Research Brief
Eating Patterns and Risk of Heart Disease (Cardiovascular Disease) Among Latino Adults in Massachusetts

Overview
Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in the United States, and Latinos are at high risk of developing CVD. They have higher rates of some metabolic risk factors, such as obesity and diabetes. Dysfunctional eating patterns may influence these risk factors. This is the first study to look at dysfunctional eating patterns among Latinos, and the relationship with risk factors for CVD. The specific eating patterns examined were Emotional Eating (EE), or eating in response to emotions, not hunger cues; Uncontrolled Eating (UE), or eating when not hungry, or losing control of eating; and Cognitive Restraint (CR), or restricting food to lose or control weight.

Main Questions
- How is Emotional Eating (EE) related to obesity and metabolic risk factors?
- How is Uncontrolled Eating (UE) related to obesity and metabolic risk factors?
- How is Cognitive Restraint (CR) related to obesity and metabolic risk factors?

Study
This paper presents results of a cross-sectional analysis of the Lawrence Health and Well Being Study of 602 Latino adults in the city of Lawrence, Massachusetts. Using a Community Based Participatory Approach, the study was conducted by the City of Lawrence Mayor’s Health Task Force, the Lawrence Senior Center, the YWCA of Greater Lawrence, the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center and the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Study participants were selected to answer survey questions, including demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, employment, education, perceived income, stress), and health records. The Three Factor Eating Questionnaire was used to assess dysfunctional eating patterns. Participant weight, height, waist circumference, and blood pressure were also measured.

The Bottom Line
Among Latinos, dysfunctional eating patterns were associated with increasing the odds of having metabolic risk factors for heart disease, such as obesity, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes.

Source

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Spotlight on Results
- Emotional Eating is associated with obesity, type 2 diabetes and hypertension
- Uncontrolled Eating is associated with obesity and central obesity (abdominal fat).
- Cognitive Restraint eating is associated with obesity, central obesity, type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol.

Call for Action
By learning more about how eating patterns are associated with risk factors for cardiovascular disease among Latinos, we can develop and test interventions that could help people change these eating habits.

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