**2016 Summary of Intuitive Eating and Related Studies**  
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This is the first study to compare intuitive eating, mindful eating, and restraint in college students. Higher restraint was associated with increased BMI and disordered eating. Whereas, intuitive eating was associated with decreased BMI and disordered eating. Mindful eating was not related to outcome variables.


Body acceptance by others was found to help women appreciate their own body and resist adopting an observer’s perspective of their body, which contributes to eating intuitively.


This study found that college women who had unconditional acceptance with an emphasis on body function and body appreciation was predictive of intuitive eating.


Twenty-four cross-sectional studies, published between 2006 and September 2015, met eligibility criteria for systematic review. Intuitive eating was associated with less disordered eating, a more positive body image, greater emotional functioning, and a number of other psychosocial correlates that have been examined less extensively. Participants in the majority of studies were university students in the USA so findings cannot be generalised to wider population of female adults. Prospective studies are now needed to verify these cross-sectional findings, and show if intuitive eating may reduce disordered eating and body image concerns, and promote women's psychological health and well-being.


The study provides support for a worksite intervention program combining intuitive eating and mindfulness for treatment of problematic eating behaviors and body dissatisfaction. Mothers and romantic partners were both found to have a role to play in predicting women's intuitive eating via their influence on women's motivation for regulating eating behaviors.

The main purpose of this research was to examine the role played by both the mother and the romantic partner in predicting women’s intuitive eating. Overall, these results attest to the importance of considering women’s social environment (i.e., mother and romantic partner) for a better understanding of their eating regulation and ability to eat intuitively.


*This study evaluated the effectiveness of an Intuitive Eating program tailored to assist military spouses in rejecting the dieting mentality. The program was able to significantly transition participants away from a dieting mentality towards intuitive-eating lifestyle behaviors.*


Large study evaluated Intuitive Eating as a possible healthier, more effective, and more innate alternative to current strategies of weight management among 2,287 young adults from Project EAT III. Overall, this study found that intuitive eating practices are inversely associated with a number of harmful outcomes, including binge eating and eating disorders behaviors.


Tylka’s Intuitive Eating scale was adopted for adolescents, with a sample size of 515 middle school boys and girls. Four key factors were identified: Unconditional Permission to Eat, Eating for Physical Rather Than Emotional Reasons, Trust in Internal Hunger/Satiety Cues, and Awareness of Internal Hunger/Satiety Cues. Intuitive Eating was associated with health benefits including lower BMI, without internalizing the thin ideal, and positive mood.


Mothers who ate intuitively used less controlling feeding practices with their children; they were more likely to allow their child to carry out their eating responsibility, such as eating based on biological cues of hunger and fullness. Mothers with the overweight children were more likely indicate use of more restrictive and pressure to eat behaviors.
Dieting, exercise, and intuitive eating among early adolescents


Current adult intuitive eating and disordered eating behaviors were self-reported by 170 college students, along with childhood picky eating and pressure through retrospective self- and parent reports. Anlyases revealed that childhood parental pressure to eat, but not picky eating, predicted intuitive eating and disordered eating symptoms in college students. These findings suggest that parental pressure in childhood is associated with problematic eating patterns in young adulthood.


Nearly 100 college-aged students and their parents completed retrospective questionnaires of parental feeding practices regarding the college students’ childhood. The results showed that parental monitoring and restriction of food intake had a significant impact on their college student’s body mass index, emotional eating, and Intuitive Eating Scale scores.


Men scoring high on Hawks’ Intuitive Eating scale, was associated with lower body mass index. Men placed value on being physically fit and healthy, rather than on an ideal weight.


Women who reported high levels of Intuitive Eating had lower body mass index. Individuals who eat intuitively also experience more intrinsic motive to engage in physical activity and do so because they enjoy it.


A sensory-based intervention, taught women how to experience eating based on 1) hunger & fullness cues 2) eating sensations based on the senses (taste, touch, hearing, smell and sight) and 3) pleasurable associations with eating. Women in the intervention group scored higher on the Intuitive Eating Scale. Researchers concluded that this is a promising strategy that, if implemented in clinical practice, can promote healthy eating in a positive way rather than through restrictive strategies that focus mainly on weight and calories. Such intervention seems to effectively reduce overeating episodes and promote the eating of desired foods when hungry.

A sensory-based intervention may help restrained women (those with concerns about dieting and weight) to become more objective, and to enjoyably connect to food and their own bodies, which may promote a more intuitive approach to eating.


This is the first study to demonstrate that relevant role of interoceptive sensitivity and the appraisal of bodily signals for Intuitive Eating. Interoceptive sensitivity was a positive and significant predictor for Intuitive Eating and BMI.


