



# The New Jersey Police Chief

*The Official Publication of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police*

Vol. 17, No. 11 • December 2011

## 2012 New Police Chiefs Orientation Program

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## Slow Down, Slim Down

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Earlier this year, Joey "Jaws" Chestnut of San Jose earned his fifth consecutive victory at the 96th annual Nathan's Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest in Coney Island. Chestnut downed 62 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes. In a sure sign that the apocalypse is upon us, the event drew 30,000 spectators – more than the attendance at the Cubs versus Nats baseball game that day in Washington, DC – and was televised live on ESPN. Repeat: A hot dog eating contest was publicized on the premiere sports network in the world!

Here's something else to chew on: One Nathan's all-beef dog and bun has 297 calories, 18.21 grams of fat, 34.40 milligrams of cholesterol and 692.07 milligrams of sodium. So Chestnut consumed about 18,414 calories, 1,129 grams of fat, 2,133 milligrams of cholesterol and 42,908 milligrams of sodium. And remember, that was in 10 minutes.

Note: Your intake of cholesterol should be less than 300 milligrams per day; your intake of sodium should be less than 2,400 milligrams per day.

Yes, an eating contest is an extreme example but the truth is that many people eat their food too quickly. Why is this a problem? By eating your food slowly, your brain is given adequate time to receive a signal from your stomach that it's full. By eating your food quickly, you don't realize that you've had enough to eat until after the fact. In addition, taking the time to chew your food facilitates the digestive process.

In one study, subjects were given a plate of food and told to eat as much as they wanted. When the subjects ate quickly, they consumed 646 calories in 8.6 minutes (about 75.1 calories per minute); when the subjects chewed their food slowly, they consumed 579 calories in 29.2 minutes (about 19.8 calories per minute). Besides eating fewer calories when they chewed their food slowly, the subjects reported greater feelings of satiety and lower feelings of hunger. And they enjoyed the meal more.

The same thing happened in another study. Here, subjects were given three servings of waffles (870 calories) and told that it wasn't necessary for them to eat all of the food. In a subsequent session, they were instructed to eat the waffles 50% slower than in the earlier session. The subjects who ate more food in the first session – in this case, 400 or more calories – were especially affected by eating more slowly. When those subjects ate at their normal pace, they consumed 617 calories; when those subjects ate more slowly, they consumed 453 calories.

Studies show that those who eat quickly also take bigger bites of food. This is a double whammy since eating food more quickly increases the number of calories that are consumed and taking bigger bites yields the same result.

There are a few simple things that you can do to chew your food slowly. For one thing, you can chew each bite of food a certain number of times before swallowing. Another is to place your fork or spoon on the table between bites. Regardless, the basic idea is to take your time and really savor the flavor.

Bottom line: Slow down and pay close attention to the food that you eat.

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