

Slimming Reminders: How diet-related food reduces dieters' food intake.

Dieting is difficult

- Only 1 in 20 dieters lose weight and maintain weight loss.
- The sight, smell and taste of delicious food can tempt dieters to break their diet plans.



Diet reminders might help

- Objects associated with dieting, e.g. weighing scales, can instantly remind dieters to limit their food intake.
- As food is central to a diet plan, some foods might be strongly associated with dieting.
- Exposure to diet-related food might remind dieters to limit their food intake in tempting situations.

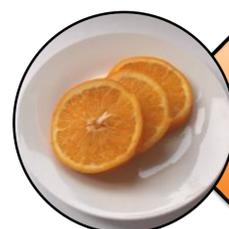
Aims

- Identify which foods are most diet-related.
- Test the effect of exposure to the sight, smell and taste of diet-related food on dieters' food intake.

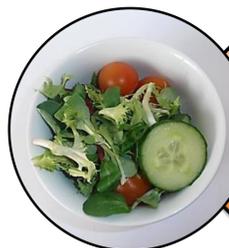
Identifying diet-related foods

Online surveys

Asked 387 women to rate whether different snack foods and appetisers were associated with dieting.



77% of dieters agreed oranges were a snack associated with dieting.



Salad was rated as an appetiser most associated with dieting.

Laboratory studies – measuring food intake



Study 1: images.

- Exposed 26 dieting women and 41 non-dieting women to images of diet-related foods and then offered tempting snack foods.



Study 2: sight and smell.

- Exposed 16 dieting women and 24 non-dieting women to the sight and smell of a diet-related food and subsequently measured snack intake.



Study 3: taste.

- Across 3 sessions, 13 dieting women and 13 non-dieting women consumed either a diet-related appetiser, a tempting appetiser or water. After each appetiser, meal intake was measured.

Findings

Diet-related images



Dieters ate **29% less snacks** after exposure to diet-related images.

Sight and smell of diet-related food



Dieters ate **40% less chocolate** after exposure to the sight and smell of a diet-related food.

Taste of diet-related food



Dieters ate **21% less of a meal** after a diet-related appetiser.

Impact

- Diet-related food cues reduced dieters' snack and meal intake.
- Increasing diet-related cues in places where dieters are most likely to overeat, such as the fridge or desk at work, might improve adherence to diet plans.
- Future studies might test the effect of adding diet-related food cues to weight-loss regimens.