*Preliminary data indicate favorable results between Intuitive Eating and collegiate females.*


Intuitive eating was associated with reduced body mass index, lower serum triglyceride levels, and with reduced risk for overall risk for heart disease.


This study developed a scale to define and operationalize intuitive eating. Intuitive eating is a valid orientation that can help individuals regain a normal relationship with food and achieve a healthy body size, when dieting so far has been ineffective or even harmful.


The intuitive eating scale (IES), a measure of food consumption that is primarily characterized by the satisfaction of physical hunger, was used to evaluate agreement with intuitive eating principles in the US and four Asian countries.


Intuitive Eating was associated with lower body mass index levels in 100 active military troops.

Critical & restrictive caregiver messages were negatively associated with intuitive eating.


The present study explores the model intuitive eating with African American college women. Results show that intuitive eating may extend and generalize to diverse cultures.


The Hawks Intuitive Eating Scale, was validated for a completely different culture, and may be and may be an appropriate tool to assess Intuitive Eating status among Arabs.


Women with high Intuitive Eating Scale (IES) scores had significantly lower BMI, which suggests that people who eat in response to hunger and satiety cues, have unconditional permission to eat, and cope with feelings without food, are less likely to engage in eating behaviors that lead to weight gain. A 10-point improvement in (IES) scores would equate to a decrease of nearly 10 pounds.


Intuitive eating is a novel health improvement strategy that considers the temporality of dieting and negative consequence of weight cycling.


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Dieting to lose weight, with its focus on restriction of caloric intake, may disrupt intuitive eating processes, though other forms of weight loss, such as exercising, which do not emphasize food may not. This study on nearly 1400 middle school boys and girls, found that regardless of sex or exercising, dieting was related to feeling less free to eat what was wanted and to eating more to soothe emotions than to satisfy actual physical hunger. Exercising, independent of dieting, was associated with feeling less permission to eat what was wanted, but also eating to satisfy physical hunger as opposed to coping with emotional distress. Overall, girls were more aware and trusting of their bodily hunger and satiety cues than boys, but when boys were exercising, they scored similarly to girls on this dimension. These findings suggest that different weight loss approaches - dieting vs. exercising - have unique relationships to young adolescents' intuitive eating and these associations tend to be stable across sex. Longitudinal studies now are needed to examine how dieting that begins in childhood or early adolescence might have long-term effects on the progression of intuitive eating.


This brief paper defines and distinguishes between non-diet approaches. Intuitive Eating is described as a well-defined model that is evidence based with a validated assessment test.


Self-compassion has been linked to higher levels of psychological well-being. Results provide preliminary support for a complementary perspective on the role of acceptance in the context of intuitive eating.


A review of 20 intervention studies that encourage individuals to eat Intuitively, shows that participants improve metabolic fitness, increase body satisfaction, improve psychological distress, and abandon unhealthy weight control behaviors.


Expression of thoughts, feelings, or needs seems to be a critical aspect of healthy eating behaviors. The suppression of voice, combined with high levels of emotional awareness, may decrease trust of internal signals of hunger and satiation and disrupt Intuitive Eating. Intuitive eating is maximized when a woman has high levels of emotional awareness and low levels of self-silencing. Conversely, intuitive eating is disrupted.


Validation of intuitive eating scales in a clinical population provides strong foundation for further examination of the role of intuitive eating in prevention and intervention of eating disorders, as well as highlights the rationale for the inclusion of intuitive eating principles in inpatient, residential, and outpatient eating disorder treatment.

Higher Intuitive eating scores were associated with an increase in the enjoyment and pleasure of eating lower BMI, less dieting, and reduced anxiety over food.


An 8-week Intuitive Eating intervention program was used on 31 women meeting the DSM IV criteria for Binge Eating Disorder (BED). Overall, the women experienced significant improvement, with a significant reduction in binge eating.


Seminal study identified the three key components of Intuitive Eater and associated health benefits. Intuitive eaters were found to be more optimistic, had better self-esteem, a lower body mass index (BMI), and were less likely to internalize the culture’s unrealistic thin ideal.


Intuitive Eating and trust in responding to hunger & satiety cues, predicts psychological health above and beyond disordered eating.


Large study on 1405 women and 1195 men, which updates and validates the new Intuitive Eating assessment scale (IE-2), which added Body-Food Choice congruence, to reflect the principle of Gentle Nutrition. Intuitive eating scores were positively related to body appreciation, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life; and were inversely related to eating disorder symptomatology, poor interoceptive awareness, body surveillance, body shame, body mass index, and internalization of media appearance ideals. IES-2 scores also predicted psychological well-being above and beyond eating disorder symptomatology.


