Counseling May Be Associated With Improved Short-term Weight Loss in People at Risk of Developing Diabetes

by Pamela Jones, MA

Diabetes increases the risk of heart disease, vision loss, nerve problems, and amputations. The best actions are first prevention then management if the disease has developed. Lifestyle changes are very effective in the prevention and control of diabetes. The interventions include regular physical activity, balanced diet, and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Being overweight is a leading risk factor in developing diabetes.

Researchers at the Peninsula Medical School in England set out to determine if basic counseling for weight loss and physical activity would help people reach weight loss and activity goals. The study, published in the British Journal of General Practice, found that counseling may help in short-term weight loss success.

About the Study

The randomized trial involved 141 participants with a body mass index (BMI) more than or equal to 28. BMI is a common measurement that accounts for height and weight to determine healthy weight ranges. The participants were free of heart disease or diabetes. They were randomized to two groups. One group received an informational brochure. The second group received behavior counseling with motivational interview techniques for six months. The goals set for both groups were a 5% weight loss and 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week.

At the end of the six-month trial:

- 24% of the counseling group and 7% of the brochure group reached their weight-loss goal
- There was no significant difference between groups in reaching physical activity goals

How Does This Affect You?

Weight loss can play a significant role in the control and prevention of diabetes. Counseling may help you take the appropriate steps and motivate you to continue losing weight. Work with a professional or organization to make a reasonable plan. Aim to make gradual lifestyle changes.

Talk to your doctor or diet or exercise specialists about a plan to help you achieve your weight-loss goals.

RESOURCES:

American Diabetes Association
http://www.diabetes.org/

American Heart Association
http://www.americanheart.org/

REFERENCES:


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