

Weight loss may depend if you are having fun exercising

By Melissa Healy, Los Angeles Times

A study delves into one of the great mysteries of diet, exercise and weight loss: why, when you've started a grueling exercise regimen in a bid to shape up, it's common to gain, not lose weight.

Sure, there's the old reassurance that muscles weigh more than fat. But when the weight gain comes before any evidence that we've changed our body composition significantly, I think we all know we're kidding ourselves.

"Framing" – or the way we think about – the experience of exercise matters, a trio of researchers at Cornell University's food psychology lab found. More specifically, they found, it influences not only what we choose to eat after the experience, but how much of it.

When we think of the physical activity we engage in as fun, or at least incidental to fun, we make better food choices. When we frame physical activity as exercise, we're more likely to choose rewarding foods and to eat more of them, the study found.

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