

Research Article

Eating frequency and weight loss: results of 6 months follow up of a public health campaign at Aurangabad

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ABSTRACT

Background: Obesity is a major health problem in developed as well as developing countries. The “carbo-insulin connection” theory was popularized by late Dr. Shrikant Jichkar from 1997 to 2004. He advocated the idea of eating only twice a day to lose weight and prevent obesity. The author tried this theory on himself from January to March 2013 and lost 8kg of weight and 2 inches from his belly! Since then the author is conducting lectures for lay people educating them about eating twice and losing weight. Author has addressed audiences in many cities and towns of Maharashtra. The present study provides the encouraging results of this public health campaign.

Methods: This study was a self-controlled community trial. The tenure of the study was from 1st July 2013 to 30th June 2014. The subjects were enrolled in the study after taking their informed consent during the author’s lectures on weight loss arranged in various cities and towns of Maharashtra. The author got pretested questionnaires filled from the audience who attended his lectures on weight loss. The follow up was done on phone every fortnightly. Total 446 individuals participated in this campaign.

Results: The weight loss and decrease in waist circumference in participants was as below: weight loss: average 1.5 kg in first month, 4.2 kg in 3 months and 6.8 kg in 6 months; inches loss: average 0.5 cm in 1st month, 1.5 cm in 3 months and 3.5 cm in 6 months. No side effects were observed.

Conclusions: The weight loss activities have taken a form of exploitative business for many. Poor and ignorant people are being looted. This simple method of weight loss costs nothing, there is no requirement of a doctor and contrary to many other successful methods of weight loss, can be followed for a life time. Hence such a simple method should be advocated for all. There is a need to spread this message in the form of a public health campaign.

Keywords: Eating frequency, Weight loss, Public health Campaign

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is a major health problem in developed as well as developing countries.¹ Obesity is recognized as a major preventable risk factor that contributes to a broad range of common chronic diseases in the United States, including hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes mellitus. Increased risk of insulin-resistant states, including glucose intolerance and Non-Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM) in obese subjects, has also been well documented.² Insulin is the

hormone responsible for utilization of carbohydrates for energy in the body. In its absence or when its levels are low, the body switches over to fats as a source of energy. Insulin is secreted in large quantities if one consumes food item that contains carbohydrates. Proteins and fats have minimal effect on insulin secretion. The “carbo-insulin connection” theory was popularized by late Dr. Shrikant Jichkar from 1997 to 2004. He advocated the idea of eating only twice a day to lose weight and prevent obesity.³ The author tried this theory on himself from January to March 2013 and lost 8kg of weight and 2

inches from his belly! Impressed by the success of this simple method of losing weight and preventing obesity, author wrote a book titled “Effortless weight loss” which got published in September 2013. Since then the author is conducting lectures for lay people educating them about eating twice and losing weight. Author has addressed audiences in many cities and towns of Maharashtra. The present study provides the encouraging results of this public health campaign. The results are from 6 months follow up of this campaign which involves 446 individuals.

METHODS

This study was a self-controlled community trial. The tenure of the study was from 1st July 2013 to 30th June 2014. The enrollment was done from 1st July 2013 to 31st December 2013. The subjects were enrolled in the study after taking their informed consent during the author’s lectures on weight loss arranged in various cities and towns of Maharashtra. The author got pretested questionnaires filled from the audience who attended his lectures on weight loss. The questionnaires included demographic information and detailed diet history with special emphasis on frequency of eating, the quantity and types of food items consumed. During lecture, the author used to guide the participants to find out how many times they are secreting insulin and then deciding upon the timings of lunch and dinner. He used to collect the questionnaires from the willing participants. The follow up was done on phone every fortnightly. Total 446 individuals participated in this campaign.

