

## Battling Bacteria in Gut May Influence Weight Gain

Body weight and obesity could be affected not only by what we eat but also by how it is digested in the gut, American scientists report.

They have discovered that levels of two types of good microbes or bacteria in the gut that help to break down foods are different in obese and lean people and mice.

The findings produced enthusiasm from researchers... Perhaps some change, such as a food additive or antibiotic use, has caused a fundamental shift in gut flora, making it easier for many people to gain weight. (*Nature*, 12/03.)

The number one resolution most Americans make every New Year is to lose a "few" pounds. Whether you resolve to increase your exercise regimen, change your eating habits, or try some new diet and supplement fad, the goal is the same...Weight loss!

This year, let me help you maintain your resolution! I have some simple tips that you can implement to help you achieve your weight loss goals. Before you know it, you'll be shedding away the pounds! More importantly, you'll be taking steps to regain your health!

**Tip #1:** Don't drink soft drinks, even if it is labeled a "diet" soda. Soft drinks are loaded with sugar, corn syrup and artificial sweeteners. Instead, replace the soft drink with herbal tea, soda water with fresh lemon or lime juice, or fresh vegetable or fruit juices. Avoiding soft drinks is one of the quickest and easiest ways to shed unwanted pounds!

**Tip #2:** Eat a grapefruit or drink unsweetened and natural grapefruit juice every morning. (Important: Eating grapefruits is contraindicated with certain medications. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before consuming grapefruits or grapefruit juice.) If you cannot eat grapefruit or simply do not like the taste, try eating a lemon or adding fresh-squeezed lemon juice to your favorite beverage or water every morning. Grapefruits and lemons have the potential to increase metabolism, having thermogenic properties. (*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol 42, 177-181)

**Tip #3:** Don't eat corn! This is probably one of the most controversial tips, but I can share with you from experience that corn is NOT healthy for you. First, corn cannot be digested properly in your G.I. tract. Secondly, corn universally contains mycotoxins, or fungal metabolites (*JAMA* 2002.) that can contribute to weight gain, and can also contribute to other health problems. If at all possible, you should avoid corn and corn products including corn tortillas, popcorn and corn chips. Instead, replace corn tortillas with flour tortillas. Likewise, replace popcorn and chips with a healthier snack option: nuts, vegetables, fruit, etc.

**Tip #4:** Eat green or cruciferous vegetables at least once per day. In reality, you should eat a minimum of 3 to 5 servings of vegetables per day. For at least one serving, try eating broccoli or cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, or some other green. Green, leafy vegetables contain chlorophyll, which naturally cleanses the blood. In addition, broccoli contains sulphurophane, a powerful antioxidant. Remember, losing weight is not always about avoiding certain foods, but it is also just as important to provide your body with the proper nutrients it needs. (Important: If you are taking a

blood-thinning medication, check with your doctor before consuming large amounts of green, leafy vegetables.)

**Tip #5:** Take a probiotic daily. Probiotics contain beneficial and “friendly” bacteria that support the gut’s health. Everyone is born with this beneficial bacteria, or normal flora. Due to diet changes or exposure to certain medications, such as antibiotics, this normal flora can be depleted. As the new research out of the journal Nature reports, taking probiotics and restoring the balance of this “friendly” bacteria in the gut can lead to weight loss and prevent other health problems.

**Tip #6:** Eat berries regularly. Berries contain potent antioxidants such as the ellagic acid found in raspberries. Try eating at least 1 serving of berries or berry juice per day, including blueberries, strawberries, cranberries or blackberries.

**Tip #7:** Avoid bread! Just like corn, our North American grain supply is often contaminated with fungal toxins, or mycotoxins (*JAMA 2002.*) that can contribute to weight gain. If you must eat bread, try eating sourdough or unleavened bread. You can also substitute flour tortillas in place of bread.

**Tip #8:** Take a combination of multivitamin/mineral/antioxidant supplements throughout the year. (Important: Check with your doctor or pharmacist before beginning any supplement or making changes to your current regimen.) There are many beneficial supplements to choose from, and many good multivitamins on the market. It is important to rotate supplements to see which brand or product benefits you the most. We are all unique! We each have unique fingerprints! Likewise, each person’s body reacts to supplements differently. If you have questions about any supplement, please feel free to email me at [questions@callforhealth.tv](mailto:questions@callforhealth.tv) and I will be happy to assist you. Most importantly, when choosing a vitamin or supplement, be sure to research the company and the product. (Make sure it is a trusted supplement manufacturer as well as a safe product.) Please feel free to [visit our “downloads” page](#) to get a complete list of recommended websites. You can also [check out our “Healthy Eating Guide”](#) to help you with your meal planning.

**Tip #9:** NEVER go grocery shopping when you are hungry. Always grocery shop on a full stomach! I know this from experience. You tend to buy “less” healthy items when your eyes are bigger than your stomach!

**Tip #10:** Along with eating healthy and exercising, make prayer a regular routine. Praying for guidance with your health and weight loss plans will keep you more persistent and compliant than any supplement, pill, trainer, or diet plan will ever do! Prayer, after all, is the best medicine.

Always remember: Making positive lifestyle changes such as exercising regularly, eating healthy, and taking supplements will benefit your long-term health. It doesn’t take new research to prove this, it takes results! It’s not “New” news, it’s Nutri-News!

- Jami Cooley, R.N.