

Volunteers needed for weight loss study

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Researchers at the University of Birmingham's School of Sport and Exercise Sciences are looking for volunteers to take part in a study investigating whether successful weight loss can alter perception.

The study will test the effect of significant weight loss on an individual's perception of spatial layout and the built environment and is led by Guy Taylor, Doctoral Researcher for the Behavioural Medicine Group for the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences.

Guy Taylor commented:

"Perceptual signals drive our behaviour based on our physiological potential. Recent studies conducted by the research group here at the University of Birmingham indicate physical changes such as weight loss may reduce the magnitude of these perceptual signals. This is the first study to date that will test this possibility.

"We are looking for individuals who are actively trying to lose weight so that we can assess whether successful weight loss alters one's perception of spatial layout. This research is designed to give scientists a better understanding of the inter-linkage between conscious vision and our bodily state. Study participants will have a unique opportunity to see the effects their weight loss has on their body thanks to the use of state of the art body composition scanning."

Volunteers who are already trying to lose weight will be required to attend the research laboratory for two sessions over a six-nine month period. The sessions will involve completion of a perception test and a short questionnaire, followed by a DXA scan to measure body composition (percentage of body fat) and a sub-maximal Vo2 uptake test to measure cardiovascular fitness. This will take approximately 45 minutes altogether and will be repeated six-nine months later.

The study will begin on Monday 28 February 2011 and will take place at the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences at the University of Birmingham. Volunteers will be reimbursed for their travel costs and will receive two DXA scans and sub-maximal Vo2 tests free of charge. These are the gold standard in terms of measuring body composition and fitness and normally cost £200.

Anyone wanting to take part or to find out more about the study should contact Guy Taylor via 0121 414 8738 or [gat690@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:gat690@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:gat690@bham.ac.uk).

Notes to Editors

Researchers are looking to recruit participants who are male or female and aged between 18 and 65. Participants should be planning on losing weight in the upcoming months or recently begun a weight loss programme.

Exclusion criteria for participants:

- Participants must not apply if they have serious vision impairment
- Participants must not apply if they have any injuries that would prevent them from cycling on an exercise bike (this is used for the cardiovascular fitness test)

The study is being organised by scientists at the University of Birmingham in collaboration with Slimming World and Rosemary Conley. The research is funded internally by the University of Birmingham.

Further media information:

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