

[IMAGE]

An Avocado a Day

By Editorial Staff

A medium-sized avocado contains more than 300 calories and nearly 30 grams of fat; so why could it possibly be a good food to eat if you're a woman trying to lose weight and improve your health? Here's why.

First, keep in mind that an avocado may be relatively high in calories and fat, but most of the calories come from the fat, and that fat is the "healthy" kind, if that makes sense. Avocados are also low in carbs (only about 17 per whole avocado), high in fiber (approximately 14 grams per avocado) and packed with vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. From a weight-loss perspective, that's not such a bad thing.

Second, new research suggests overweight / obese women who eat an avocado a day for 12 weeks can reduce their visceral abdominal fat – the most dangerous type because it's hard to target and situated near / around the organs – and also reduce the visceral:subcutaneous fat ratio. (Subcutaneous fat is located under the skin and considered less dangerous / easier to shed than visceral fat. People with a higher ratio are also at greater risk for type 2 diabetes.)

avocado - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark In the study, published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, researchers divided women into two groups for comparison. Both groups received one meal per day as part of the 12-week study, with one group's meal including an avocado, while the other group's meal did not. Meals were essentially equivalent in terms of calories and ingredients except for the inclusion or omission of avocado, suggesting this simple, powerful fruit (yes, avocado is technically a fruit since it fits all the criteria for being a berry) can help overweight / obese women get back on track toward better health and wellness. And of course, for women already at a healthy weight, avocado is an essential element of a balanced diet for all the nutritional reasons discussed above.

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