

## Healthy Eating & Diet

### Eating Slowly May Help Weight Control

#### Study Shows Eating Too Fast Blocks Hormones That Make You Feel Full

By [Bill Hendrick](#)  
WebMD Health News

Reviewed by [Louise Chang, MD](#)

Nov. 4, 2009 -- Eyeball your food a little longer if you're looking to shed some pounds, because wolfing it down too fast may make you prone to overeat, a new study shows.

So savor those aromas, relish the meal's presentation, and don't just dig in like you've got to finish it off in a hurry, researchers report in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

Eating a meal quickly puts the kibosh on the release of hormones in the gut that induce feelings of being full, and this can lead to overeating, says study researcher Alexander Kokkinos, MD, PhD, from Laiko General Hospital in Athens, Greece.

In short, eating too fast blocks the release of gut hormones that help make you feel full, and thus you may overeat.

"Most of us have heard that eating fast can lead to food overconsumption and [obesity](#), and in fact some observational studies have supported this notion," Kokkinos says in a news release. "Our study provides a possible explanation for the relationship between speed eating and overeating by showing that the rate at which someone eats may impact the release of gut hormones that signal the [brain](#) to stop eating."

Previous studies have shown that the release of gut hormones after a meal acts on the brain and induces feelings of fullness and satisfaction, the researchers note. But until now, they say, concentrations of appetite-regulating hormones haven't been studied in the context of different rates of eating.

In the study, 17 healthy men consumed the same test meal, 300 milliliters (about 10 ounces) of ice cream, at different rates during two separate test sessions. The duration of one meal was five minutes and the other was 30 minutes.

The researchers took blood samples and measured levels of different gut hormones before the meal and at 30 minute intervals after eating began until the study session ended 210 minutes later.

The scientists conclude that "eating at a physiologically moderate pace leads to a more pronounced anorexigenic gut peptide [appetite reduction] response than eating very fast."

The notion that eating quickly leads to [weight gain](#) used to be considered "an old wives' tale," the researchers say, but their study suggests there is some truth to it.

"Our findings give some insight into an aspect of modern-day food overconsumption, namely the fact that many people, pressed by demanding working and living conditions, eat faster and in greater amounts than in the past," Kokkinos says in the news release. "The warning we were given as children that 'wolfing down your food will make you fat' may in fact have a physiological explanation."

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