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NEW Healthy Eating & Diet

Ladies' Night Out a Diet Wrecker

Study Shows Women Who Eat With Other Women Tend to Consume More Calories

(continued)

Eating to Impress

The new study findings echo previous research done by Sarah-Jeanne Salvy, PhD, assistant professor of pediatrics at the State University of New York at Buffalo, who reviewed the Young study for WebMD and for the journal.

People often manipulate the amount of food they eat "to convey a positive impression," she says. For instance, she says, when you want to relate to someone, whether they are same sex or opposite, "eating like someone else would be ingratiating yourself."

Women who suppress their eating in front of a man may be trying to look more feminine and in control, she agrees.

In her own research, published this month in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Salvy has found that [overweight children](#) who eat in the company of their [overweight](#) friends may eat more than those who eat with someone they don't know.

She studied 23 overweight children and 42 non-overweight children, ages 9 to 15. She found those eating with a friend ate substantially more than those eating with someone they did not know. Overweight children who ate with an overweight partner -- friend or not -- ate more than overweight kids who ate with a non-overweight eating partner.

Eating with another overweight person may decrease the kids' inhibitions, she says, or make them feel they have "permission" to eat more.

Does Young's study carry any practical advice?

"I suggest it's just something to be aware of," she says. "If you eat with a [same sex] friend you've known for a long time, you eat more."

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