

The Effects of Intrinsic Motivation Induced Coaching on Sustained Fat Loss

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ABSTRACT

In pursuit of sustained fat loss, intrinsic motivation plays a pivotal role. This study explores the impact of 4-weeks of intrinsic motivation coaching (IMC) on fat loss, following up 10 weeks later. **PURPOSE** The purpose of this study was to investigate whether IMC strategies during a fat-loss intervention improves sustained fat loss thereafter. **METHODS:** Participants (IMC: n=7, CON: n=6) had their body composition assessed using multifrequency bioelectrical impedance analysis at weeks 1, 4, and 14. Prior to the study, participants in the IMC group completed a survey of intrinsic motivators. During the fat loss intervention, participants were prescribed a full-body, 3x/week resistance training program with guidance for dietary caloric restriction. The dietary guidance suggested a 20% caloric deficit, with protein recommended at 2.3g/kg of fat-free mass (FFM). Weekly virtual check-ins were carried out with researchers providing coaching and feedback on nutrition and exercise. During weekly check-ins, only the IMC group received follow-ups regarding their intrinsic motivators. Participants tracked their diet via MyFitnessPal and sent results to researchers prior to check-ins. After week 4, the fat loss intervention ended, with no further check-ins occurred until the follow-up 10 weeks later. Differences in body composition between weeks 1, 4, and 14 were compared between the groups to determine whether IMC influenced fat loss by week 4, and at the follow-up. The data were analyzed using a 2-way Repeated Measures ANOVA using JASP software. **RESULTS:** There were no statistically significant differences in sustained fat loss (weeks 1-14) between groups. During the initial 4-weeks, the IMC group showed greater reductions in total body fat (1.36kgs vs 0.87kgs) and body fat percentage (1.7% vs 0.6%), as well as increased FFM (1.3kgs vs + 0.08kgs). At the 10-week follow-up, the CON group had lost 0.2kg of bodyfat, but the IMC group regained 0.53kg of body fat. **CONCLUSION:** This study suggests that while IMC may yield initial positive results, it doesn't aid in sustaining those outcomes without supervision. Limited sample size and heterogeneous pre-study body compositions hamper definitive conclusions. Larger studies of coaching nuances and psychological influences on long-term fat loss success are still needed.