



Hanford Occupational Health Services

Inside Out

Food & Addiction

by Kelly Harnish, MCHES, Health Education Specialist

While there is no clinically recognized definition for food addiction, there is a new field of nutrition science investigating the role that addictive patterns have on our food choices. Leading researchers at Yale University's Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity have designed studies to look for answers. They are not interested in finding out why someone might eat an entire bag of chips or carton of ice cream in one sitting. Instead, they want to find out why people have the habits they do. For instance, why do some people "need" something sweet after a meal or have cravings for salty, fatty foods.

An important neurotransmitter in the brain, dopamine, is responsible for feelings of pleasure and reward. Dopamine regulates our movements and our actions towards things that bring pleasure, such as food, music, alcohol, cigarettes, etc. Researchers are finding that dopamine is actually *lower* in obese and overweight people compared to people of normal weight. Less dopamine results in an increased drive for more food to reach satisfaction. That can lead directly to overeating.

Why would dopamine be lower in people who may be addicted to food? Do people eat because their dopamine response is defective, or is it because they overate too many times and over-stimulated their dopamine system? Studies have shown both to be true. Mouse studies show that animals fed delicious, high calorie foods have changes in the brain that are long-lasting. In this case, the food changed the brain. In

another study, obese women were followed over 6-month period. Those who gained weight showed a lower dopamine response than those who kept their weight stable. Some of the women had a better defense to overeating because of their higher dopamine response. Researchers also looked at dopamine response when people were shown pictures of yummy food, like milkshakes. Obese people had a higher dopamine response to the image of a milkshake than they did when they actually drank it. This increased pleasure from the cue translates into desire and potential for uncontrolled behavior.

So what are we to do? Luckily, we can retrain our brains. Our brain's cortex is responsible for judgment and decision-making, and it can be exercised. Here are some tools:

- Be mindful of your eating. Keep food put away. At meals, sit down at the table. Enjoy it!
- Notice cues that stimulate excessive eating. There are smells, routines, and advertisements.
- Avoid the troublemaker foods. If it's a problem for you, don't buy it.
- Eat more whole food and less processed food.
- Distraction is your friend. Music, walking, cleaning, or hobbies can keep you from thinking of food.
- Manage stress.
- Exercise; it increases dopamine receptors!!!

Check out the **Community Health & Wellness** page on our website! You'll find links to all kinds of great nutrition and fitness activities and services available in the Tri-Cities. It's your health, own it!

Invite us to be a guest at your next work group meeting.

June Featured Presentation: "FOOD AND ADDICTION"

To schedule a presentation, contact us!
Email: ahew@rl.gov Phone: 376-3939



WATCH FOR UPCOMING EVENTS:

June

[Workfit Leader Training \(1st\)](#)
[Site Health Fairs \(14th\)](#)
[Tobacco Cessation Class \(starts 18th\)](#)

July

[Site Health Fairs \(12h\)](#)
[Workfit Leader Training \(13th\)](#)
[Tobacco Cessation Class \(starts 16th\)](#)

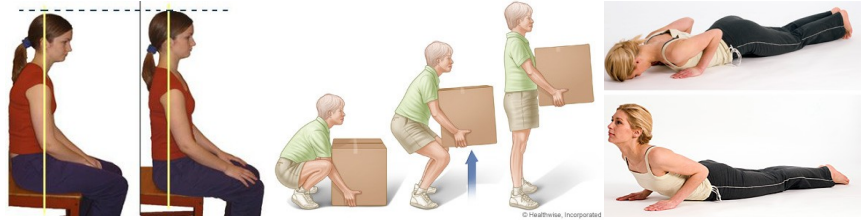
Select a link or visit our website: www.hanford.gov/amh



Back Health & Safety

by Laura Carpino, Exercise Physiologist

Back strains and sprains are very common here at Hanford and especially during the summer months as we embark on another season of yard work, outdoor play and weekend-warrior activities. The best offense is a good defense, so here are a few tips to keep your back feeling great this summer so you can enjoy time with your family and friends!



1. Reduce your risk for back injuries by living a healthy lifestyle: quit smoking, manage stress, eat nutritious food, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. The next [10-week Tobacco Cessation class](#) starts July 9th.
2. Practice good posture throughout the day. Sit with relaxed shoulders, abdominal muscles engaged by pushing the belly button towards the spine, and feet resting on the floor. Use the back rest whenever possible,

but do not slouch. When standing, also relax your shoulders and engage the abdominals without squeezing the buttocks muscles.

3. Stretch and warm up before activity, even work-related activities. Use the WorkFit Daily Stretch module for a whole-body stretching routine. A warm-up can consist of some shoulder rolls, neck half-circles (don't tilt the head back), some gentle torso twists, and shallow squats. If you would like to become a WorkFit leader for your workgroup, attend the WorkFit Leader Training at Hammer – the next session is June 1st from 7:30-9:30 AM at HAMMER. Contact [Health Education](#) at 376-3939 to get more information.

4. Practice good work habits: use safe lifting and carrying practices, take breaks when fatigued, use lifting/carrying equipment whenever possible, and stretch throughout the day.


For more information on back health, attend the Back Health & Safety Workshop at HAMMER on July 19th from 2-4PM. Contact [Laura Carpino](#) for more information. Our Exercise Physiologists also provide individual interventions for injury prevention and work conditioning. Visit our [webpage](#) or contact one of our Exercise Physiologists, [Paul Rudis](#) at 376-2109 or [Laura Carpino](#) at 376-9040, for more information.

The Diabetes Learning Center is holding a class **“Reducing Risk for Type 2 Diabetes”** on July 19th from 5:30-7:30 pm and July 20th from 1:30-3:30 pm. The cost is \$25. Call 942-2620 for more information. You can register and pay online at under the Community and Classes link.

‘Quit It’ 10 Week Tobacco Cessation Program

The next [tobacco cessation](#) class runs from July 9th to September 10th, 2012.

In order to enroll in the class, please call Kelly Harnish at 373-3729 or email



QUIT IT!

Healthy Recipes

Green Goddess Breakfast Drink

Serves: 5—1 cup servings

Ingredients:

- 1 orange, peeled
- 1 cup grapes, frozen
- 1 banana
- 1 pear, cored
- 1 cup soy, almond, or rice milk
- 2 cups fresh kale or spinach
- ice cubes (optional)

Preparation:

Place all ingredients in the blender for 1 minute, or until desired smoothness is achieved. Add ice cubes, if using, and process further to desired temperature.



PER SERVING: 1 CUP

Calories	110
Total Fat	1.1 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	36 mg
Carbohydrate	24.5 g
Dietary fiber	3.8 g
Protein	3.1 g
Sugar	14.9 g
Calcium	99 mg
Iron	1 mg
Vitamin C	33.1 mg
Vitamin E	1.2 mg

Click here for: [Healthy Recipes](#)