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## A New Probiotic for Weight Loss?

Weight is always a hot topic, so I'm telling you about two weight-loss studies this week. The idea is to give you some idea how the next great thing could hit the market—or it may not—but if it does, you read it here first. The potential solution is a good bacterium called *Akkermansia muciniphila*. This probiotic may be a key to weight loss, or it may not. Let's take a look at the first study. I'll only hit the highlights because these were two of the most complicated research papers I've ever read.

In the first study, researchers exposed mice to cold for 30 days; in addition, they also withheld food for some of that time. The goal was to check changes in gut bacteria and levels of brown fat.

The mice lost weight for awhile, then they adapted. Researchers found that the levels of brown fat increased, which uses more calories than white fat; that can explain some of the weight loss. Why did it stop? The mice grew longer intestines to extract more calories. While you might be shocked with that, just wait.



Researchers found increased levels of *Akkermansia muciniphila* in the feces of the cold-exposed mice. Then they transplanted the feces into mice that weren't exposed to the cold. Guess what? They got the same weight-loss and brown fat increase. The benefits were attributed to the good bug.

Does this mean that we have the solution to weight loss? Not so fast. We'll look at another study on Thursday.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

Reference: DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2015.11.004>.

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