

# Study disputes notion that breakfast is key to weight control

June 5 2014

---



Recommendation to eat breakfast every day for weight loss wasn't confirmed in testing.

(HealthDay)—New research refutes the common belief that skipping breakfast could contribute to obesity.

Instead, researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) found that passing on the first meal of the day doesn't help or hinder efforts to lose weight.

"The field of obesity and [weight loss](#) is full of commonly held beliefs that have not been subjected to rigorous testing; we have now found that one such belief does not seem to hold up when tested," senior investigator David Allison, director of the UAB Nutrition Obesity Research Center, said in a university news release. "This should be a

wake-up call for all of us to always ask for evidence about the recommendations we hear so widely offered."

The study involved 309 overweight and obese adults between the ages of 20 and 65. The otherwise healthy participants were randomly told to eat breakfast or skip the meal. The study also included a [control group](#) that was given healthy nutrition information, but not any specific instructions about breakfast. People in this control group included those who ate breakfast and those who skipped breakfast.

The researchers analyzed the effects of eating or skipping breakfast on weight loss. They also examined how changing breakfast habits could influence efforts to shed unwanted pounds.

"Previous studies have mostly demonstrated correlation, but not necessarily causation," study author Emily Dhurandhar, an assistant professor in UAB's department of health behavior, said in the news release. "In contrast, we used a large, randomized, controlled trial to examine whether or not breakfast recommendations have a causative effect on weight loss, with weight change as our primary outcome."

The study, published online June 4 in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, revealed there was no difference in weight loss among the various groups.

"We should try to understand why eating or skipping breakfast did not influence weight loss, despite evidence that breakfast may influence appetite and metabolism," Dhurandhar noted.

Also, the findings only included body weight and did not examine the effects of breakfast habits on people's appetite, body fat and metabolism, she said.

"In addition, our study was 16 weeks in duration, which is longer than many previous studies; but it is not clear whether an effect of the recommendation would be clearer from an even longer duration study," Dhurandhar added. "Finally, we gave subjects a recommendation of what a healthy breakfast is, but left their choices of [breakfast](#) foods up to their discretion."

**More information:** The American Heart Association provides more information on [how to lose weight](#).

Copyright © 2014 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Study disputes notion that breakfast is key to weight control (2014, June 5) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-disputes-notion-breakfast-key-weight.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--