

New trend of eating fruit only on an empty stomach is poor advice

A trendy weight loss fad that's circulating is the recommendation that you should **only** eat fruit on an empty stomach. The theory behind this weight loss trick is that when other foods are present in the stomach, those foods prevent the fruit from being digested; therefore it stays in your stomach and rots, and can cause everything from gas, bloating, weight gain, graying hair, balding, nervous breakdowns to dark circles under the eyes! Is it really true that this "rotten fruit" can be the cause of so many health challenges?

"The answer is a big **no**... fruit can be eaten anytime," shares Susan Mills-Gray, nutrition/health specialist. "While it is true that fruit is more quickly digested if it's the only food present in the stomach, the same is true for **all** food."

"Nothing can rot in the stomach," Dr. Pochapin, director of the Monahan Center for Gastrointestinal Health at [New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center](#), says. "Rotting, or fermentation, means bacterial action on food resulting in decomposition. And because of the presence of hydrochloric acid, the stomach has very few bacteria. The place where fruit produces gas is in the colon, not the stomach," Dr. Pochapin adds. "The colon is loaded with bacteria and acts as the body's sewage system."

Food takes 6 to 10 hours to reach the colon, which explains why it does not really matter when fruit is eaten. Fruit contains sugar and [vitamins](#), which are absorbed in the small intestine, and complex fibers, which pass through the gastrointestinal tract without much digestion. When the fiber reaches the colon, bacteria feed on the fiber and produce gas as a byproduct, regardless of when and with what the fiber was ingested.

This type of diet recommendation is a good example of how fad diets twist dietary information to set their diet apart from others... and it's generally some truth mixed with untruth. Several of the fad diets that use this technique claim that Dr. Oz promotes this and that is not true. Dr. Oz is not the originator of this technique, nor has ever endorsed the health benefits of using this weight loss tip.

Long-term weight management comes from eating a variety of food in moderate portions with plenty of physical activity. So grab a piece of fruit and enjoy!

For more information on a healthy diet, contact your local MU Extension center or contact Cass County's nutrition/health specialist, Susan Mills-Gray, directly at mills-grays@missouri.edu.

Sources: Today's Dietician, June 2011; Cornell Medical Center; <http://www.quackwatch.com>; <http://www.snopes.com>

Extension, UCM SBTDC, and the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce. For more information or to register, call 660-543-4402 or email WiegelW@missouri.edu. Class size is limited to 24 people, and the registration deadline is March 5.