

Watching cooking shows leads to weight gain

By Roberto A. Ferdman, Washington Post

Food television has been something of a revelation. As Americans cook less and less, they seem compelled to watch people cook more and more. The mouthwatering viewer experience – which features cooking shows and competitions, food travel adventures and other gustatory escapades – has captivated people around the country.

The Food Network, the genre's most coveted brand, alone gathers an average audience of more than 1 million viewers each night. And it's just one of a growing number of networks that routinely feature series about food and eating. Chefs – some professionally trained, others less formally practiced – are increasingly bringing new, exciting and delicious culinary ideas into living rooms.

Mostly women watch these shows, often to learn specific cooking skills. But when people watch more of these food shows on television, it turns out they're also gaining more weight, according to a new study by researchers at Cornell University. And they're even more likely to gain weight if they also cook.

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