

Is food addicting? Not so fast, Yale researchers caution

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Although some recent scientific reports have equated the over-consumption of food to drug addiction, there are many differences between the neurobiology of the behaviors, Yale School of Medicine researchers report.

In an exhaustive review of literature on food-seeking and addiction published Sept. 25 in the journal [Nature Neuroscience](#), Yale scientists Ralph DiLeone, Jane Taylor, and Marina Picciotto argue for the need to develop an integrated model to study both behaviors and tailor treatments.

Read about the research: www.nature.com/neuro/focus/feedingcontrol/index.html

More information: The drive to eat: comparisons and distinctions between mechanisms of food reward and drug addiction, *Nature Neuroscience* 15, 1330–1335 (2012) [doi:10.1038/nn.3202](https://doi.org/10.1038/nn.3202)

Abstract

The growing rates of obesity have prompted comparisons between the uncontrolled intake of food and drugs; however, an evaluation of the equivalence of food- and drug-related behaviors requires a thorough understanding of the underlying neural circuits driving each behavior. Although it has been attractive to borrow neurobiological concepts from addiction to explore compulsive food seeking, a more integrated model is needed to understand how food and drugs differ in their ability to drive behavior. In this Review, we will examine the commonalities and differences in the systems-level and behavioral responses to food and to drugs of abuse, with the goal of identifying areas of research that would address gaps in our understanding and ultimately identify new treatments for obesity or drug addiction.

Provided by Yale University

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