

**Birgit Lindel, *Stress-related influences on the eating-behaviour of overweight children*,
Diss. Trier 2002.**

To determine stress-related influences on obesity, the eating behaviour of 100 overweight and normal weight children was investigated in the laboratory and in everyday life. A controlled repeated measures design was used for the laboratory study with stress vs. non-stress as one repeated factor. The eating style was measured by recording cumulative eating curves with a universal eating monitor. Stress eating during everyday life was measured by questionnaire. In everyday life, the amount of protein, carbohydrate, and fat as well the total amount of energy in each meal were analysed.

The eating style after stress-induction in the laboratory did not differ between weight groups. However, in everyday life, overweight children more often pretended to eat when feeling stressed, than did normal weight children. The “stress eating” was more pronounced for children, who have high restraint scores. Overweight children didn't ingest neither more calories nor fat, carbohydrate or protein.

Stress-related eating behaviour in everyday life may be part of the development and maintenance of overweight in children. However, if the availability of food is limited and the environment is structured, stress-protective resources of overweight children may help them to control their eating behaviour.