

## **Using Online Tools in Conjunction With a Comprehensive, Group-Based Weight Loss Plan Enhances Outcomes.**

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There are an increasing number of ways for people to access weight-loss programs. However, little research has been done to evaluate the impact that various methods impact actual weight loss. This study evaluated the effectiveness of a comprehensive, group-based, weight-loss program with the same program done in conjunction with online tools.

Eighty-nine participants with home-based computer access and skills were assigned into 2 groups. One group was instructed to attend weekly meetings and follow the Weight Watchers plan (WW=65). The second group was assigned to do the same as well as use web-based tools as part of their weight-loss approach (WW + eTools=24).

After 24 weeks, the change in weight ( $-10.09 \pm 10.32$  lbs vs  $-15.23 \pm 10.56$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and BMI ( $1.65 \pm 1.67$  vs  $-2.60 \pm 1.72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) were significantly greater for the WW + eTools group than the WW group. In another analysis of the WW + eTools group, a Spearman's rank correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the relationship between the number of days with at least one online interaction and change in weight. Change in weight was related to the number of days using the online tools ( $r = -0.425$ ,  $p = 0.039$ ) during the 24-week period.

These data suggest that adding on-line tools to a comprehensive, group-based, weight-loss plan enhances weight-loss success.