

Women: Weight Loss Reduces Incontinence

A six-month programme of diet, exercise and behaviour modification resulted in a loss of 17 pounds and nearly one-half (47 percent) fewer incontinence episodes per week on average, according to a new study.



Weight-loss should be a first line treatment for obese women with incontinence; © Hemera

Starting a weight-loss regimen significantly reduces urinary incontinence for women, according to researchers. It follows that weight loss should be added as a first-line treatment in overweight and obese women, the researchers said.

By contrast, an information-only programme on diet and exercise without any direct weight-loss training led to a loss of three pounds and 28 percent fewer incontinence episodes per week on average, the researchers said.

“Earlier research has shown that behavioural weight-loss programmes have many benefits, including decreasing blood pressure and helping to fight off diabetes. Here we have shown that weight loss has measureable impact on reduced incontinence,” said Frank Franklin, a co-author on the study.

The results are from the Program to Reduce Incontinence by Diet and Exercise, or PRIDE study. It included 338 overweight and obese women with a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to 30 kg/m² who experienced up to ten episodes of incontinence per week.

Those on the diet, exercise and behaviour modification programme reported feeling significantly more satisfied with the improvements in incontinence compared to the information-only participants, Franklin said.

Urinary incontinence affects more than 13 million women in the United States and has been linked to increased risk of falls and bone fractures, according to the scientists. Considering the PRIDE results and other health benefits, the initiation of weight loss should be added as a first-line

treatment in overweight and obese women, said lead study author Leslee Subak.

Source: [University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)