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My position:

Food Noise: New Concept or Old Concept with New Name? - "No"
(old concept) argument

Disclosure Slide

- I am author of Power of Food Scale, a measure of hedonic hunger (similar to food noise)
- Drexel University and I license this scale to researchers and to pharmaceutical companies

Words change over time even when the concept remains the same

- Bee's knees
- The "Cat's Meow"
- Cool
- Groovy
- Far out
- Fly
- Aura

First, a Quick Side Note

- Important to recognize how the concept of food noise originated
- Not from scientists or past research, but from the results of GLP-1 studies – a serendipitous discovery
- Powerful anorexigenic drugs dramatically reduced a mental state that many didn't know they were suffering from
- What is new is not the phenomenon of “food noise,” but incretin drugs' dramatic effects on appetitive motivation

First, a Quick Discursive Note

- The term was used to describe the sudden relief from a previously-unlabeled mental state
- So the ***TERM*** “food noise” is definitely new, but is the phenomenon itself?
- I think not

What Existing Concepts Encapsulate Food Noise?

- There are 6 or 7, but I'll focus on 3:
 - Craving
 - Food Preoccupation
 - Hedonic Hunger

Mostly Agreement on Definitions of Food Noise

- Thought-based
- Persistent
- Intrusive, unwelcome or distressing

Debate question: To what extent have other, related appetitive constructs also captured these features?

Craving – the First Old Wine flowing into New Wine Bottle Called Food Noise



Craving Research Shows Major Overlap with Food Noise

- Thought-based: Cravings are motivated thoughts about a specific food
- Persistent: Not merely thoughts about food but repeated, “sticky” thoughts about wanting to eat a specific food
- Distressing or psychologically harmful:
 - Forman et al (2007): “Included 'craving distress' as one of the specific dependent variables measured to assess the” negative impact of cravings”
 - Schumacher et al (2017): “Links food cravings to negative consequences, such as negative mood, depression, disordered eating (especially binge eating)”

Food Preoccupation: More Old Wine



Food Preoccupation: More Overlap with Food Noise

- Food Preoccupation Questionnaire (Tapper & Pothos, 2010)
- Term itself means persistent thoughts about food, mirroring food noise definition
- Authors specifically differentiate between food thoughts that generate positive versus negative emotions
- Latter obviously fulfills the “distressing or psychologically harmful” food noise criterion

Hedonic Hunger – More Old Wine!



Hedonic Hunger Research Shows Major Overlaps with Food Noise

- Thought-based: Hedonic hunger is the chronic psychological motivation to eat delicious food when not hungry
- Sample item from Power of Food Scale:
 - “It seems like I have food on my mind a lot” (persistent)
 - Hedonic hunger, like food noise, is omnipresent, even in the absence of dieting or weight loss
- Several studies, in both general population and bariatric surgery patients, report relationships between hedonic hunger and depression, stress levels and anxiety

Further Overlapping Constructs I Could Include...

- Food Addiction
- Food Cue Responsivity
- Reward-Based Eating Drive model

A Proverbial Flood of Old Wine!



Back to the Original Debate Question

- Food Noise: New Concept or Old Concept with New Name?
- All the components of food noise are part of existing constructs that were identified years ago
- So there's nothing new under the sun.... Including the concept of food noise -

Not new but there are benefits to the term

- Terminology that patients are familiar with
- We can connect with patients and their experience
- Less “psychobabble-ish” than “food preoccupation” and “hedonic hunger”
- **Steelman** – perhaps some consolidation of factors **BUT** just like adding gravy to mashed potatoes, and calling it mashed potatoes and gravy, is just a new name for food, food noise is simply a term for well-established constructs

Thank you!

Presentation Slide - Template

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