

BEATING THE BINGE – Online screening – information for participants

Thank you for your interest!

Welcome to the online screening for the study '*Beating the Binge – Understanding the pathways towards binge eating*'. We are very glad that you are interested in participating.

Purpose of the project

Binge eating is a common and severe phenomenon with many negative consequences. In order to improve existing treatments for binge eating, our research group at Maastricht University (Clinical Psychology department) examines the factors that predict binge eating in daily life (ERCPN-OZL_210_01_07_2019). This information will help us find out how and when to intervene to prevent binge eating episodes.

The *Beating the Binge* project consists of three consecutive studies. The first study was mainly aimed at identifying the thoughts that people may have prior to a binge eating episode. In the current study we will broaden our focus and will look at other possible predictors of binge eating as well, such as environment and behavior.

We are looking for:

For this project, we are looking for adults (m/f; age 18-65) who experience episodes of **binge eating** with some regularity (at least once a week). Binge eating is defined as consuming an unusually large (or what feels like unusually large) amount of food in a discrete period of time, accompanied by a sense of loss of control.

Unfortunately, not everyone can participate. You can NOT take part in the study if you:

- Are not currently living and/or studying in the Netherlands or Belgium
- Do not own a smartphone
- Have a Body Mass Index (BMI) below 18.5¹
- Are pregnant
- Experience binges exclusively after drug use

Some psychological problems also rule out participation (see questionnaire).

What does participation entail exactly?

If you take part in this study, we will ask you to monitor your eating behavior for a two-week period using a **smartphone app**. Before and after each eating moment, and at random moments during the day, you will answer questions about eating, thoughts, emotions, and the context in which these take place. This is a registration-only study. We will not ask you to make any changes to your daily routines (yet). In addition, you will wear a **smartwatch** (provided by us) that will continuously gather data about e.g. your activity level, heart rate, and sleeping pattern.

In order to participate you will not be required to visit the university. You will receive a digital manual with detailed instructions about how to install and use the app and smartwatch. There will also be a

¹ <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator>

practice day. All data will be handled and stored **anonymously** and **confidentially**. You will receive a small reward for your participation (VVV gift voucher of €25). Students at the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (UM) can also choose to receive 3 participation credits instead.

Screening and interview

To determine whether you can participate in the study, you first need to fill out a short online **screening survey**. If you meet the initial screening criteria, you will be invited for a **telephone interview** during which further eligibility for the study will be determined.

Summary

In short, the study consists of three parts:

Part	When?	What?	How long?
Screening	Now	Online questionnaire	+/- 8 minutes
Interview	If you meet the initial screening criteria	Telephone interview during which eligibility is further determined	30-45 minutes
Study	If, by means of a telephone interview, it is determined that you belong to the target group of the study	During a two-week period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before and after each eating moment, and at random moments during the day, answering questions via a smartphone app about eating, thoughts, emotions, and the context in which these take place • Wearing a smartwatch 	+/- 3-5 minutes per eating moment

What am I consenting to today?

It is important to know that today, you only give consent for the screening. We advise you to take some time to reflect on your participation. Furthermore, we would like to inform you that by participating in the screening you are not obliged to take part in the other parts of the study. When applicable, you will sign separate consent forms for these other parts in due course. Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent and end your participation in the screening at any time without giving a reason and/or without negative consequences.

What happens to my data?

All data gathered during the screening will be handled strictly **confidentially** and will be stored in **encrypted** form at a **secure** server at Maastricht University. This means that safe data collection via the internet is guaranteed and it will not be possible to link the data back to you in any way.

For this screening, we will also gather and (temporarily) store personal information and possibly medically sensitive information about you. Personal information in the screening consists of your name, your e-mail address, and (if you belong to the target group of our study) your phone number.

The possibly medically sensitive information concerns two questions about your psychological well-being and the question whether you are pregnant.

To protect your privacy, your personal information (name, e-mail address) will be stored separately from the rest of your data. Your e-mail address will be linked to a unique participant number in an encrypted file. The encryption key is stored on a separate server. Only the researchers have access to this server.

If the screening indicates that you **do not** belong to the target group of our study, all personal information will be deleted immediately. Your answers to the screening questions will still be in our database but can no longer be traced back to you (not even with the encryption key).

If you **do** meet the initial screening criteria, we will also ask you for your phone number. We need this for the telephone screening. Similar to your name and e-mail address, your phone number will be stored separately from the rest of your data. The researchers have temporary access to the screening data that you entered, because this information will serve as a starting point for the telephone screening during which further eligibility for the study will be determined. After the interview, all data will be fully anonymized. The fully anonymous research data can be used for further scientific research both in the Netherlands and abroad.

At the bottom of this information letter, you will find more information about the use of your personal data and your rights as a participant.

Risks and benefits

To the best of our knowledge, we are not aware of any significant risks associated with participating in the screening. We deem it highly unlikely that participating in the screening will lead to any complaints. If you do unexpectedly start to experience complaints, and you feel that these are related to your participation in the screening, you can make this known to one of the researchers. If necessary, you can end your participation at any time. If there are other factors in your life that impact your mental health, we advise you to consult your general practitioner.

Contact details

If you have any questions about the study, you can send an e-mail to fpn-btb@maastrichtuniversity.nl. Further information as well as the latest news about the study can be found on our website: www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/fpn/btb.

Privacy statement

You can withdraw your consent for the use of your personal data at any time. In that case, personal data and research data will be deleted if possible. For more information about your rights, see the document 'Personal information and privacy' (option EN) on the website www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/fpn/ercpn under 'Fast Facts'.

If you have any questions about the processing of your personal data, please contact the responsible researcher first (see above). You can also consult the Data Protection Officer of Maastricht University at fg@maastrichtuniversity.nl.