

Cluttered kitchens cause over-snacking

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CLUTTERED KITCHENS MAKE YOU FAT

**DECLUTTER
YOUR
KITCHEN...**



**ESPECIALLY IF
STRESSED**

© VARTANIAN, KERNAN, & WANSINK (ENVIRONMENT & BEHAVIOR, 2016)

Cluttered and chaotic environments can cause stress, which can lead us to grab more of the indulgent snacks -- twice as many cookies according to this new study. Credit: Daniel Miller

Cluttered and chaotic environments can cause stress, which can lead us to grab more of the indulgent snacks— twice as many cookies according

to this new study!

Conducted at the Cornell Food and Brand Lab and published in *Environment and Behavior*, the study shows that cluttered kitchens are caloric kitchens. When stressed out females were asked to wait for another person in a messy kitchen—with newspapers on the table, dishes in the sink, and the phone ringing - they ate twice as many cookies compared to women in the same kitchen when it was organized and quiet. In total they ate 65 more calories more in 10 minutes time.

"Being in a chaotic environment and feeling out of control is bad for diets. It seems to lead people to think, 'Everything else is out of control, so why shouldn't I be?'" says lead author Lenny Vartanian, PhD., now Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of New South Wales in Australia. "I suspect the same would hold with males," he adds.

Half of the 101 females participating in the study waited in a cluttered kitchen with scattered piles of papers and dirty dishes, while the other half waited in an organized kitchen. Both kitchens had bowls of cookies, crackers, and carrots. Prior to entering the room, however, some of the participants were asked to write about a time when their life was out of control and others were asked to write of a time when they were in control. The latter group entered the cluttered room feeling in control and ate about 100 fewer calories than those who felt out of control before entering.

"Although meditation, as a way of feeling in control, might be one way to resist [kitchen](#) snacking for some, it's probably easier just to keep our kitchens picked up and cleaned up," said coauthor Brian Wansink, Director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab and author of *Slim by Design*.

More information: L. R. Vartanian et al. Clutter, Chaos, and

Overconsumption: The Role of Mind-Set in Stressful and Chaotic Food Environments, *Environment and Behavior* (2016). [DOI: 10.1177/0013916516628178](#)

Provided by Cornell Food & Brand Lab

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