



Stay Cold to Lose Weight

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Scientists have discovered that staying in the cold could help us lose weight. Researchers at the University of California found that exposure to the cold increases levels of a protein that helps form brown fat - the type of fat that generates heat and keeps us warm. Brown fat burns energy, which helps us lose weight. White fat stores excess energy, which results in weight gain. The researchers said that because air conditioning and heating give us constant, comfortable temperatures, our body's need for brown fat has decreased. They found that: "Outdoor workers in northern Finland who are exposed to cold temperature have a significant amount of brown fat when compared to same-aged indoor workers."

The research was conducted on two different control groups of mice. One group was injected with the protein that helps create brown fat. This group subsequently gained 30 per cent less weight after both groups were fed high-fat diets. The researchers say this could be good news in the fight against obesity. People who are obese have lower levels of brown fat than thinner people. Head researcher Hei Sook Sul said: "This protein could become an important target for research into the treatment and prevention of obesity and obesity-related diseases." She added: "If you can somehow increase levels of this protein...you could possibly lose more weight even if eating the same amount of food."

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