

Dulled sense of taste may boost weight-loss surgery results

November 5 2014



Study showed those who found food less flavorful after procedure lost 20 percent more weight.

(HealthDay)—Some people can't taste food as well after undergoing weight-loss surgery, but this side effect may help them shed more weight, new research suggests.

The study included 88 severely obese people, average age 49, who underwent taste tests before and three, six and 12 months after [weight-loss surgery](#).

Eighty-seven percent of the patients had taste changes after weight-loss ("bariatric") surgery, including 42 percent who said they ate less because food didn't taste as good. However, the researchers found that those with decreased taste intensity lost 20 percent more weight over three months

than those with increased taste intensity.

The findings were presented Tuesday at the annual meeting of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS), in Boston. Research presented at meetings is considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed medical journal.

"In our clinical experience, many patients report alterations in their perception of taste after [bariatric surgery](#). However, little evidence exists as to how and why these changes affect weight loss after surgery," study author Dr. John Morton, chief of bariatric and minimally invasive surgery at the Stanford University School of Medicine, said in a society news release.

"It appears it's not just the flavor that influences weight loss, it's the intensity of the flavor. Patients with diminished taste intensity lost the most weight. A potential application to these findings may include teaching taste appreciation in hopes of increasing weight loss," Morton explained.

Dr. Jaime Ponce, medical director for Hamilton Medical Center Bariatric Surgery program and ASMBS immediate past-president, noted in the news release that "the study provides excellent new insight on [taste change](#) after bariatric surgery."

But Ponce added, "More research is needed to see how we can adjust for [taste perception](#) to increase weight loss."

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more about [weight-loss surgery](#).

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Citation: Dulled sense of taste may boost weight-loss surgery results (2014, November 5)
retrieved 5 May 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-11-dulled-boost-weight-loss-surgery-results.html>

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