

Fruit and Vegetable Intake prior to and following a 4-week Intervention (OZDASH study)

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Objective - The OZDASH (OD) diet (a diet combining increased fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, fish and nuts etc) was developed to test the feasibility and effectiveness in lowering blood pressure, in free-living Australian adults.

Design - The OD diet specified a minimum of 8 serves of fruit and vegetables per day (at least 4 serves of vegetables). Ninety-seven participants commenced the study and 94 (38 females, 56 males) completed the 4-week OD diet. A food frequency questionnaire (FFQ) was administered at baseline and after the OD diet. The summary questions on average fruit and vegetable intake in the last 12 months (baseline) and the last 4-week (OD diet) were used in this analysis.

	% participants consuming fruit (serves/day)					% participants consuming vegetables (serves/day)				
	≤ 1	2-3	4-5	6+	P*	≤ 1	2-3	4-5	6+	P*
Baseline	31%	59%	9%	2%	<0.0001	23%	55%	19%	2%	<0.0001
OZDASH	2%	50%	42%	5%		1%	28%	64%	7%	

* Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Outcomes - Initially 31% of participants were consuming one serve/day or less of fruit and 23% consumed one serve/day or less of vegetables. On the OD diet, only 2% of participants consumed one serve/day or less of fruit and only 1% consumed one serve/day or less of vegetables. During the dietary phase, the majority of subjects (59%) achieved an increase in fruit intake and 67% achieved an increased vegetable intake. However, 29% did not meet the target of at least 4 serves of vegetables per day but 98% had at least 2 or more serves of fruit per day.

Conclusion – After four weeks on the OD diet, fruit and vegetable intakes increased, particularly in those consuming less than one serve initially. Therefore, while motivated individuals did increase fruit and vegetable intakes, almost a third were unable to meet the target for vegetables.