

January 12th, 2011

New research shows portion-controlled meal replacement diets as more effective than standard diets at both initial weight loss and long-term weight maintenance in type 2 diabetics.

MEAL REPLACEMENTS BETTER THAN STANDARD DIETS FOR WEIGHT LOSS IN DIABETICS

A recent study published in *Diabetes Education* compared the efficacy of a portion-controlled meal replacement diet (PCD) to a standard diet (SD) based on American Diabetes Association recommendations in achieving and maintaining weight loss.

Participants included 119 overweight men and women with type 2 diabetes and a body mass index (BMI) between 25 and 40. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of two diets (PCD or SD) that contained 75% of predicted energy needs. The diets were then followed by a maintenance phase of one year.

Weight loss at 34 weeks and weight maintenance at 86 weeks was significantly better on PCD versus SD. Approximately 40% of the PCD participants lost at least 5% of their initial weight compared with only 12% of those on the standard diet. Significant improvements in biochemical and metabolic measures were observed at 34 weeks in both groups. The ease and self-reported adherence to the diet were greater in the PCD group throughout the study.

In this study, a diet using portion-controlled meal replacements resulted in significantly greater initial weight loss and less regain after one year of maintenance than a standard, self-selected, food-based diet. As PCDs may help obese patients with type 2 diabetes adhere to a weight control program, diabetes educators should consider recommending them as part of a comprehensive approach to weight control.

Cheskin LJ, et al. Efficacy of meal replacements versus a standard food-based diet for weight loss in type 2 diabetes: a controlled clinical trial. 2008. *Diabetes Educ* 34(1):118-27.