The theory in nutshell

This weight loss theory is based on a very simple principle. Every time we consume any food item containing carbohydrates we secrete insulin. If we eat breakfast or complete lunch or dinner, the quantity of insulin secreted is almost the same.⁴ Insulin secretion is of two types. There is a baseline secretion 18 to 32 unit per 24 hours which is beyond our control.⁵ Secondly with each episode of eating, we secrete insulin. As our blood always has high level of insulin, the body uses carbohydrates as a source of energy and fats remain untouched. Insulin being the saving hormone, tries to store energy in the form of fats. When we treat a diabetic patient with injectable insulin, one of the side effects is weight gain. When we are fasting say 3 to 4 hours after lunch or dinner, our insulin level goes down. The lowered level of insulin stimulates the body to use firstly liver glycogen and then fats for the purpose of energy. Hence when a person eats only twice in the day, s/he loses weight.

Important points to be noted

- This diet plan is not useful for those who are suffering from diabetes.

- This diet plan is not required for persons below the age of 18 years.

Diet advice in the campaign

- Identify the time of the day when you are really hungry; usually a person is truly hungry twice in the day. Some people have a pattern of 9 am, 6 pm and others have a pattern of 1 pm and 9 pm.
- Eat whatever you are eating presently at these two times; you have to just divide the quantity in to two.
- More quantity (say 60 to 70%) should be at the time of lunch and remaining at dinner.
- You can eat any food item; no restriction on foods.
- You should not take tea/coffee with sugar, fruits, dry fruits or any other eatables in between the two meals.
- You should also not use sugar substitutes as the sweet taste stimulates the secretion of insulin.
- If at all you feel hungry in between two meals, you can take buttermilk or coconut water.
- Check your weight every 15 days on the same weighing machine.
- Check your waist circumference every month.

RESULTS

Out of the total 446 participants, 18 were lost to follow up. The reasons were: inability to control the hunger (9), could not follow the diet plan due to tour and festivals (8) and exacerbation of migraine (1).

Table 1 shows the distribution of participants as per age and sex.

Table 1: Distribution of participants as per age and sex.

Age group	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total
20-29	23 (11.5)	28 (12.3)	51 (11.9)
30-39	39 (19.5)	48 (21.0)	87 (20.3)
40-49	67 (33.5)	75 (32.9)	142 (33.1)
50-59	56 (28)	58 (25.4)	114 (26.6)
60 onwards	15 (7.5)	19 (8.3)	34 (8.1)
Total	200 (100)	228 (100)	428 (100)

Most of the participants were in the age group of 40 and above. Females were more than the males.

For most of the participants the first 4 to 5 days was a testing time when they switched over to tea or coffee

without sugar. After first week most of them had a feeling of lightness in the body and they also reported increased work efficiency.

The weight loss and decrease in waist circumference in participants was as below:

Weight loss: Average 1.5 kg in first month, 4.2 kg in 3 months and 6.8 kg in 6 months

Inches loss: Average 0.5 cm in 1st month, 1.5 cm in 3 months and 3.5 cm in 6 months

No side effects were observed.

DISCUSSION

It is evident from the results that eating twice a day can effectively reduce the weight as well as tummy. Moreover it is a method with special features that one doesn't have to spend money, there is no need of a doctor and one can follow this diet plan throughout the life without any problem!

The simple theory of losing weight is highly effective and it has no side effects too. Some people could not control their hunger and one got exacerbation of his migraine so could not complete the trial.

Limitations

The data was obtained with the method of self-reporting and hence there was no cross check on the information provided by the participants. As the participants were from many cities in Maharashtra it was not possible to verify all the information provided by the respondents. It is possible that due to eating twice a day, some people might be consuming lesser calories than their usual intake and some part of the favourable outcome may be due to this aspect.

CONCLUSIONS

Weight loss has become a fad in today's world. Most of the people spend lots and lots of money on diet formulae and exercise plans with little or sometimes no advantage.

The weight loss activities have taken a form of exploitative business for many. Poor and ignorant people are being looted. This simple method of weight loss costs nothing, there is no requirement of a doctor and contrary to many other successful methods of weight loss, can be followed for a life time. Hence such a simple method should be advocated for all. There is a need to spread this message in the form of a public health campaign.

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