Study: Action-Packed TV Might Make You Snack More

LINDSEY TANNER, AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Could action-packed TV fare make you fat? That's the implication of a new study that found people snacked more watching fast-paced television than viewing a more leisurely paced talk show.

THE SKINNY: Cornell University researchers randomly assigned almost 100 undergraduates to watch one of three 20-minute sessions featuring: "The Island," a 2005 sci-fi thriller starring Scarlett Johansson and Ewan McGregor; that same movie but without the sound; or the "Charlie Rose" show, a public television interview program. The students were all provided generous amounts of cookies, M&M candies, carrots and grapes.

During "The Island," students ate on average about 7 ounces (207 grams) of various snack foods, and 354 calories. That was almost 140 calories more and nearly double the ounces they ate watching interviewer Charlie Rose. Watching the movie without sound, they also ate more — almost 100 calories more — compared with Charlie Rose.

THE THEORY: The faster paced TV seemed to distract viewers more, contributing to mindlessness eating, said Cornell researcher Aner Tal, the study's lead author. The results suggest that a steady diet of action TV could raise risks for packing on pounds.

LIMITATIONS: The study was small and didn't last long enough to measure any long-term effects on the students' weight. It's also possible some viewers would find talk shows or other slower-paced TV more distracting and would be more apt to snack more during those shows than when watching action-packed programs.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Tal suggests viewers take steps to prevent mindless snacking, by avoiding or limiting high-calorie snacks when watching TV.

Source URL (retrieved on *03/26/2015 - 10:39pm*):
http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2014/09/study-action-packed-tv-might-make-you-snack-more