



Dietary Interventions for Weight Loss

Macronutrient composition

What is it? Four diets of different macronutrient (fats, proteins, carbohydrates) compositions accompanied by group and individual behavioral counseling

How did it do? Participants in all groups lost on average 6.5kg at 6 months and about 1/4 of participants continued to lose weight from 6 months to 2 years

Downsides? Cravings, fullness, and hunger were similar across all groups. Macronutrient goals were difficult to achieve across all diets

Alternate Day Fasting (ADF)

What is it? Participants alternated between a "fast" day and a "feast" day in which they consumed 25% vs. 125% of their baseline caloric needs, respectively. This was compared to daily caloric restriction (75% of baseline caloric needs) and a control group.

How did it do? ADF was more difficult to adhere to and did not result in increased weight loss as compared to the daily caloric restriction group.

Downsides? Difficult to meet caloric goals on both "fast" and "feast" days; increased dropout was observed among the ADF group.

Commercial weight loss programs

What is it? Weight loss programs such as Weight Watchers and Nutrisystem that emphasize nutrition and behavioral counseling (with or without an exercise component).

How did it do? Programs such as Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig consistently demonstrate greater sustained weight loss compared to control/education. Nutrisystem also shows promise, but lacks long term data

Downsides? The biggest barrier to these programs is cost with Weight Watchers being one of the lowest-cost programs.

