



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Contact: Jennie Ward-Robinson, Ph.D., 312-355-3219

## **GROUND-BREAKING STUDY ESTABLISHES LINK BETWEEN WATER CONSUMPTION AND CALORIE INTAKE**

CHICAGO, IL, Jul. 24, 2008: A study funded by the Institute for Public Health and Water Research (IPWR) has provided the first scientific evidence that water consumption can influence food and calorie intake in older overweight adults.

The study, conducted by IPWR Fellow Brenda Davy, Ph.D., RD of Virginia Tech, examined the effects of water consumption on meal calorie intake for a population of twenty-four overweight and obese men and women ranging from 55 to 75 years of age. Results indicate that participants consumed approximately 13% fewer calories during breakfast when they drank two cups of water 30 minutes prior to eating the meal.

The study also revealed the sample group habitually consumed only half the recommended total daily fluid intake and less than half of the recently proposed 20 to 50 fluid ounces of water per day recommended by the Beverage Guidance Panel.

"71% of Americans over 60 years old are overweight or obese," said Jennie Ward-Robinson, Ph.D., Executive Director of IPWR. "This unprecedented study sheds light on the lack of water consumption as a contributing factor, and also makes clear the need for adequate quantities of drinking water in a weight management regimen for our seniors."

"It's not expensive – anyone can do this," said Prof. Davy. She noted that Americans do not drink enough water and that fluid consumption often consists of calorie-containing beverages, such as soft drinks and beer. "Sweetened soft drinks are a major source of calories in the U.S. diet," she said.

"The reason what we're doing is so important is that there is a lack of scientific evidence upon which to base water consumption recommendations for weight management and optimal health," said Prof. Davy. "Until now, very little research has been conducted in this arena. IPWR funding has allowed me to establish a scientific rationale as to why water consumption is important in weight management."

According to Dr. Ward-Robinson, "There is an urgent need to understand the role water plays in all aspects of human health. Support is needed for undertaking this type of research so that we can begin to articulate not only the value of drinking water, but we can determine the amount of water required for optimal healthy functioning as linked to health status. IPWR is committed to advancing knowledge about the health benefits of drinking water through scientific discovery and increasing awareness through public health education.

Study participants were given a standardized breakfast meal on two occasions. They were instructed not to drink fluids prior to one meal. A half hour prior to the other meal, participants were given a 500-mL (2 cups) water "preload." In addition to the measured drop in caloric intake during the water preload test meal, participants consumed a lower volume of food.

The study was reported in the July 2008 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*.

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