Wellness News Network™
Your Source for Health & Wellness Information
Issue 1, April 2015

Why Watching Less TV Can Extend Your Life

Presented by: Total Health Systems **TotalHealthSystems.com**

You have often heard that watching TV is bad for you but did you know it may shorten your life?

According to a series of studies done within the last eight years, watching television boosts your risk of developing a number of serious health problems –from depression to type 2 diabetes and yes, TV appears to abbreviate life span.

In this issue of the Wellness News Network, we investigate the research about how television impacts your health.

Watching TV Means Not Watching What You Eat

A steady diet of TV influences what you eat and how much. Studies indicate watching television boosts your consumption levels of empty calories – foods high in energy but low in nutrition.

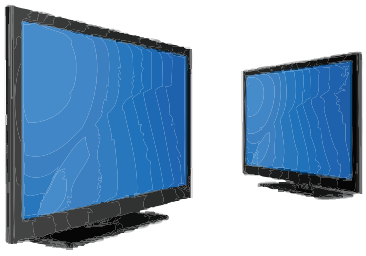
The American Journal of Preventive Medicine published a review of 53 studies on this topic. It found watching TV is linked with increased eating of fast food and decreased intake of fruits and vegetables among children, teens and adults.[1]

One of the review authors commented that many people consume a substantial amount of their daily caloric intake while viewing TV programming.

The distracting nature of watching television also makes people less aware of the type of food they are actually consuming. A Canadian study from the University of Alberta on college students found those who watched TV for a minimum of four hours a day ate more energy dense snacks compared to students who watched one hour or less of TV daily. The study authors also noted: "The exposure to the advertising seems to stimulate a desire to eat that particular food product." [2]

This effect of TV food advertising should not be underestimated, as several studies on children show what an influence television has on their food choices.

The University of Liverpool conducted what they called "the first study to demonstrate that children with greater previous exposure to



QUESTION:
What are empty calories?

A) Food high in energy, low in nutrients
B) Another phrase for 0 calories
C) Calories from non-sugar sweeteners

ANSWER:
A) Food high in energy, low in nutrients

TRUE OR FALSE:
Watching 3+ hours of TV daily may make you depressed

ANSWER:
True

QUESTION:
Watching too much TV increases your risk of …?

A) Heart disease
B) Type 2 diabetes
C) Premature death
D) All of the above

ANSWER:
D) All of the above

Presented by: 43740 Garfield Road, Clinton Township (586) 228-0270
28098 23 Mile Road, Chesterfield (586) 949-0123
57911 Van Dyke Road, Washington (586) 781-0800

commercials (high television viewers) seemed to be more responsive to food promotion messages than children with lower previous advertising exposure."[3]

Overall, exposure to TV food ads revealed a food consumption increase of 134% for obese children, 101% for overweight children and 84% for normal weight kids. [3] The children were also prone to choose high fat and high sugar foods.

A study that appeared in the European Journal of Public Health noted if unhealthy food advertising was reduced "that from one in seven up to one in three obese children in the USA might not have been obese in the absence of advertising for unhealthy food on TV."[4]

As well as reducing overall TV viewing, you should turn off the television during meals. A study on adolescents who watched TV while eating during family meals showed they had poorer dietary quality compared to kids who didn't watch TV during these times.[5]

TV Linked to Depression

TV seems like an ideal diversion from our problems and should make us happier but research supports the contrary. A study in the Journal of Economic Psychology revealed chronic TV viewing is linked to less happy feelings. The researcher authors also noted that heavy TV viewers suffer from higher levels of anxiety.[6]

Women who watch 3+ hours of TV daily were 13% more likely to suffer depression [7]

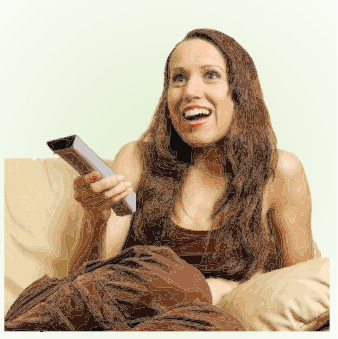
How much television you watch as a teenager may also influence the chances of developing depression as an adult.

The University of Pittsburgh and the Harvard Medical School investigated adolescent TV habits and uncovered that for every hour he or she watched television, the teenager's risk of depression in adulthood increased 8%.[8]

Diabetes, Heart Disease & Death

Two of the most prevalent health problems in our society are heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Your risk of developing these conditions increases from 15% to 20% if you watch two or more hours of TV each day, according to a large review of TV and health research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.[9] The same review also revealed that your overall risk of premature death jumped by 13% if watching over 2 hours of daily TV.

Engaging in sedentary activities like watching television equals less time spent on calorie burning activities like exercise. Don't let a passive lifestyle turn you into a dangerous statistic. Talk to your chiropractor about setting up an exercise plan for you and your whole family.



Quote to Inspire

"I find television to be very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go in the other room and read a book."

Groucho Marx

References and sources:

1. Sedentary Behavior and Dietary Intake in Children, Adolescents, and Adults - *American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2011; 41 (2): 178 DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2011.05.002.*

2. The Association of Television Viewing With Snacking Behavior and Body Weight of Young Adults - *American Journal of Health Promotion: May/June 2008, Vol. 22, No. 5, pp. 329-335.*

3. Food Commercials Increase Preference for Energy-Dense Foods, Particularly in Children Who Watch More Television - Pediatrics, 2011; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2010-185.

4. By How Much Would Limiting TV Food Advertising Reduce Childhood Obesity? - Eur J Public Health (2009) 19 (4): 365-369. doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckp039 First published online: March 26, 2009.

5. Associations between Watching TV during Family Meals and Dietary Intake Among Adolescent - Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, Volume 39, Issue 5, September–October 2007, Pages 257–263.

6. Does Watching TV Make Us Happy? - Journal of Economic Psychology, Volume 28, Issue 3, June 2007, Pages 283–313.

7. Relation Between Clinical Depression Risk and Physical Activity and Time Spent Watching Television in Older Women: A 10-Year Prospective Follow-up Study - Am. J. Epidemiol. (2011) 174 (9): 1017-1027. doi: 10.1093/aje/kwr218 First published online: October 7, 2011.

8. Association Between Media Use in Adolescence and Depression in Young Adulthood - Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2009;66(2):181-188.

9. Television Viewing and Risk of Type 2 Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, and All-Cause Mortality – JAMA, 2011;305(23):2448-2455. doi: 10.1001/jama.2011.812.

Disclaimer: Information contained in the Wellness News Network Newsletter is for educational and general purposes only and is designed to assist you in making informed decisions about your health. Any information contained herein is not intended to substitute advice from your physician or other healthcare professional.

Copyright © - Wellness News Network™ - www.ChiroHDTV.com