

The effect of aspartame as part of a multidisciplinary weight-control program on short and long term control of body weight

George L Blackburn, Beatrice S Kanders, Philip T Lavin, Susan D Keller, and Janet Wheatley

This study investigated whether the addition of the high-intensity sweetener aspartame to a multidisciplinary weight control program would improve weight loss and long term control of body weight. One hundred sixty-three obese women were randomly assigned to consume or to abstain from aspartame sweetened foods and beverages during 16wk of a 19wk reduction program (active weight loss), a 1-y maintenance program, and a 2-y follow up period. Women in both treatment group lost » 10% of initial body weight (10kg) during active weight loss. Among women assigned to the aspartame treatment groups, aspartame intake was positively correlated with percentage weight loss during active weight loss ($r = 0.32$, $P < 0.001$; and $r = 0.34$, $P < 0.01$ respectively) and self reported eating control ($r = 0.37$, $P < 0.001$; and $r = 0.33$, $P < 0.01$, respectively). These data suggest that participation in a multidisciplinary weight control program that includes aspartame may facilitate the long term maintenance of reduced body weight.

Am J Clin Nutr 1997;65:409-18