

CONTACT: PATRICIA MCDANIEL :: 732-643-4298 ::  
PMCDANIEL@NJPRESSMEDIA.COM :: APP.COM/HEALTH

# healthy living



## CONSTANT CRAVING

GETTY IMAGES/BRAND X

### Nutritionist explains why we overeat – and how to stop

By Susan Bloom

For the Asbury Park Press

We've all experienced it — that overstuffed feeling from eating too much that leads us to groan and loosen our pants or shirts. In fact, with more than one-third of Americans defined as “obese” and the U.S. claiming the highest rate of obesity of all countries, we're feeling it all too much.

Like many habits, overeating is often triggered by emotional factors and can have serious physical and psychological ramifications if not addressed.

We recently spoke with Bradley Beach-based registered dietitian Robyn Flipse to better understand why we overeat and how we can avoid it.

“We eat to refuel our bodies and relieve the unpleasant sensation of hunger, and, under ideal circumstances, we stop eating when we achieve a physical sense of satisfaction,” Flipse explained. “Newborns instinctively respond to that cue, but as we get older, other distractions interfere with our ability to recognize the internal signals that tell us we've had enough — to the point where most people no longer know what the physical sensation of satiety feels like.”

She noted that while overeating is not typically life-threatening — the body will process the food and we'll likely feel hungry again four hours later, “research has connected overeating with an inflammatory response that's been linked to heart disease and certain types of cancer.”

“So while gluttony may not hurt you in the short-term, it represents an assault on the body and can contribute to serious long-term concerns, if practiced on a regular basis.”

#### Cultural cues

Flipse attributes our nation's excessive eating habits to a plethora of drivers.

Among those, “portion sizes have grown,” she said, “and food has become supersized as a way for outlets to compete with each other for the consumer's dollar. In addition, the size of plates and the

depth of bowls have increased over time — the average dinner plate used to be 8 to 9 inches and is now 10 to 12 inches, a 25 percent to 50 percent increase,” she said.

And Flipse said food also is more readily available than ever before — “as close as the nearest gas station or even the checkout counter of department stores — and food outlets are open longer hours than ever. Cars have built-in drink holders and everything today is made to accommodate the process of eating. So there's nothing keeping people from feeding any impulse.”

Following are some of Flipse's tips to help curb the desire to overeat:

**Be mindful:** “When we eat with distractions, we often don't even remember that we ate or else we may feel like we didn't eat that much, so we keep on eating.”

**Portion control:** “Buy single-serving portions or create them for yourself with baggies to give yourself a built-in advantage over the mindless habit of eating a large bag or portion of something,” she said.

**Size matters:** Flipse recommends trading down dish sizes to help reduce portions. “Normal-size portions can look small and dissatisfying in today's oversized dishes,” she said.

**Eat more slowly:** Because it can take up to 20 minutes after eating for the brain to receive fullness signals, Flipse recommends eating more slowly through such tricks as “eating with your nondominant hand, eating with chopsticks, or putting your fork down after each bite.”

**Choose wisely:** Flipse recommends avoiding restaurants that pride themselves on big portions. “And don't eat the bread on the table before your meal,” she added. “You wouldn't do this at home, so why do it in a restaurant?”

**What's eating you?** “We need to practice safe, alternative ways of working through unpleasant feelings, such as talking to friends, exercising, listening to music, etc.”



Nutritionist Robyn Flipse says more food in larger portions is more available than ever before in our society. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBYN FLIPSE

#### CHEW ON THIS

» According to a recent Pew survey, 6 in 10 Americans said they eat more than they should either “sometimes” or “often.”

» While the consumption of food triggers the release of good-feeling dopamine, a 2012 University of Texas at Austin study published in *The Journal of Neuroscience* suggests that “obese individuals have fewer dopamine (D2) receptors in the brain relative to lean individuals and overeat to compensate for this reward deficit.”

» A Yale University study suggests there may be a link between the rising consumption of fructose — a sweetening agent increasingly present in processed food and drinks over the past 30 years, in parallel with the rise in obesity — and the increased incidence of overeating. Unlike the consumption of glucose, which suppresses areas of the brain associated with a desire for food, researchers believe fructose may play a role in stimulating appetite.

» Founded in 1960 and headquartered in New Mexico, Overeaters Anonymous ([www.overeatersanonymous.org](http://www.overeatersanonymous.org)) estimates its membership at 54,000 in more than 75 countries. It uses a 12-step program to help members combat overeating.

#### READ MORE TOMORROW

Learn how local restaurants help combat overeating through smaller portions and lighter ingredients — in Wednesday's Table section.



#### READ MORE

Scan the code to learn how shaping up even in middle age lowers heart failure risk later in life.

#### People's Pharmacy

By Joe Graedon & Teresa Graedon

### More success with mouthwash and acne

**Q.** I thought I'd share my experience using Listerine as an acne treatment after reading about it in your column. I have tried all types of antibiotics and topical prescriptions on the market. Nothing has worked as well as applying Listerine morning and night. Who knew it could be that simple?

