

The Grapefruit or Hollywood Diet

The "Grapefruit Diet", a variation of the 1930's "Hollywood Diet", recommended consuming at least half a grapefruit before a meal to help burn more calories and fat for fast weightloss (Dow, Going, Chow, Patil, & Thompson, 2012; Zamora Navarro & Pérez-Llamas, 2013). Variations of the "Grapefruit Diet" included consuming grapefruit juice (substitution for grapefruit) before a meal, or just consume grapefruits as a meal substitution, for snacks, or as often as possible. Grapefruit was thought to have magic cleansing and fat burning properties amongst social gossip (Depree & Bauer, 2004; Dow et al., 2012). Preloading with water and/or grapefruit juice was also a popular belief to help lose weight, eat less, and burn more calories (Silver, Dietrich, & Niswender, 2011; Zamora Navarro & Pérez-Llamas, 2013). However, Dow et al. (2012) noted that grapefruit has no thermogenic properties, and that any correlation to weightloss is most likely due to some kind of overall caloric reduction, choice of better macronutrients, or increased activity.

Silver et al. (2011) compared preloading meals with grapefruit, grapefruit juice, and water in a group of 85 obese adults who responded to advertisements. All the volunteers underwent a prescribed diet plan for the first two weeks and lost an average of 0.99 kg (+/- 0.5kg) (Silver et al., 2011). Then for the next 12 weeks, the volunteers were assigned some method of preloading (grapefruit, grapefruit juice, or water) before a meal (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) (Silver et al., 2011). After the 12 weeks of preloading and restricting, all three groups (the grapefruit group, the grapefruit juice group, and the water group) lost some weight and reduced waist circumference (Silver et al., 2011). However, as Silver et al. (2011) noted, there were no significant statistical differences between the three groups as to which preloading method provided a better result. Silver et al. (2011) noted that the concept of preloading may be beneficial for the reason that whatever is used as the "preloader", takes up volume thus helping to create a sense of satiety. However, the trade-off is if the preloader is nutrient-sparse (i.e. opposite of nutrient dense) or is a "filler" like water, the potential exists for the person to get hungry again sooner.

There is better evidence that citrus, especially grapefruits, promote cardiovascular health via flavonoids naringin and hesperidin which have antioxidant, hypolipidemic, and antihypertensive properties (Dow et al., 2012). Dow et al. (2012) studied the effects of grapefruit on the blood pressure and lipid profile of obese men and women. After a baseline diet was established, 42 participants were assigned half a grapefruit before each meal whereas the other 32 participants just maintained a low fruit/vegetable diet (Dow et al., 2012). Dow et al. (2012) noted that grapefruit consumption did not specifically promote weight loss. However, Dow et al., (2012) found that grapefruit consumption reduced systolic blood pressure most likely due to the vitamin C, hesperidin and naringenin of the grapefruit. Although both groups (grapefruit and non-grapefruit groups) improved total cholesterol and low-density lipoprotein profile, the grapefruit group did significantly better (Dow et al., 2012).

I have not personally heard too much (or have experience/interaction with) about people being on different diets as I am not working in the health and fitness field. I do not talk about diets/dieting with my friends. However, I do remember my high school friends and myself reading news stand magazines and trying the grapefruit diet and preloading with water and other

very similar variations, without much effect (not surprisingly). As far as manipulating macronutrients and following a strict ratio of sorts, I never do that and most likely never will. I have no desire to measure and plan everything out and be that "detail-consumed". There was a period that I was "that" detail-consumed and logged everything, but that tends to consume all my waking-hours if I have to do that. I know myself well, and my lifestyle is not that way and never will be. I am very present about knowing when I make "good" or "bad" food choices. I may mentally note how many servings of fruits or vegetables (for example) I've had. I am more of a spontaneous/natural eater. I will not follow a meal plan because it does not work for me. If I am not hungry, I will not eat (even if it is "eating time" with other people). I do not associate "eating" with "being social", and I do not feel that pressure or need to partake.

References

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