

# Temptation: It Depends on How You're Feeling

December 01, 2011



From gravy-soaked turkey to home-baked cookies, the holiday season is full of temptations. In a series of experiments published in *Psychological Science*, researchers examined the role visceral states — such as hunger — play in people's response to temptation. In one experiment, two groups of smokers rated how pleasurable they thought smoking was and were then told they would be given money for delaying smoking. Smokers who were craving cigarettes rated cigarettes as being more pleasurable than those who were not craving a cigarette. Also, the participants who had cravings were also more likely to smoke instead of taking the money. Previous theories concerning visceral states and self control imply that reacting to a visceral state is a hedonic response, but the authors of this study suggest that visceral states influence temptation by modifying cognitive resources such as reasoning.