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In a recently published university study, diets using meal replacements were more effective at initial weight loss and long-term weight maintenance than standard self-selected diets based on recommendations of the American Diabetes Association.

MEAL REPLACEMENTS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN STANDARD FOOD-BASED DIETS FOR WEIGHT LOSS IN TYPE 2 DIABETES

A university-based clinical trial recently compared the effectiveness of a portion-controlled meal replacement diet (PCD) to a standard diet (SD) based on recommendations by the American Diabetes Association. The focus of the study was to compare each diet in achieving and maintaining weight loss among obese subjects with type 2 diabetes.

Study participants included 119 men and women with diabetes and a body mass index (BMI) of between 25 and 40. Subjects were randomly assigned to a reduced calorie regimen of either a standard diet or portion-controlled meal replacement diet. The reduced calorie diets were carried out for 34 weeks, followed by a one-year maintenance.

The portion-controlled diet resulted in significantly better weight loss at 34 weeks and weight maintenance at 86 weeks compared to the standard diet. At 34 weeks, both groups had significant improvements in biochemical and metabolic measures of health. The ease of use and retention rate was significantly higher in the PCD group throughout the study.

A diet using portion-controlled meal replacements was significantly more effective in achieving initial weight loss and less regain after 1 year of maintenance than a standard, self-selected, food-based diet. These diets may help obese patients with type 2 diabetes adhere to a weight control program, and should be considered as part of a comprehensive approach to weight control.

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