

Is alternate-day fasting more effective for weight loss?

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Alternate day fasting regimens have increased in popularity because some patients find it difficult to adhere to a conventional weight-loss diet.

A new article published by *JAMA Internal Medicine* reports on a [randomized clinical trial](#) that compared the effects of alternate-day fasting with daily calorie restriction on weight loss, weight maintenance and indicators of [cardiovascular disease risk](#).

Krista A. Varady, Ph.D., of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and coauthors included 100 obese adults in the single-center trial, which was conducted between October 2011 and January 2015. Patients were assigned to 1 of 3 groups for one year: alternate-day fasting (25 percent of calorie needs on fast days; 125 percent of calorie needs on alternating "feast" days); daily calorie restriction (75 percent of calorie needs every day); or no intervention.

After one year, weight loss in the alternate-day fasting group (6.0 percent) was not significantly different from the daily calorie restriction group (5.3 percent), according to the results.

"The results of this randomized clinical trial demonstrated that alternate-day fasting did not produce superior adherence, [weight loss](#), weight maintenance or improvements in risk indicators for [cardiovascular disease](#) compared with daily calorie restriction," the article concludes.

The authors note some study limitations, which included a short maintenance phase of six months.

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