

[IMAGE]

Obesity Can Kill Your Taste Buds

By Editorial Staff

Obesity can be a killer, but even if you live with it, your life probably won't be as rewarding as it would be if you achieved a healthy weight. Here's one reason you might not realize: Extra weight can blunt your taste buds.

Cornell University researchers have discovered that even small levels of inflammation caused by obesity can reduce the number of taste buds on the tongue, at least in mice. (Research findings involving mice are often able to be replicated in humans.) According to the researchers, obesity reduced the number of taste buds by 25 percent, which they attribute to inflammation-driven disruptions in the natural process of taste bud recycling / renewal. Less taste buds = less ability to enjoy the taste of food, specifically the five primary tastes: salt, sweet, bitter, sour, and savory.

taste buds - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Since food, particularly the type and amount, is often what leads to weight gain, and the "comfort" associated with eating can be emotionally triggered in people with chronic weight issues, it's interesting that this research, published in *PLOS Biology*, suggests obesity may impact the sensory experience (how food tastes). If you're not even enjoying what you're eating (and you're eating too much / too much unhealthy food in the first place), it might be time to make a change.

Struggling with your weight? Talk to your doctor for a complete health assessment and advice on how to lose those unwanted pounds for good.

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