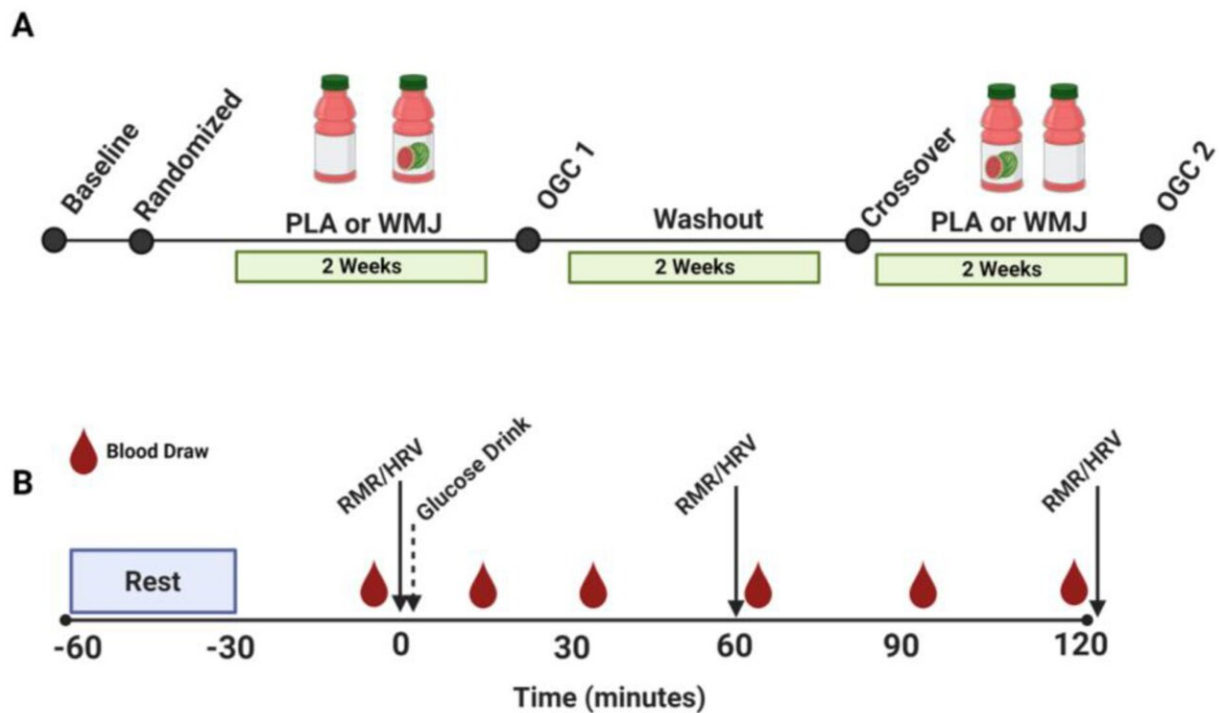


# Nutrition research continues to support the health benefits of regular watermelon consumption

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(A) Participant randomization and train schedule for two treatments (WMJ and PLA). (B) Study visit sampling time course for RMR, HRV, and blood draws during the OGC study visit conducted after the 2-week WMJ or PLA treatment period. WMJ, watermelon juice; PLA, placebo; RMR, resting metabolic rate; HRV, heart rate variability; OGC, oral glucose challenge. Credit: *Nutrients* (2023). DOI: 10.3390/nu15040810

There's no question that watermelon is both delicious and nutritious, but new research underscores this nutrient-rich fruit's contributions to overall diet quality and heart health.

A recent study published in *Nutrients* suggests that [watermelon](#) can increase [nutrient intake](#) and overall diet quality in both children and adults. The study analyzed National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data and found that total diet quality was higher in watermelon consumers as compared to non-consumers.

According to the study, children and adult watermelon consumers had higher intakes of dietary fiber, magnesium, potassium, vitamin C and vitamin A as well as lycopene and other carotenoids, while they had lower intakes of added sugars and total saturated fatty acids. Research analyst and author on the study, Kristen Fulgoni, will present the research findings at Nutrition 2023, the American Society for Nutrition annual meeting, held July 22-25, 2023 in Boston.

In addition to the NHANES study, another new study also published in *Nutrients* builds on previous work in this area of research to show that watermelon juice supplementation protects vascular function during hyperglycemia.

Conducted at Louisiana State University, this randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover trial to test the effects of 2 weeks of daily watermelon juice supplementation, specifically looked at the potential beneficial modulating effects of L-citrulline and L-arginine—two compounds found in watermelon—on nitric oxide bioavailability and heart rate variability.

"We acknowledge that while the sample size was small (18 healthy young men and women) and more research is needed, this study adds to the current body of evidence supporting regular intake of watermelon

for cardio-metabolic health. In addition to L-citrulline and L-arginine, watermelon is a rich source of antioxidants, vitamin C and lycopene—all of which can help reduce [oxidative stress](#) and play a role in heart disease prevention," said Dr. Jack Losso, Ph.D., professor at Louisiana State University's School of Nutrition and Food Sciences.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommend 1.5 to 2.5 cups of fruit daily and currently U.S. adults and children fall short of this goal—getting only about half the recommended fruit serving each day. Watermelon is a nutrient-rich fruit and an excellent source of Vitamin C (25% DV), a source of Vitamin B6 (8% DV), and a delicious way to stay hydrated (92% water), with only 80 calories per 2-cup serving.

Thoughts of juicy watermelon at your upcoming BBQ or outdoor get together likely conjure up memories of enjoying the perfectly ripe fruit in summer's past. The reality is that watermelon can be enjoyed any time thanks to the diversity of climates that enable watermelon production year-round. Whether you're waiting for the first signs of summer to enjoy watermelon—or not—let this new nutrition research nudge you to include watermelon as part of your balanced diet.

**More information:** Kristin Fulgoni et al, Watermelon Intake Is Associated with Increased Nutrient Intake and Higher Diet Quality in Adults and Children, NHANES 2003–2018, *Nutrients* (2022). [DOI: 10.3390/nu14224883](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu14224883)

Rachel Matthews et al, The Effect of Watermelon Juice Supplementation on Heart Rate Variability and Metabolic Response during an Oral Glucose Challenge: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Crossover Trial, *Nutrients* (2023). [DOI: 10.3390/nu15040810](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15040810)

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