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## Garcinia cambogia (hydroxycitric acid) as a potential antiobesity agent: a randomized controlled trial

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### Abstract

**Context:** Hydroxycitric acid, the active ingredient in the herbal compound *Garcinia cambogia*, competitively inhibits the extramitochondrial enzyme adenosine triphosphate-citrate (pro-3S)-lyase. As a citrate cleavage enzyme that may play an essential role in de novo lipogenesis inhibition, *G cambogia* is claimed to lower body weight and reduce fat mass in humans.

**Objective:** To evaluate the efficacy of *G cambogia* for body weight and fat mass loss in overweight human subjects.

**Design:** Twelve-week randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial.

**Setting:** Outpatient weight control research unit.

**Participants:** Overweight men and women subjects (mean body mass index [weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters], approximately 32 kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

**Intervention:** Subjects were randomized to receive either active herbal compound (1500 mg of hydroxycitric acid per day) or placebo, and both groups were prescribed a high-fiber, low-energy diet. The treatment period was 12 weeks. Body weight was evaluated every other week and fat mass was measured at weeks 0 and 12.

**Main outcome measures:** Body weight change and fat mass change.

**Results:** A total of 135 subjects were randomized to either active hydroxycitric acid (n = 66) or placebo (n = 69); 42 (64%) in the active hydroxycitric acid group and 42 (61%) in the placebo group completed 12 weeks of treatment (P = .74). Patients in both groups lost a significant amount of weight during the 12-week treatment period (P < .001); however, between-group weight loss differences were not statistically significant (mean [SD], 3.2 [3.3] kg vs 4.1 [3.9] kg; P = .14). There were no significant differences in estimated percentage of body fat mass loss between treatment groups, and the fraction of subject weight loss as fat was not influenced by treatment group.

**Conclusions:** *Garcinia cambogia* failed to produce significant weight loss and fat mass loss beyond that observed with placebo.

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Badmaev V, Majeed M, Conte AA.

JAMA. 1999 Jul 21;282(3):233-4; author reply 235. doi: 10.1001/jama.282.3.233.

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Schaller JL.

JAMA. 1999 Jul 21;282(3):234; author reply 235.

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