Debunking Medical Myths: Eating Late at Night Causes You to Gain Weight

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DEBUNKING A MEDICAL MYTH:
Eating late at night causes you to gain weight.
True or False? Let’s find out!

Alexandra Breves, Alexander Wind, Coltrane Groves, Mina Juma, Sydney Colbert, Brandon Holland

WHERE DID THIS MYTH COME FROM?
A crucial factor in weight gain due to eating at night is simply that more calories are consumed in the day overall. The additional hours of nighttime eating allow for more consumption of calories leading to weight gain. So yes, eating (excessively) at night causes weight gain.

WHERE DID THIS MYTH COME FROM?
A team of Danish scientists conducted a prospective study of middle-aged adults and found that there was NO significant association between night time eating and later weight gain over 6 years (except amongst already obese women).³

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WHAT YOU EAT MATTERS!
• If you eat small, nutrient-dense, and low-energy foods at night, such as eggs, fish, and seeds, you can have positive physiological outcomes.
• If you eat large mixed-meals at night, filled with fats and carbohydrates, such as french fries, fried rice, and burgers, you can experience weight gain.³

WHAT YOU EAT MATTERS!
• It’s not all about when you eat; it’s also about what and how much you eat!
  + Make your snacks count!
  + Eating at night can actually be beneficial for some people.
  + Benefits can include improvements of overall satiety, sugar metabolism for those that are hypoglycemic, as well as total percentage of caloric intake per day.

SUMMARY

REFERENCES

1.PLA = placebo, CHO = carbs,
2.WH = whey protein, CAS = casein protein
3.PL = placebo, PRO = protein

22% greater mixed-muscle protein synthesis in males. ³