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**Use of a non-dieting approach to support weight management patients to improve eating behaviours and dietary intake.**

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## Abstract

**Background/Aim:** Overweight and obesity numbers continue to increase locally and internationally. It is well known that the ability to make and maintain dietary changes long-term is difficult for many individuals. In recent years, weight management focus has moved towards understanding the impact of psychological factors on managing weight and supporting related changes. This pilot study explored whether a non-dieting programme is an effective intervention for people within the hospital system classified as overweight and obese.

**Methods:** Participants (n=31) were enrolled in a 28-week intervention study: 1-3 month normal diet run-in; 4-week group intervention programme; 24 weeks of follow-up including 3 individual follow-up sessions over 3 months. Data was collected at baseline, at the end of group sessions and at the individual sessions for anthropometry, behavioural and cognitive approaches to food, dietary intake and changes in eating habits.

**Results:** Positive change was observed in emotional and external trigger eating style scores, decreasing from  $2.67 \pm 1.04$  and  $3.06 \pm .67$  respectively at baseline to  $1.98 \pm .86$  ( $P < 0.002$ ) and  $2.56 \pm .63$  ( $P < 0.001$ ) at 6-month follow-up. Participants' reported mean ( $\pm$ SD) intuitive eating level increased from  $35.9 \pm 22.0$  to  $60.0 \pm 23.5$  from baseline to end of intervention ( $P < 0.000$ ), increasing further at the 6-month follow-up ( $67.50 \pm 26.356$ ) ( $P < 0.001$ ). Participant's median [95%CI] confidence levels increased significantly after completing the group sessions, from 6.0 [5, 7.5] up to 8.0 [7, 9] ( $P < 0.001$ ,  $r = 0.8$ ) and confidence levels remained higher, 7.5 [5,8], at 6-month follow-up. Mean ( $\pm$ SD) weight did not change significantly during the study;  $112.33 \pm 26.67$  kg at baseline and  $112.04 \pm 28.52$  kg at 6-month follow-up.

**Conclusions:** Group-based intuitive eating weight management programmes can support participants to start making changes to improve their food-related behaviour and lifestyle to improve wellbeing and health.

**Keywords:** *Non-dieting, intuitive eating, group education, weight management*

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>BMI</b>	Body Mass Index
<b>CBT</b>	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
<b>CM</b>	Centimetre
<b>DEBQ</b>	Dutch Eating Behaviour Questionnaire
<b>DHB</b>	District Health Board
<b>EI</b>	Energy In
<b>EO</b>	Energy Out
<b>FFQ</b>	Food Frequency Questionnaire
<b>HDEC</b>	Health and Disability Ethnicity Committee
<b>HRQL</b>	Health Related Quality of Life
<b>IES</b>	Intuitive Eating Scale
<b>iPMS</b>	Patient Information System
<b>Kg</b>	Kilogram
<b>M</b>	Metre
<b>MOH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
<b>Q-LES-Q-SF</b>	Quality of life enjoyment and satisfaction Questionnaire – short form
<b>QOL</b>	Quality of Life
<b>REE</b>	Resting Energy Expenditure
<b>SD</b>	Standard deviation
<b>NZ</b>	New Zealand
<b>WG</b>	Wholegrain
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

## Contribution to Research

Table 0.1: *Contributions to this study*

<b>Researchers</b>	<b>Contribution to this thesis</b>
<b>Franica Yovich, NZRD</b>	Main researcher, Eating for your Health facilitator, participant recruitment, screening, and testing, data collection, data analysis, statistical analysis, interpretation and discussion of results.
<b>Associate Professor Rozanne Kruger</b>	Main academic supervisor and guidance with design of thesis, methods, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, and revision.
<b>Dr Beverly Haarhoff</b>	Academic supervisor and guidance with design of thesis, methods, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, and revision.
<b>Nikki Renall, NZRD</b>	Eating for your Health facilitator
<b>Reena Soniassy, NZRD</b>	Assessment and review of participants in clinic and data collection
<b>Erna van der Watt, NZRD</b>	Assessment and review of participants and data collection
<b>Zakiya Bi-Hussein</b>	Data collation and entry