

How your personality impacts your weight

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When you gain weight, you probably blame it on the workouts you skipped or the junk food you've been eating. But there's another surprising factor that might be screwing with the number on the scale. Certain personality traits are associated with obesity, according to new research recently presented at the APA Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The Tricky Traits

Across four studies and more than 8,900 people, researchers found that people high in neuroticism (those who are prone to negative emotions like anxiety, sadness, or loneliness) and people low in conscientiousness (those who are disorganized, undisciplined, and easily distracted) are more likely to have a higher BMI. Having either one of these traits appears to increase your risk of obesity, but fortunately, having both of them doesn't amplify the effect, study author Angelina Sutin, assistant professor at Florida State University, said.

What It Means for Your Waistline

Of course, this doesn't mean that every person with either of these traits will automatically be obese, Sutin said. Instead, it means these personality traits can lead to behaviors that tend to cause weight gain. For instance, someone high in neuroticism might get stressed out more easily, which could lead to emotional eating and stress-fueled cravings. And someone low in

conscientiousness might be a little disorganized and flaky, which can make it harder to plan out healthy meals or stick to a diet and fitness routine.

But if this sounds like you, you're not totally doomed.

"We usually think about personality being very stable," Sutin said. "But the expression of personality can be changed."

So if you recognize these traits in yourself, just make an effort to avoid indulging in the unhealthy behaviors that can go along with them. That might mean hiding the chocolate ice cream when you're super stressed or setting a reminder to hit the grocery store so you're not grabbing fast food five nights a week. You may not be able to change your personality, but you can make tweaks to keep your health and weight in check.

Read more: <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2013/09/09/how-your-personality-impacts-your-weight/#ixzz2fAmv2vFh>