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Review article

Effect of ambience on food intake and food choice

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Abstract

Eating takes place in a context of environmental stimuli known as *ambience*. Various external factors such as social and physical surroundings, including the presence of other people and sound, temperature, smell, color, time, and distraction affect food intake and food choice. Food variables such as the temperature, smell, and color of the food also influence food intake and choice differently. However, the influence of ambience on nutritional health is not fully understood. This review summarizes the research on ambient influences on food intake and food choice. The literature suggests that there are major influences of ambience on eating behavior and that the magnitude of the effect of ambience may be underestimated. Changes in intake can be detected with different levels of the number of people present, food accessibility, eating locations, food color, ambient temperatures and lighting, and temperature of foods, smell of food, time of consumption, and ambient sounds. It is suggested that the manipulation of these ambient factors as a whole or individually may be used therapeutically to alter food

these ambient factors as a whole or individually may be used therapeutically to alter food intake and that more attention needs to be paid to ambience in nutrition-related research.



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Keywords

food intake; food choice; humans; ambient factors

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