Flexible control strategies include monitoring portion sizes, eating smaller amounts and lower calorie versions of comfort foods, staying within a predetermined daily calorie range, and self-monitoring weight. Flexible control have been touted by certain scholars as adaptive approaches to eating that stand in contrast to rigid restriction of food intake. This is the first study to compare Intuitive Eating with flexible control. Results indicate 1) Intuitive Eating was related to well-being, as well as a lower BMI. 2) Intuitive Eating is an adaptive and distinct construct from flexible control. 3) Flexible control was found to overlap with rigid control. The researchers concluded that health professionals or health organizations should not adopt flexible control eating strategies.

To improve positive body image and intuitive eating, efforts should encourage body acceptance by others and emphasize functional, rather appearance motives for exercise.


Mothers who are concerned about their young child's weight are more likely to use restrictive feeding, which has been associated with increased food seeking behaviors, emotional eating, and overeating in young children across multiple studies. Researchers examined whether mothers' intuitive eating behaviors would moderate the association between their concern about their child's weight and their use of restrictive feeding. Their findings indicate that it may be important address maternal intuitive eating within interventions designed to improve self-regulated eating in children, as mothers who attend these interventions tend to be highly concerned about their child's weight and, if also low in intuitive eating, may be at risk for using restrictive feeding behaviors that interfere with children's self-regulated eating.


A review of 26 studies on Intuitive Eating research shows that intuitive eating has a positive link to health and well-being.


A weight diverse sample of 333 college women completed an online survey assessing internalized weight stigma, intuitive eating, body shame, body image flexibility, and self-compassion. Internalized weight bias is a potential driving force behind myriad negative health and quality of life complications for individuals traversing the weight continuum. Subscribing to internalized weight stigma was marked by declines in a healthy intuitive approach to eating for young women traversing the weight spectrum. Mindfulness, acceptance and compassion may be a helpful way to transform self-critical weight bias.


Intuitive Eating was associated with lower adiposity and less insulin resistance, especially for girls who valued general health more highly, than physical appearance.


Consistent with adult findings showing cross sectional relationships between intuitive eating practices and health markers [66,67], our findings suggest that intuitive eating can be safely used in obese adolescents without fear of sustained consumption of unhealthy foods. In other words, no sustained increases in calories, sugars or fats were seen despite the curriculum suggesting all foods are allowable, dieting is counterproductive, and portion size should be addressed using awareness of internal satiety and hunger signals rather than external rules.
Dieting, exercise, and intuitive eating among early adolescents


In adolescents with type 1 diabetes mellitus, there appears to be a strong association between intuitive eating, in particular the effect of emotion on eating, and glycaemic control. Higher values of both total Intuitive Eating Scale and the Eating for physical rather than emotional reasons subscale were associated with lower HbA1c.


This is the first study to evaluate the effectiveness of an intuitive eating program designed to increase normative eating behaviors and reduce eating disorder risk factors. The intuitive eating model can be a promising approach for disordered eating prevention on college campuses.
SELECTED STUDIES ON THE EFFECTS OF DIETING

General


Tsai, AG et al. (2005). Systematic review of commercial weight loss programs. Annals Internal Medicine, 42:56.

Weight Gain, Increases Risk of Binge Eating & Eating Disorders


SELECTED STUDIES ON THE EFFECTS OF Biggest Loser


Food Restriction/Dieting Increases Rewarding Value Of Food/” Food Addiction”


Binge Eating Disorder and Forbidden Foods


INTUITIVE EATING RESOURCES

Intuitive Eating Official Website
www.IntuitiveEating.org
Get the latest news from blog and calendar of events. You will also find articles, research, interviews and general information about Intuitive Eating.

Intuitive Eating Professionals on LinkedIn
http://linkd.in/mMrn2M
This is an international group of over 2,500 allied health professionals, where we share news, views, and resources. It’s free to join

COUNSELING AND SUPPORT

Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor Directory
www.IntuitiveEatingCounselorDirectory.org
This is a listing of allied health professionals who are trained and certified in the Intuitive Eating process.

Intuitive Eating Online Community
www.IntuitiveEatingCommunity.org
Get inspired, share your story, and partake of the many tools to empower your Intuitive Eating journey. There are over 9,000 members—it’s free.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

www.IntuitiveEatingTraining.com
Individual and group training available for allied health professionals:
• Intuitive Eating Pro Skills Teleseminar Training
• Group or Individual Supervision
• Become a Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor