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*Weight loss and reduced waist circumference are related to an improvement in heart health and factors related to metabolic syndrome. According to recent research, supplementing with calcium and vitamin D during weight loss enhances heart health benefits in women with typically low calcium intakes.*

## **CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D ENHANCE HEART HEALTH BENEFITS OF WEIGHT LOSS**

Recent research has shown that overweight individuals with low calcium and dairy consumption are at increased risk of developing metabolic syndrome. These findings suggest that adequate calcium intake could create a healthier metabolic profile.

Canadian researchers investigated this issue by testing cardiovascular benefits of long-term calcium supplementation in women with low calcium intake. Healthy, overweight or obese women with a daily calcium intake of less than 800 mg/day were randomly assigned to one of two groups: a group consuming two tablets/day of a calcium + vitamin D supplement (600 mg elemental calcium and 200 IU vitamin D/tablet), or a group consuming placebo. Both groups completed a 15-week reduced calorie weight-loss program.

Significant decreases in LDL cholesterol levels, as well as the ratios of total to LDL and LDL to HDL were seen the calcium + vitamin D group. These changes were independent of changes due to fat loss and reduced waist circumference. A tendency for more beneficial changes in HDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and total cholesterol was also observed in the calcium+D group.

This was the first study to show that calcium and vitamin D enhance the beneficial effects of weight loss on cardiovascular risk factors in overweight women with typically low calcium intakes.

*Major GC, et al. Supplementation with calcium + vitamin D enhances the beneficial effect of weight loss on plasma lipid and lipoprotein concentrations. 2007. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition 85(1): 54-9.*