

## When You Hit A Weight Loss Plateau, New Medical Research Could Help You Break Through

New research out of Galveston could be good news for your New Years resolution.



By Alexandra Hart | January 15, 2018 10:39 am  
[Health & Science](#)



Ruth Hartnup/Flickr (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Many people who have tried to lose weight will tell you it seems like sometimes there's a plateau – weight loss just sort of stalls out. That's when the goal of losing weight comes to an end. And it's not a small issue: the CDC considers more than 1 in 3 Americans to be obese.

Now, research from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston suggests a breakthrough on the horizon. Their [new study](#), published in *Biochemical Pharmacology*, details a promising new drug that appears to be able to get the fat to shrink.

Dr. Stan Watowich, the lead author of the study and professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at UTMB, says that, in many cases, obesity stems from much more than just lifestyle choices.

"The body, actually – it's a great and glorious thing – but it does seem to want to prevent you from losing weight once you put it on," Watowich says. "And there are some enzymes in your fat tissues that get overexpressed as these fat tissues grow, because the best guess is nature is saying, 'Look, if you've put on weight, you're putting it on for a reason and we want to help you keep this weight on.' And so this may be historical, when we didn't have a lot of food sources readily available."

Watowich's research targets the metabolism of fat cells, which can destabilize during weight loss.

"We essentially are turning off this break so that these fat cells can resume more of a normal metabolic rate," he says.

Still, he says the drug will not be a silver bullet for obesity.

"This, in and of itself, is not going to get you back to a normal healthy weight. We're thinking that this may help jump start your metabolism so that then you're going to lose maybe 5, 10, 15 percent of your fat weight," he says.

In the future, the drug could help with diabetes and regulating blood sugar levels. Clinical trials are expected to begin in two years.

*Written by Jen Rice.*

# NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE, YOU'RE ON TEXAS STANDARD TIME

The Texas Standard is a partnership of

