

Americans Are Stuck in Unhealthy Pandemic Habits. Here's How to Reboot

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The early days of lockdown restrictions had a profound effect on people's daily lives. Alcohol sales skyrocketed, physical activity dropped off sharply, and "comfort eating" led to weight gain, too.

So, what's happened since March of 2020? After two years of pandemic life, many of these effects persist. The strategies we used to adapt and cope have cemented into habits for many of us. And this is not a surprise to scientists who study behavior change.

"We know when a shock arises and forces a change in our behavior for an extended period of time, there tend to be carryover effects because we're sticky in our behaviors," says [Katy Milkman](#) of the University of Pennsylvania, and author of the book *How To Change*. In other words, our pandemic habits may be hard to break.

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