

The on-again, off-again weight-loss diet

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(HealthDay)—Being on a weight-loss diet day in and day out for months on end can be challenging and even discouraging.

What's more, following the same never-ending [diet](#) could be the reason you aren't getting the results you're looking for. A study in the *International Journal of Obesity* found an alternative that can provide better [weight](#) loss results and is easier to stick with.

The "MATADOR" study recruited 51 participants, all obese men. MATADOR is short for Minimizing Adaptive Thermogenesis And Deactivating Obesity Rebound.

After four weeks in which their caloric needs were calculated, participants followed either a continuous diet or a "restricted intermittent diet" of two weeks on followed by two weeks off for 16 weeks. Men who followed the restricted intermittent diet achieved [greater weight loss](#) at the conclusion of the study. This suggests that a two-week-on, two-week-off diet plan could help you shed unwanted weight and keep it off.

One theory is that the breaks keep your metabolism from resetting at a lower caloric need, a reset that makes it harder to keep losing weight without more calorie cuts.

There's one caveat to trying this strategy on your own: It's important to refrain from overindulging during your off weeks. Make sure your eating during off-weeks is balanced, with a variety of foods totaling about 500 calories a day more than you eat during the weight-loss phases. These weeks should help reinforce the moderate eating of the diet weeks and give your body time to adjust to your progressively [lower weight](#).

More information: You can read the full details of the [MATADOR](#) plan online.

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