

Could 'poop pills' be
the key to treating
obesity?



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Could a regiment of freeze-dried " poop pills" be the key to weight loss?

That's what scientists at Massachusetts General Hospital will try to find out in a that starts this year, reported. On the surface, the study, in which 20 obese participants will ingest capsules containing fecal matter from lean, healthy donors for six weeks, sounds like an *Onion* article.

But studies have shown significant differences between the microbiomes of obese and lean participants, with the latter having a generally more diverse population of bacteria. And hints that these poop pills, which introduce donors' intestinal microbes to participants' guts, may result in weight loss.

In study that involved sets of human twins where one twin was lean and the other obese, researchers found that when the gut bacteria from the lean twin were transplanted into microbe-free mice, the mice remained slim. But when the mice received a bacteria transplant from the obese twin, .

That said, scientists are just beginning to parse out the complex, potentially significant, relationship between microbiomes and humanhealth.

Elaine Yu, a clinical researcher who is leading the trial, told *Ars Technica* that if the results show the transplanted gut bacteria have an impact, it could lead to targeted treatments for weight loss.

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