

[IMAGE]

Here's the Dish on Candy

"Out of sight, out of mind." It's an old phrase that can apply to a lot of situations. A recent study shows that this phrase can easily be applied to the number of candies a person eats at work, with people being more likely to consume more candy per day when it's in plain sight and within easy reach.

In the study, 40 adult workers (all female) volunteered to take part in a four-week study of chocolate consumption from an office candy dish. In one phase of the study, 30 Hershey's chocolate kisses were placed either on the volunteer's desk, or 6.5 feet away (but clearly visible). In the second phase, the candies were placed in covered bowls that were either clear or opaque, again on the volunteer's desk or 6.5 feet away.

People ate an average of 2.2 more candies each day when they were visible compared to being hidden, and 1.8 candies more per day when they were on the person's desk compared to 6.5 feet away. While this may not seem like much, consider that one Hershey's kiss contains approximately 25 calories. Over a five-day work week, this could add up to 275 extra calories to a person's diet, not to mention the extra sugar and fat due to candy consumption.

While the results of this study don't mean the end of the workplace candy dish, they do mean that the closer and more visible food is, the more likely a person is to eat a lot of it. If you're going to eat snacks at work, why not snack on healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, or items that have fewer calories and are low in fat and sugar? For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition/foods.

Reference:

Wansink B, Painter JE, Lee Y-K. The office candy dish: proximity's influence on estimated and actual consumption. *International Journal of Obesity*, advance online publication (doi: 10.1038/sj.ijo.0803217), published Jan. 17, 2006.

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