

Study: Over-eating related to portion size

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A University of Pennsylvania study suggested Thursday that people will eat any size food portion that is offered to them.

The authors of the study said people assume the portion given to them, no matter what the size, is appropriate due to a "culturally induced" norm, the Chicago Sun-Times reported Thursday.

Researchers offered free Tootsie Rolls, M&Ms and soft pretzels in public places and noted the amounts people consumed. The experiment was repeated, offering different sized portions of the candy and cut up pretzels.

"They ended up consuming considerably more when there was a larger size spoon or (product)," said Andrew Geier, the study's lead author and a doctoral candidate in experimental psychology at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study, published in the Psychological Science journal, suggested that portion control could be the key to controlling overeating in the United States.

"It is our belief that a small percentage change in portion size would change consumption by the same percentage," the study's authors wrote.

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