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Leeds study investigating the effects of two different diets

# Appeal for new year slimmers to join research

**BY KATIE BALDWIN**  
HEALTH REPORTER

**WOMEN** wanting to lose weight in 2011 are being sought by researchers looking into which of two healthy diets is the best at improving health.

A team at the Human Appetite Research Unit at the University of Leeds are running a study comparing the effects of the 12-week plans on body weight, body composition and appetite control.

Professor Louise Dye, chairman in nutrition and behaviour at the unit and one of the leaders of the Leeds Women's Wellbeing Study, said: "This study is really about taking foods that we know are good for you and looking at whether we can incorporate them into a healthy eating lifestyle over a 12-week period and help people to maintain a healthy weight, or in this case lose a bit of weight."

The study started in May last year and 32 women have completed it so far, but researchers are hoping for around 70 in total so they are looking for many

more women to put themselves forward.

Participants need to be premenopausal women aged between 18 and 48 who are overweight, non-smokers, not pregnant and in general good health and can follow the 12-week plan.

Those accepted will be provided with breakfast cereals, snacks and a recipe book, and will be supported by a dietician.

Dr Clare Lawton, senior research fellow and clinical trials co-ordinator, said the diets were both healthy and did not involve any unusual foods or supplements.

## Feelings

"They include five portions of fruit and vegetables and both diets are based on the British Heart Foundation's healthy eating guidelines," she said.

As well as changing their diet, women are asked to record their feelings to enable the researchers to look at their eating behaviours.

Prof Dye added: "What we know from other studies is that a lot of people don't eat because they are hungry, they have other triggers for their behaviour such as they use foods they find comforting, like chocolate.

"We are looking at that and using that information to try and help make suggestions about how they could change their behaviour."

Women are being recruited for the study until March. For more information, contact Diana or Iria on 0113 343 5753 or email [LWW@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:LWW@leeds.ac.uk).

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**"I shed a stone - and dog slimmed too"**

**ANNEMARIE** Sumerton lost a stone taking part in the study - and her dog even lost weight too. The 47-year-old decided to sign up after her weight crept up over the years. Annemarie, from Chapel Allerton, Leeds, said: "I used to be a size 10 and then I went up to a 14 to 16. I just resigned myself to it. "I'd just assumed as I got older I'd put on weight and it was harder to get rid of it." The mum-of-three joined the study and has just finished the 12-week programme, during which she has lost a stone and gone down to a size 12. "I feel really good about it," she said.

"The first week was a bit hard because I was giving up crisps and chocolate but after that I was fine because I saw the benefits quite quickly. "I didn't feel like I was on a diet at the time and it was easy to follow." And the study hasn't only benefited Annemarie - her dog Pippa, a Lancashire Heeler, has even lost a pound after being taken out on a series of power walks. Annemarie said she planned to continue with the regime even after finishing on the study. "It has changed my life - the way I eat and the way I think about food," she added. "I just feel healthier and I am sleeping better."



**DIET SECRETS:** Dr Clare Lawton and Prof Louise Dye are looking for study volunteers