**A.** Listerine was first brought out as a surgical antiseptic sold to doctors starting in 1879. By the early 20th century, it was being promoted to consumers as a mouthwash. It also was touted for dandruff and “bad skin.”

The herbal oils and alcohol in Listerine have antimicrobial properties, and many readers have reported success using it for fungal infections such as jock itch, dandruff and nail fungus. Other readers also have found, as you did, that it helps clear blemishes.

**Q.** I am a 16-year-old girl who has had bladder problems since I was 8. I was taken to the hospital for pain in my left hip, and the doctor prescribed two pills (500 mg each) of naproxen to be taken twice daily.

I had pain in my stomach and back, and I couldn't sleep. Then my urinary system shut down completely. I had taken the drug for almost three weeks before another doctor took me off. I was in the hospital for seven weeks and was just released with no improvement.

I know the drug did this to me. Has anyone else had this severe reaction?

**A.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as naproxen can harm the kidneys (Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety, October 2009). A recent study of marathon runners found that those who took ibuprofen before the race to ward off muscle soreness were more likely to develop temporary kidney failure as a result (BMJ Open online April 19, 2013). Your story is a reminder that pain relievers may have serious side effects.

Contact the Graedons at [www.PeoplesPharmacy.com](http://www.PeoplesPharmacy.com).

### A wet spring worsens allergies

By Mary Elizabeth Dallas  
:: HealthDay

Although spring arrived late this year in parts of the United States, the summer allergy season will still be strong, according to a sinus expert at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Dr. Richard Waguespack, clinical professor in the university's division of otolaryngology, said a wet spring often results in a robust summer allergy season. However, some simple strategies can help people manage symptoms such as sneezing, wheezing and coughing, he added.

The best defense against allergies is to avoid triggers by staying indoors, Waguespack said. “When it is reasonable and consistent with your lifestyle, if you have outdoor allergies, you should stay indoors when everything is in bloom,” he said. Waguespack added that checking the pollen counts online before going outside can help allergy sufferers plan their activities.

Waguespack offered these other tips to manage seasonal allergies:

- » Close your windows at night.
- » Take non-sedating, over-the-counter antihistamines such as loratadine (Claritin), cetirizine (Zyrtec) or fexofenadine (Allegra).
- » Schedule a checkup with your doctor.

“Visiting your family doctor or an ear, nose and throat specialist when allergies are not readily treated with (over-the-counter) medications is vital for reduction of symptoms,” Waguespack said.

People who experience recurrent or persistent allergies also should consult their doctor, he added.

#### OFF AND RUNNING

## RTC Training's young runners 'paint the town pink'

If you were driving down Route 71 in West Long Branch on May 2, you may have noticed a sea of pink while passing by Sorrentino Park.

The more than 80 children participating in RTC Training's Cool Runners Fitness Camp were supporting Meridian Health's “Paint the Town Pink” initiative by dressing in pink to raise awareness of the importance of annual mammography.

When “West Pink Branch” became a pink town, RTC Training thought it was important to become a supporting business.

By involving its participants, who ranged from kindergarten through eighth grades, the hope was to gain awareness through the kids' active involvement and weeklong excitement for coming up with the “pinkest outfit” — all to get the moms to think about the importance of getting that yearly mammography.



ROB  
CAVANAUGH

The children supported the cause by painting their faces pink, coloring their hair pink and wearing pink clothing.

“When I showed up to camp and saw the amount of pink being worn by these kids, I knew that their moms received the message,” said Jessica Campanile, RTC Training coach.

“I don't think many of these kids even knew why they were wearing pink, but their message was received loud and clear by all women.”

Paint the Town Pink was started by Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank seven years ago with the goal to encourage women 40 and older to pledge to have their annual mammogram, as well as raise funds to provide mammography to

the uninsured and underserved in the community.

This year, Paint the Town Pink expanded to 23 towns in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

Striving to make the educational process fun, other events that took place throughout the month included “Little Things: An Evening with Giuliana and Bill Rancic” at the Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manasquan, “Girls Night Out” at the Downtown in Red Bank, a “Monmouth Mall Goes Pink” event, a Pink Physician Panel at the Middletown Library, and a “Party for Pink” hosted by The Care to Give Council at the Navesink Country Club.

For more information about kids' running camps and adult training through RTC Training, contact Rob Cavanaugh, director, at 732-406-4454 or at [rob@rtc-training.com](mailto:rob@rtc-training.com). Learn more at [www.rtc-training.com](http://www.rtc-training.com).



Madelyn Kopec, 11, of West Long Branch (bottom) and Francesca Antonucci, 14, stretch during a cool-down period at the RTC Cool Runners Fitness Camp May 2 at Sorrentino Park in West Long Branch.

ROBERT WARD/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER