

When you eat may matter more than what you eat: study

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(HealthDay)—There's evidence that the old expression "eat breakfast

like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper" could use some tweaking. With one important revision, this approach could help not just for better health, but also for losing weight.

A study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that *when* you eat rather than *what* you eat could have the bigger impact.

Researchers compared the weight loss results of two groups of dieters, all women between the ages of 18 and 45, who ate the same number of daily calories. The group that had its main meal of the day at lunch lost 3 pounds more than the group that ate a big dinner—12.5 pounds compared to 9.5 pounds over 12 weeks. They also had greater improvement in [insulin sensitivity](#), which can help keep diabetes at bay.

While more study is needed to find out if these results can be maintained and if they apply to the [general population](#), it's a simple lifestyle change that anyone can make. As a [bonus](#), you may not experience the typical mid-afternoon hunger that has you reaching for snacks, or worse, a trip to the nearest vending machine for a [candy bar](#).

If you bring lunch to work, you might find it a challenge at first to pack a more substantial meal. It may help to order in, using the dollars from your dinner budget. Of course, after having a large lunch, you don't want to turn around and have a large dinner, too, a habit it will take time to break. To make the adjustment easier, at dinner, fill your plate with healthy foods you can eat in high volume, like a salad and lots of veggies.

More information: Choose My Plate has tips on how to build your [bigger lunch](#) and keep it healthy.

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