

Want to improve your health? Focus on nutrition and not weight

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Credit: Wikipedia.

If you are watching what you eat, working out, and still not seeing improvements in your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, etc., here's some hope. A new report appearing in the August 2015 issue of *The FASEB Journal* suggests that inflammation induced by deficiencies in vitamins and minerals might be the culprit. In this report, researchers show that - in some people - improvement results in many of the major markers of health when nutritional deficiencies are corrected. Some even lost weight without a change in their diet or levels of activity.

"It is well known that habitual consumption of poor diets means increased risk of future disease, but clearly this is not a compelling enough reason for many to improve their eating habits," said Bruce Ames, Ph.D., a senior scientist at Children's Hospital Oakland Research

Institute, director of their Nutrition and Metabolism Center, and a professor emeritus of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. "However, a relatively easy intervention with something like the nutrient bar used in this study may help people to realize the positive impact that a diet with adequate nutrition can have in their daily lives, which may be a stronger incentive for change."

To make their Ames and colleagues undertook three clinical trials in which adults ate two nutrient bars each day for two months. Participants acted as their own controls, meaning that changes in a wide variety of biochemical (e.g., HDL-c, LDL-c, insulin) and physical (e.g., [blood pressure](#), weight) measurements were recorded in each individual over the two-month period. People who were overweight/obese moved in a healthier metabolic direction (e.g., improved HDL, LDL, insulin, glucose, etc.), and some lost weight by just eating small, low-calorie, nutrient bars each day for two months, without any additional requirements.

"If being healthy was as simple as 'losing weight' or 'keeping thin,' our ancient ancestors who lived in times of extreme food scarcity might still be with us today," said Gerald Weissmann, M.D., Editor-in-Chief of *The FASEB Journal*. "This report shows that what you eat is as important, if not more, than how much you eat and how many calories you burn in the gym."

More information: Joyce C. McCann, Mark K. Shigenaga, Michele L. Mietus-Snyder, Ashutosh Lal, Jung H. Suh, Ronald M. Krauss, Ginny L. Gildengorin, Alisa M. Goldrich, Devan S. Block, Swapna V. Shenvi, Tara H. McHugh, Don A. Olson, and Bruce N. Ames. A multicomponent nutrient bar promotes weight loss and improves dyslipidemia and insulin resistance in the overweight/obese: chronic inflammation blunts these improvements. *FASEB J.* August 2015

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