

34. SWACSM Abstract

Effect of Sustained COVID-19 Guidelines on Eating Behaviors and Weight Gain

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSE: Prior research examining the impact of *short-term* self-quarantine indicates altered eating behaviors and weight change. Roughly ten months after the first lockdown was announced, the COVID-19 pandemic continues without abatement. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of *long-term* COVID-19 guidelines on eating behaviors and weight change. **METHODS:** A research announcement was sent out via Facebook to 1200 possible participants. The Weight and Lifestyle Inventory (WALI) was used to assess possible changes in factors that contribute to eating. Participants were also asked to report weight before the pandemic and at the time of the study. Weight categories were created, and ordinal regression modeling was used to assess the impact of weight gain risk factors. **RESULTS:** One hundred and fifty-seven participants (40 male, 117 female) completed the surveys. Participants were 30.3 ± 13.5 years old with a BMI of $27.7 \pm 7.4\text{kg/m}^2$. The average weight change was -1.9 ± 10.2 lbs. Thirty-three percent reported weight loss, while 27% reported weight gain. Besides, "eating at breakfast" and "eating when tired," all eating behaviors were statistically related to weight gain ($p < .05$). When all eating related factors were placed into a regression model, the only two still significant were 'snacking after dinner' (OR: 1.153, B: .142, $p = .041$, 95 CI: 1.006 – 1.321) and 'eating too much food' (OR: 1.333, B: .288, $p = .004$, 95 CI: 1.095 – 1.623). **CONCLUSION:** The current study reported a mean weight loss of 1.9 pounds. However, the standard deviation was 10 pounds. Meaning, individual heterogeneity of the COVID bodyweight response is evident and appears to be partially explained by snacking after dinner and overeating.

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