Trait and behavioural motor control is associated with resistance to overconsumption

Fay, Stephanie H.; White, Melanie J.; Finlayson, Graham S.; King, Neil A.

Queensland University of Technology, Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences(1, 4), School of Psychology and Counselling(2), Brisbane, Australia; University of Leeds, Institute of Psychological Sciences(3), Leeds, UK

While overall obesity rates are rising, a minority of individuals appear to resist overconsumption and remain lean in spite of an ‘obesogenic’ environment. Studying the factors hypothesised to underpin behaviours associated with resistance to overconsumption may inform weight management strategies in an adverse environment. Trait (BIS-11) and behavioural (response inhibition, GoStop) self control were assessed in the laboratory. Snack food consumption was measured covertly via a sham taste test. Lack of motor control was positively correlated ($r = .32, p < .05$) and successful response inhibition was negatively correlated ($r = -.35, p < .05$) with snack food intake. Low motor control was also associated with further food intake when satiated ($r = .39, p < .01$). These relationships were independent of self-reported palatability and perceived reward value of the food. Motor control may be an important factor implicated in ‘mindless’ eating in an environment abundant in palatable, energy-dense snack foods.