

## **New research: herbal formulation helps overeaters think with their stomachs**

A new study has shown that a herbal supplement originally formulated to boost satiety also changes the way that people think and feel about food. The findings, to be presented to the European Congress on Obesity, have important implications for the obesity debate, which has been linked to impaired satiety responses and a lack of control over eating.

The supplement, Zotrim, contains three South American herbs - Yerba Mate, Guarana and Damiana – which work together to increase the feeling of fullness when taken with a meal and prolong this feeling between meals<sup>1</sup>.

The new research, by a team of diet, nutrition and psychology experts, followed 72 overweight subjects taking Zotrim with no particular diet or lifestyle advice. Subjects' weight and body shape was monitored regularly for 6 weeks and they completed questionnaires to estimate hunger, fullness, snacking and perceived control over eating behaviour for 10 weeks.

Control over eating was determined through response to a series of statements about satiety/hunger sensations and eating behaviours, such as:

- “I often feel hungry and end up snacking too much between meals”
- “I don't feel full until I have eaten a large portion at meals”
- “I find it difficult to refuse tempting foods”

By week two of Zotrim supplementation, significantly fewer subjects agreed with these statements, suggesting an increase in control of eating habits. Similar responses given at week four, week six and week 10 showed a prolonged change, which also coincided with an increase in reported fullness.

Previous research on subjects taking Zotrim, using ultrasound scans, has demonstrated a slower rate of gastric emptying<sup>2</sup>. Prolonging the period that food is

---

<sup>1</sup> Ruxton, Nutrition and Food Science, 34, 25-28, 2004; Andersen, Journal of Human and Nutrition and Dietetics, 14, 243-250 (2001)

held in the stomach could increase stimulation of the vagus nerve, which carries satiety signals directly to the brain to regulate food intake.

Lead researcher in the latest study, Dr Carrie Ruxton, said: “Our research suggests that Zotrim helps engage the ‘satiety switch’ in people who have trouble recognising when to stop eating. The previously observed slower rate of gastric emptying seems to be accompanied by a psychological change in how subjects taking Zotrim think about food, which combine to change eating behaviour and facilitate weight loss.”

Dr Anthony Leeds, Senior Lecturer and Principal Investigator in the Division of Nutritional Science at King’s College London, said: “The relationship between the stomach and the subjective feeling of satiety that prevents overeating is very important in the management of body weight. The results reported in this study are consistent with the theory that psychological and physiological changes are closely related and are a further helpful contribution to a growing body of knowledge.”

Louise Diss, Managing Director of The Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust (TOAST), says of the research: "It is good for people to have a range of evidence-based options to aid weight management and the results suggest that Zotrim could be useful in helping change eating behaviour. People need help and support in losing weight and, for some, Zotrim could be part of the solution that works for them.”

Heidi Lambeth, who lost 4 stone 7 lbs on Zotrim says, “I have always enjoyed food but I used to have difficulty recognising when to stop and only felt full after having a large meal. Zotrim helped me to feel that satisfied on smaller portions so it helped me develop healthier eating habits for the long term. I lost 3 stone 11lbs while taking Zotrim and a further 11lbs once I got used to eating less food and could lose weight without Zotrim’s help.”

Other key findings, observed after 6 weeks of Zotrim supplementation, were:

- Average weight reduced by more than 5 lbs (2.3 kg)
- Waist circumference fell by more than 1 inch (3.4 cm)
- Hip circumference fell by 1 ½ inches (3.7 cm)
- Between-meal hunger significantly reduced

---

<sup>2</sup> Andersen, Journal of Human and Nutrition and Dietetics, 14, 243-250 (2001)

- Snacking in the afternoon and evening significantly reduced

Zotrim® costs £21.95 for a month's supply (180 tablets) and is available from Boots, Tesco, Superdrug, Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Holland and Barrett and selected health food stores. For more information and online availability please visit [www.zotrim.com](http://www.zotrim.com)

### **ENDS**

For further information, a copy of the ECO poster or the questionnaires completed by the research subjects, samples, photography, further clinical reports and case studies, please contact Jo White or Johnny Steyn at CCD Healthcare PR on 020 7434 4100 / [jo@ccdpr.com](mailto:jo@ccdpr.com) / [Johnny@ccdpr.com](mailto:Johnny@ccdpr.com)

### **Notes to editors**

The control of eating behaviour is very complex. Appetite is influenced by environmental factors (e.g. time of day, smell or sight of appealing food) and physiological factors (e.g. low blood sugar level increases appetite)

Hunger is influenced predominantly by responses in the brain. Appetite suppressing drugs such as Reductil and Acomplia act on these responses in the brain to reduce appetite.

**Satiation** is the control process, which tells the brain when to stop eating in response to food and feeling full.

**Satiety** is the state of fullness in which people are less likely to want to eat.

In contrast to hunger, which is controlled directly by the brain, satiation and satiety are controlled both by stomach fullness (by messages to the brain via the vagus nerve) and by hormones, which are released in the digestive tract in response to food and digestion. These hormones then travel via the bloodstream to the brain where they act to curtail eating.