

Mindfulness training shows promise for maintaining weight loss

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Credit: McGill University

Can mindfulness training help overweight people shed pounds and keep them off? McGill University researchers surveyed the growing body of studies investigating that question, and came away encouraged.

Kimberly Carrière, Bärbel Knäuper and Bassam Khoury examined 19 studies conducted over the past decade. Mindfulness interventions in these studies involved either formal meditation, informal mindfulness strategies that focused on eating activity, or some combination of these two approaches.

The researchers found that:

- Interventions based on mindfulness proved "moderately effective for weight loss" and "largely effective in reducing obesity-related eating behaviours."
- Initially, when compared to participants treated with diet and exercise-based "lifestyle-change" interventions, those who received mindfulness [training](#) lost less weight by the end of the program (3.3% of their initial body weight, compared with a 4.7% decrease for the former group.)
- Yet, at follow-up examinations, mindfulness participants had continued to lose weight, bringing their average weight loss to 3.5% of their initial body weight, while those in the "lifestyle-change" programs regained some weight.

The findings, published in the World Obesity Federation journal *Obesity Reviews*, are "encouraging" and "highlight the potential of using mindfulness training to support weight loss," says Carrière, a doctoral student in Prof. Knäuper's Health Psychology Lab in the Department of Psychology. "We recommend that further research investigate how integrating [mindfulness training](#) into lifestyle-change programs improves [weight-loss](#) maintenance."

"Mindfulness-based interventions for [weight loss](#): a systematic review and meta-analysis," K. Carrière, et al. *Obesity Reviews*, published online Oct. 27, 2017.

More information: K. Carrière et al. Mindfulness-based interventions for weight loss: a systematic review and meta-analysis, *Obesity Reviews* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/obr.12623](https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.12623)

Provided by McGill University

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