

[IMAGE]

Losing Weight with Green Tea

Green tea is rich in flavonoids, a group of plant pigments commonly known as bioflavonoids. Flavonoids function as antioxidants, protecting the body against some types of cancer; evidence that a subclass of flavonoids called "tea catechins" helps control fat oxidation suggests that green tea may play a role in weight management.

The December 1999 *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* included a study that explored this potential influence of green tea on weight loss. The authors began by explaining that ³fundamentally, there are only two ways to treat obesity: reduce energy intake or increase energy expenditure.² Relying on this premise, they compared the effect of green tea vs. placebo on 24-hour energy expenditure (EE a higher EE means the body is burning more calories) and respiratory quotient (RQ a lower RQ means the body is metabolizing more fat).

On three separate occasions, subjects (10 men) randomly received one of three treatments at breakfast, lunch and dinner: green tea extract (50 mg caffeine, 90 mg *epigallocatechin gallate*); caffeine (50 mg); or placebo. Subjects who ingested the green tea extract demonstrated a significant increase in EE and a significant decrease in RQ compared to subjects who ingested caffeine or placebo.

The authors note that caffeine had no effect on EE or RQ, even in amounts equivalent to those found in the green tea extract (50 mg). Their results emphasize the potential ability of green tea (independent of caffeine) to "influence body weight and body composition."

Reference:

Dulloo AG, Duret C, Rohrer D, et al. Efficacy of a green tea extract rich in catechins polyphenols and caffeine in increasing 24-h energy expenditure and fat oxidation in humans. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Dec. 1999: Vol. 70, pp1040-45.

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