

**THE GLOBE AND MAIL** 

# Bore yourself thin: Can repetitive foods help you lose weight?

Adriana Barton

Globe and Mail Blog

Posted on Tuesday, July 19, 2011 8:49PM EDT

---

Pasta for dinner? Again?

Eating the same thing day after day may sound dull – but it’s a winning formula for weight loss, a new study has found.

As Time.com reports, monotonous menus can help you [“bore yourself thin.”](#)

Repetition – not flavour preferences – may discourage overeating, according to the study, to be published in the August issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

In other words, daily helpings of sizzling rib-eye could have the same effect as endless egg-white omelettes.

In the study, University of Buffalo professor Leonard Epstein and colleagues recruited 32 women and divided them into two groups with an equal number of overweight and normal-weight subjects.

For five days in a row, one group performed a 28-minute task and then ate as many 125-calorie helpings of [macaroni and cheese](#) as they wanted.

The second group followed the same program, except they completed the sessions only once a week over five weeks.

By the end of study period, the once-a-day group was eating 30 less calories of [mac and cheese](#) per session, while the other group had increased their intake by 100 calories.

The conclusion? The first group was mac-and-cheesed out. Or, as the researchers put it, repetition had led to “habituation.”

Food-addiction experts suggest the flip-side may also be true.

[In an editorial accompanying the study](#), professors Nicole Avena and Mark Gold at the University of Florida wrote: “School-lunch planners and public-health officials should note that diversity in the menu is not necessarily a virtue, and in fact it may be associated with promoting excess food intake and increased body mass index,” reports MDNews.com.

That would be the “buffet effect.”

In Canada, [more than 1 in 4 adults – 25.4 per cent – are obese](#), defined as having a body mass index over 30, The Globe and Mail reported.

And if the mac-and-cheese boredom study holds any weight, the nation's dizzying array of food choices may be partly to blame.

**Is variety the spice of life? Or are diverse menus a recipe for obesity?**

---

© 2011 The Globe and Mail Inc. All Rights Reserved.