



- SUBSCRIBE
- RENEW
- GIVE A GIFT
- DIGITAL EDITION

Print | Close

Study of the Day: Eating Chocolate for Breakfast Is Good for Your Diet

By Hans Villarica

New research from Tel Aviv shows that starting the day with a full meal that includes a sweet dessert contributes to weight loss success.



PROBLEM: Though restrictive diets often result in weight loss, most obese dieters fail to keep the pounds off as soon as their cravings start to overpower their discipline. Can a more forgiving breakfast topped off with sweets help prevent this all-too-common obesity relapse?



- [How We Read Restaurant Menus](#)
- [Why We Often Chicken Out at the Last Minute](#)
- [English Is an Overwhelmingly Positive Language](#)

METHODOLOGY: To determine if and how the timing and composition of meals affect short- and long-term weight loss, researchers led by Tel Aviv University's Daniela Jakubowicz randomly assigned 193 clinically obese, non-diabetic adults, ages 20 to 65, to one of two diet groups with identical daily caloric intake -- 1,600 for men, 1,400 for women. Those in the first group ate a low-carbohydrate diet that included a small 300-calorie breakfast while members of the second cluster were given a 600-calorie breakfast high in protein and carbs that always included dessert.

RESULTS: Halfway through the 32-week trial, participants in both groups had lost an average of 33 pounds per person. Things changed drastically soon after, however. While participants in the large-breakfast group lost another 15 pounds each, those in the low-carb group regained an average of 22 pounds each. At the end of the program, those who had less restrictive breakfasts had lost an average of 40 pounds more per person than their peers.

CONCLUSION: Starting the day with a full meal that includes a sweet dessert can bolster and maintain a dieter's weight-loss progress.

IMPLICATION: Curbing cravings is better than deprivation for dieting success, says Jakubowicz in a statement, since avoiding sweets altogether can create a psychological addiction to these same foods in the long-term.

SOURCE: The full [study](#), "Meal Timing and Composition Influence Ghrelin Levels, Appetite Scores and Weight Loss Maintenance in Overweight and Obese Adults," is published in the journal *Steroids*.

Image: Shutterstock.

This article available online at:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2012/03/study-of-the-day-eating-chocolate-for-breakfast-is-good-for-your-diet/253780/>

Copyright © 2014 by The Atlantic Monthly Group. All Rights Reserved.