Who Knew Weight Loss Could Be This Simple?

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Middle-aged and older adults ate fewer caloriesand shed more pounds when they drank two cups of water before a mealcompared with those who didn't, according to research presented at theAmerican Chemical Society meeting and reported by HealthDay News.

Forthe study, researchers at Virginia Tech divided overweight and obeseparticipants, ages 55 and 75, into two groups. One followed a low-fat,low-calorie diet while the other followed the same diet but also dranktwo cups of water before each of their three daily meals.

Aftera three-month follow-up, those in the group who drank water lost anaverage of five more pounds than those who didn't drink water. And theyalso realized an added bonus. Downing a couple glasses of water beforea meal helped them keep weight off. One year later, researchers foundthat dieters who continued to drink their pre-meal water didn't regainany weight, plus they lost, on average, an extra 1.5 pounds.

"Drinkingmore water is a pretty simple strategy that may be helpful to peopletrying to lose weight," said lead author Brenda Davy, PhD, RD, anassociate professor in the department of human nutrition, foods andexercise at Virginia Tech.

How exactly did drinking waterhelp? Apparently, it takes longer for water in the stomach to empty inolder people, making them feel fuller and less hungry for longer. Butonly older adults experienced H2O benefits.

Previous studies showed that water left the stomachs of people ages 18 to 35 almost immediately, providing no diet benefits.

Still,this research could help fight the obesity epidemic in America. How?Because it showed that if people drank water directly before and aftermeals, they ate much less food. But the hard part is getting people todrink water instead of high-calorie beverages, researchers explained.

"We'renot saying 'Drink more water and the body fat will melt away,'" Davysaid. "But for people who are trying to lose weight and trying tofollow a low-cal diet, it's something they can do as part of that."

Click here to read why drinking fewer sugary beverages is better for your health.

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