Addiction to Highly Processed Food Among Older Adults



January/February 2023

www.healthyagingpoll.org



Q1. People sometimes have difficulty controlling how much they eat of certain foods such as:

- Sweets like ice cream, chocolate, doughnuts, cookies, cake, and candy
- Starches like white bread, rolls, pasta, and rice
- Salty snacks like chips, pretzels, and crackers
- Fatty foods like steak, bacon, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, pizza, and french fries
- Sugary drinks like soda pop, lemonade, sports drinks, and energy drinks

When the following questions ask about "certain foods" please think of *any* foods or beverages similar to those listed in the food or beverage groups above or *any other* foods you have had difficulty within the past year.

In the past 12 months...

	Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	2–3 times a month	Once a week	2–3 times a week	4–6 times a week	Every day
I had such strong urges to eat certain foods that I couldn't think of anything else.								
I tried and failed to cut down on or stop eating certain foods.								
If I had emotional problems because I hadn't eaten certain foods, I would eat those foods to feel better.								
Eating the same amount of food did not give me as much enjoyment as it used to.								



Q2. In the past 12 months...

	Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	2–3 times a month	Once a week	2–3 times a week	4–6 times a week	Every day
My eating behavior caused me a lot of distress.								
I had significant problems in my life because of food and eating. These may have been problems with my daily routine, work, school, friends, family, or health.								
My overeating got in the way of me taking care of my family or doing household chores.								
I kept eating in the same way even though my eating caused emotional problems.								

Q3. In the past 12 months...

	Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	2–3 times a month	Once a week	2–3 times a week	4–6 times a week	Every day
My friends or family were worried about how much I overate.								
I spent a lot of time feeling sluggish or tired from overeating.								
I avoided work, school or social activities because I was afraid I would overeat there.								
I was so distracted by eating that I could have been hurt (e.g., when driving a car, crossing the street, operating machinery).								
I ate to the point where I felt physically ill.								

Note: Survey from Modified Yale Food Addiction Scale Version 2.0: Schulte, E. M., & Gearhardt, A. N. (2017). Development of the modified Yale Food Addiction Scale Version 2.0. European Eating Disorders Review, 25(4), 302–308.

Data Source and Methods

This National Poll on Healthy Aging report presents findings from a nationally representative household survey conducted exclusively by NORC at the University of Chicago for the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation. National Poll on Healthy Aging surveys are conducted using NORC's AmeriSpeak probability-based panel. This survey module was administered online and via phone between July 2022 to a randomly selected, stratified group of U.S. adults age 50–80 (n=2,163). The sample was subsequently weighted to reflect population figures from the U.S. Census Bureau. The completion rate was 75% among panel members contacted to participate. The margin of error is ±1 to 3 percentage points for questions asked of the full sample and higher among subgroups.

Findings from the National Poll on Healthy Aging do not represent the opinions of the University of Michigan. The University of Michigan reserves all rights over this material.

National Poll on Healthy Aging Team

Jeffrey Kullgren, MD, MS, MPH, Director
Erica Solway, PhD, MPH, MSW, Deputy Director
Scott Roberts, PhD, Associate Director
Ashley Gearhardt, PhD, MPhil, MS, Faculty Collaborator
Dianne Singer, MPH, Poll Manager
Matthias Kirch, MS, Data Lead
Preeti Malani, MD, MSJ, MS, Senior Advisor
Emily Smith, MA, Multimedia Designer
Lauren Hutchens, MPH, Contributing Editor

The Regents of the University of Michigan

Jordan B. Acker (Huntington Woods), Michael J. Behm (Grand Blanc), Mark J. Bernstein (Ann Arbor), Paul W. Brown (Ann Arbor), Sarah Hubbard (Okemos), Denise Ilitch (Bingham Farms), Ron Weiser (Ann Arbor), Katherine E. White (Ann Arbor), Santa J. Ono (ex officio)

The University of Michigan is a Non-discriminatory, Affirmative Action Employer.

© 2023, The Regents of the University of Michigan