

Study: Environment affects how much you eat

By Amanda L. Chan, Huffington Post

If you're trying to resist the mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese and bacon at the buffet, you might want to try filling your plate with fruits and vegetables first, a study suggests.

Researchers at Cornell University found that when people ate healthy foods first at a buffet, they consumed fewer high-calorie foods later on in the meal.

"The first three food items a person encountered in the buffet comprised 66 percent of their total plate, regardless of whether the items were high or low-calorie foods," study researcher Brian Wansink, a behavioral economist and professor at the University, said in a statement.

The study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, included 124 people who were eating at one of two breakfast buffets. In the first buffet, healthy foods like low-fat yogurt, low-fat granola and fruit were presented first. In the second, unhealthier foods such as cheesy eggs, bacon and fried potatoes were presented first. All the diners were told they could only make one trip to the buffet.

Researchers found that nearly all the participants offered the fruit first – 86 percent – took it. But when the fruit was offered last, only about half – 54 percent – took it.

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