

# ASCO: Trial creates six percent weight loss after breast cancer treatment

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Dr. Tim Byers and colleagues report clinical trial results of intervention creating 6 percent weight loss after breast cancer treatment. Credit: University of Colorado Cancer Center

Carrying extra body fat increases the risk for diabetes, heart disease and stroke, and also increases risk of cancer recurrence after a breast cancer

diagnosis. A multi-institutional study presented at the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting 2015 shows that female breast cancer survivors are able to lose weight through modest lifestyle changes.

"This is a significant finding because it shows that women are able to lose weight after [breast cancer treatment](#) and this may lead to reduced risk of recurrence," says Tim Byers, MD, MPH, associate director for cancer prevention and control at the University of Colorado Cancer Center, and one of the study's authors.

"I think these findings show that we should now move forward with a larger study," says Byers. "If we can prove that intentional [weight loss](#) reduces [breast cancer recurrence](#) I believe weight control will become a routine part of oncology care."

The study, which lasted two years, followed 700 women at four sites around the United States (Denver, San Diego, Saint Louis, and Birmingham).

"The study was a randomized control trial in which half of the participants took part in lifestyle interventions. The goal was to lose seven percent of their body weight and maintain it for two years," says Rebecca Sedjo, PhD, assistant researcher professor at CU Cancer Center, and collaborator in the trial. In the first 12 months the average weight loss for the intervention group was six percent of their body weight.

In order to make lifestyle changes the women in the [intervention group](#) attended motivational meetings that focused on increasing physical activity and decreasing caloric intake. The meetings tapered off from once a week to once a month in the first year. In the second year, newsletters were sent to participants to encourage continued weight

control.

"We don't need to focus on getting to the 'ideal' body type, whatever that may be," says Byers. "If we can prove that modest weight loss improves the chance of better outcomes after [breast cancer](#) we need to encourage and support that."

**More information:**

[abstracts.asco.org/156/AbstView\\_156\\_148454.html](https://abstracts.asco.org/156/AbstView_156_148454.html)

Provided by University of Colorado Denver

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