

# LIVE WELL WORK WELL

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## Are Attitudes Contagious? Nonverbal Signals May Affect Behavior

If you were to meet two new people, and others seem to be friendlier toward one of those individuals, would that lead you to like that individual more than the other? A new Northwestern University study examined whether people can acquire attitudes toward other individuals from the nonverbal signals that are directed toward them.

The researchers found that after people watched a brief silent video of individuals interacting, they acquired attitudes toward the individuals in the video based on the nonverbal signals that were displayed toward them. This was true of the attitudes that people were explicitly aware of, but this also impacted their implicit attitudes.

“This means that people were quicker to pair the individual who received positive nonverbal signals with good things, than the individual who received negative nonverbal signals,” said Allison Skinner, formerly a postdoctoral researcher at Northwestern University, and now an assistant professor at the University of Georgia, lead author of the study. Skinner said the fact that people often attributed their attitudes to the behavior of the recipients of nonverbal signals was eye opening.

“This has important implications for how people make sense of the nonverbal messages that they are exposed to in everyday life. These findings suggest that when we see people being less friendly toward one individual relative to another, we often attribute the unfriendliness to the target.”

Skinner said it is possible that this research also may lay the foundation for group-based biases. “For example, white people in the U.S. who observe white people displaying negative nonverbal signals toward black people tend to go on to show more anti-black bias than those who were exposed to positive nonverbal signals directed toward a black person.”

“I think this has important implications for our understanding of how we develop biases toward social groups, in general – even from a young age,” said Co-author Sylvia Perry, assistant professor of psychology in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern and a faculty fellow with the University’s Institute for Policy Research.



Northwestern University. “Are attitudes contagious? Nonverbal messages.” ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190819140219.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190819140219.htm) (accessed August 21, 2019).

# Misunderstanding Food Date Labels Linked With Higher Food Discards

A new survey examining U.S. consumer attitudes and behaviors related to food date labels found widespread confusion leading to unnecessary discards, increased waste, and food safety risks. The survey analysis was led by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF), which is based at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Among survey participants, the research found that 84% discarded food near the package date "at least occasionally" and 37% reported that they "always" or "usually" discard food near the package date. Notably, participants between the ages of 18 to 34 were particularly likely to rely on label dates to discard food. More than half of participants incorrectly thought that date labeling was federally regulated or reported being unsure. In addition, the study found that those perceiving labels as reflecting safety and those who thought labels were federally regulated were more willing to discard food.

New voluntary industry standards for date labeling were recently adopted. Under this system, "Best if used by" labels denote dates after which quality may decline but the products may still be consumed, while "Use by" labels are restricted to the relatively few foods where safety is a concern and the food should be discarded after the date.

"Foodborne illness is misery-or worse," says Roni Neff, PhD, assistant professor with the Bloomberg School's Department of Environmental Health and Engineering. "As date labeling becomes standardized, this research underlines the need for a strong communications campaign and highlights a particular need for education among those ages 18 to 34."

Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. "Misunderstanding food date labels linked with higher food discards: Confusion about when to worry about food safety is widespread." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190219132805.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190219132805.htm) (accessed August 20, 2019).

# Yoga Regimen Reduces Severity of Rheumatoid Arthritis Symptoms

According to a study published in *Restorative Neurology and Neuroscience*, eight weeks of intensive yoga practice significantly decreases the severity of physical and psychological symptoms in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Marked improvements were seen in the levels of certain inflammatory biomarkers and assessments of functional status and disease activity in patients studied, demonstrating yoga's promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative potential for achieving optimal health.

"Our findings show measurable improvements for the patients in the test group, suggesting an immune-regulatory role of yoga practice in the treatment of RA. An intensive yoga regimen concurrent with routine drug therapy induced molecular remission and re-established immunological tolerance. In addition, it reduced the severity of depression by promoting neuroplasticity," explained lead investigator, Rima Dada, MD, PhD, Professor, Department of Anatomy, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, India. She noted that high disease activity and underlying depression are associated with increased disability, reduced quality of life, and minimized rates of clinical remission and treatment response.

Dr. Dada concluded, "This study offers a new option. Pharmacological treatments can be supplemented with alternative and complementary interventions like yoga to alleviate the symptoms at both physical and psychosomatic levels." With yoga-based MBI providing a holistic treatment dimension, reaching a state of remission is becoming a more achievable treatment goal. As a majority of diseases have a psychosomatic component, this approach may be widely applicable.

IOS Press. "Yoga regimen reduces severity of rheumatoid arthritis symptoms: New research supports adding yoga as an adjunctive therapy to treat this chronic inflammatory disease." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190205115301.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190205115301.htm) (accessed August 21, 2019).

# Low Levels of Vitamin D In Elementary School Could Spell Trouble In Adolescence

Vitamin D deficiency in middle childhood could result in aggressive behavior as well as anxious and depressive moods during adolescence, according to a new University of Michigan study of school children in Bogotá, Colombia.

Children with blood vitamin D levels suggestive of deficiency were almost twice as likely to develop aggressive and rule breaking behaviors as reported by their parents, compared with children who had higher levels of the vitamin.



University of Michigan. "Low levels of vitamin D in elementary school could spell trouble in adolescence." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190820130917.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190820130917.htm) (accessed August 21, 2019).

"Children who have vitamin D deficiency during their elementary school years appear to have higher scores on tests that measure behavior problems when they reach adolescence," said Eduardo Villamor, professor of epidemiology at the U-M School of Public Health and senior author of the study appearing in the *Journal of Nutrition*.

Villamor said vitamin D deficiency has been associated with other mental health problems in adulthood, including depression and schizophrenia, and some studies have focused on the effect of vitamin D status during pregnancy and childhood. However, few studies have extended into adolescence, the stage when behavior problems may first appear and become serious conditions.

While the authors acknowledge the study's limitations, including a lack of baseline behavior measures, their results indicate the need for additional studies involving neurobehavioral outcomes in other populations where vitamin D deficiency may be a public health problem.

## September Recipe Pumpkin Chocolate Waffles

- 1 ¾ cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup canned pumpkin
- 1 ½ cup (12 oz.) diet ginger ale
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 packet Splenda or Stevia (optional)
- 2 Tbsp light margarine, melted
- ½ cup sugar-free chocolate chips



Sift together dry ingredients. Mix together pumpkin, ginger ale, egg yolks, and vanilla. In a separate bowl, beat egg whites and Splenda until soft peaks form and set aside. Into pumpkin mixture, add dry ingredients and margarine alternately. Stir in chocolate and fold in egg whites.

Scoop 1 cup of batter onto a heated waffle iron. Dough will be a little thick, so with a heat-proof spatula, spread to the edges. Cook as usual. Serve with light margarine and sugar-free syrup.

Makes 16 waffle square. Yield: 4 servings. Each serving provides (with chocolate): Calories- 320, Carbs- 43g, Protein- 12g, Fat-11g. Without chocolate: Calories- 245, Carbs- 40g, Protein- 11g, Fat-5g

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