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Optifast meal replacement and its effect on body weight

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions all around the world and it is alarming because it is affecting populations from different age groups. It is implicated in the development of a variety of chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and many types of cancer.

The objective of this study is to examine the effect of Optifast meal replacement (OF) on body weight and body composition among obese individuals following a period of weight loss and weight maintenance compared to an isocaloric, food based diet (FB).

The methods used in this study were as follows: A 12 week randomized, controlled clinical trial included 90 obese adults with a body mass index (BMI) between 30 and 50 kg/m² randomly assigned to 1 of 2 weight loss programs. The dietary interventions consisted of Optifast meal replacement for weight loss or a self-selected isocaloric, food based meal plan. Both groups were very well supervised for an average of twice per month in order to make sure that individuals were following strictly the diet program assigned to them. Sometimes they were down and didn't want to go on with the challenge of losing weight, so they were allowed to have one cheating meal in order to keep them on track. With the assistance of specialized dietitian both groups stayed motivated and followed the diet to the end, which helped us to get better results from this study.

The results of this study showed as follows: Weight loss was significantly better in the Optifast group (OF) versus the food based group (FB) (12.3% versus 6.9%). There was no difference in satiety observed between the 2 groups during the weight loss phase. The optifast group was full of energy after completing the diet program and showed no frustration towards food when done.

After completing this 12-week study, the main conclusion was that the meal replacement diet plan evaluated was an effective strategy for weight loss and thus for improving in a number of health related parameters. Moreover, the meal replacement weight loss program ensured the delivery of all nutrients minerals and vitamins needed so there was no risks of developing any deficiency.

Biography

Vera Matta is Clinical Dietitian with a Master degree in Nutrition Counseling and a PhD degree in Nutritional Psychotherapy, currently completing a second PhD in Clinical Nutrition. She is a Counselor for many food institutes. She is Owner of Diet & Health Clinic.

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