

New evidence that chili pepper ingredient fights fat

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Scientists are reporting new evidence that capsaicin, the stuff that gives chili peppers their kick, may cause weight loss and fight fat buildup by triggering certain beneficial protein changes in the body. Their study, which could lead to new treatments for obesity, appears in ACS' *Journal of Proteome Research*.

Jong Won Yun and colleagues point out that obesity is a major public health threat worldwide, linked to diabetes, [high blood pressure](#), [heart disease](#), and other health problems. Laboratory studies have hinted that capsaicin may help fight obesity by decreasing calorie intake, shrinking fat tissue, and lowering fat levels in the blood. Nobody, however, knows exactly how capsaicin might trigger such beneficial effects.

In an effort to find out, the scientists fed high-fat diets with or without capsaicin to lab rats used to study obesity. The capsaicin-treated rats lost 8 percent of their body weight and showed changes in levels of at least 20 key proteins found in fat. The altered proteins work to break down fats. "These changes provide valuable new molecular insights into the mechanism of the antiobesity effects of capsaicin," the scientists say.

More information: "Proteomic Analysis for Antiobesity Potential of Capsaicin on White Adipose Tissue in Rats Fed with a High Fat Diet", *Journal of Proteome Research*.

Provided by American Chemical Society

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