

# Healthier with personalized diet

**A personalized diet that takes account of someone's metabolism will improve their health. This conclusion follows research by Maastricht UMC+, Wageningen University & Research and Radboud UMC, with financial support from the food industry.**

Nutrition researchers had long suspected that the optimum diet could vary between people depending on their metabolism, explains Lydia Afman, associate professor in the Human Nutrition & Health chair group. 'Now we have scientific proof of this.'

The researchers set up a study that followed 242 overweight participants during a three-month nutritional programme. The subjects were divided into two groups based on how well insulin did its job in the liver and muscles. If insulin does not do its job well enough, the cells in the body are less able to keep the blood sugar levels under control, which can eventually lead to type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. People who are less sensitive to the effect of insulin in their muscles turned out



PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK

to benefit most from food with a lot of protein (for example, dairy products and nuts) and dietary fibre (wholemeal products and vegetables) and little fat. The participants whose insulin did not work so well in their livers benefited more from a diet with a lot of monounsaturated fatty acids, as found in olive oil and nuts. 'We expect people are more likely

to stick to personal dietary advice than general guidelines, and this is a first step towards that,' says Afman. 'Even if someone already keeps to the guidelines for a healthy diet, improvements are still possible.'

The results were published in January in the scientific journal *Cell Metabolism*.

Info: [lydia.afman@wur.nl](mailto:lydia.afman@wur.nl)