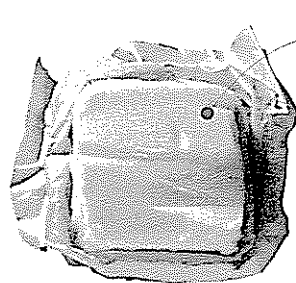
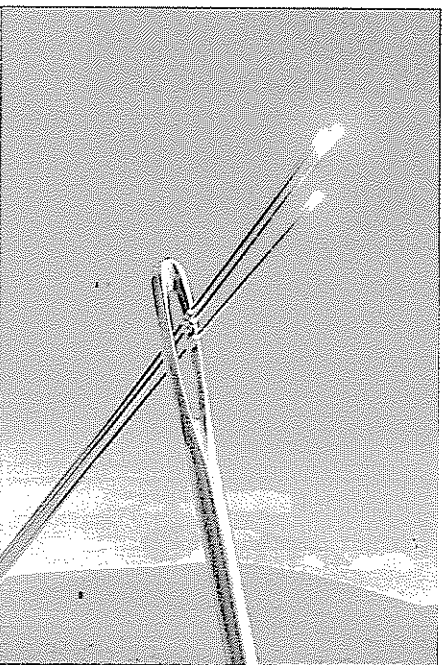
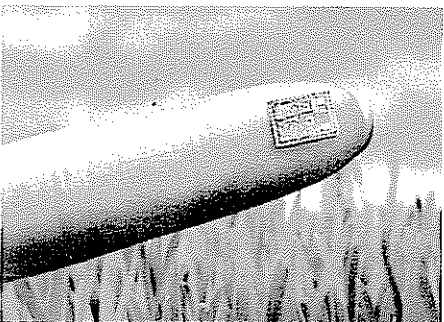
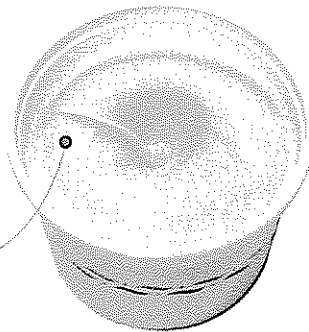


**Big Technology**



**BUTTER**  
Butter has no trans fats, but go easy—it's loaded with calories.



**MARGARINE**  
Tub margarines have less trans fat than stick margarines, but even a little is too much.

**I LOVE BUTTER. IS IT A MISTAKE TO USE IT?**

AL, RENO, NV

No, within reason. True, a pat contains 2 more grams of saturated fat than margarine does, but really, how much do you use? A smear on your toast, one on your potato. Remember, stick margarine contains partially hydrogen-

ated oils, the dreaded trans fats that lower HDL (good) cholesterol. Soft tub margarines have less (some have none), but that's still too much. If just 2 percent of your daily calories are from trans fats, you've increased your

heart-disease risk by 23 percent, according to a recent review in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. But if the flavor of butter isn't important to you and you're trying to lower your cholesterol, try spreads like Benecol or Take

Control, which reduce cholesterol absorption, says Milton Stokes, M.P.H., R.D., a registered dietitian in New York City. But, he says, "if you're craving the flavor of butter, then buy butter. The key is simply moderation."

**My dog and cat are both pudgy. Got a belly-off plan?**

IRWIN, BERKELEY, CA

First, dehumanize your feelings toward them. Cats that are treated like family members or children are more likely to be fat, German researchers found. Chubby pets' masters use food, not play, as a reward. (*USA Today* found that 69 percent of pet owners think of their animals as furry people.) Many underestimate how overweight Tabby is. Test your dogs at [www.pet-slimmers.com/shapedog.htm](http://www.pet-slimmers.com/shapedog.htm) (or [shapecat.htm](http://shapecat.htm) for cats). The *Journal of Nutrition* endorses these exams. Then get tough. No dinner-table scraps. Quit with the treats, or at least cut back, says the Humane Society. Not every "roll over" needs a reward; one in three will still cement the response. And beware of treats made of dehydrated raw salmon and beef, which can carry salmonella, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "People are getting sick but not attributing it to contact with pet treats," says Fred Angulo, an epidemiologist at the CDC.

**I keep finding new moles on my body. Is this part of the normal aging process?**

BILLY, SEATTLE, WA

Absolutely. You'll continue to form new, harmless moles deep into middle age. The two most common harmless moles look like a brown pencil eraser or a red dot, says John Wolf, M.D., head of Baylor College of Medicine's dermatology department. These are skin cells or blood vessels growing in clusters. But be concerned when the new marks don't resemble old moles from childhood. If new moles stand out, or if

older spots show a change in shape or hue, see a dermatologist ASAP. Thirty percent of melanomas begin as healthy moles, and 90 percent of moles contain potential cancer-causing mutation traits. Other mole traits that spook guys but shouldn't: a gradual change in size (not shape), sprouting hair, or a mole that becomes elevated above skin level. If you have a family history of skin cancer, have your skin doc track your moles. ■

**DOES IT WORK?™**

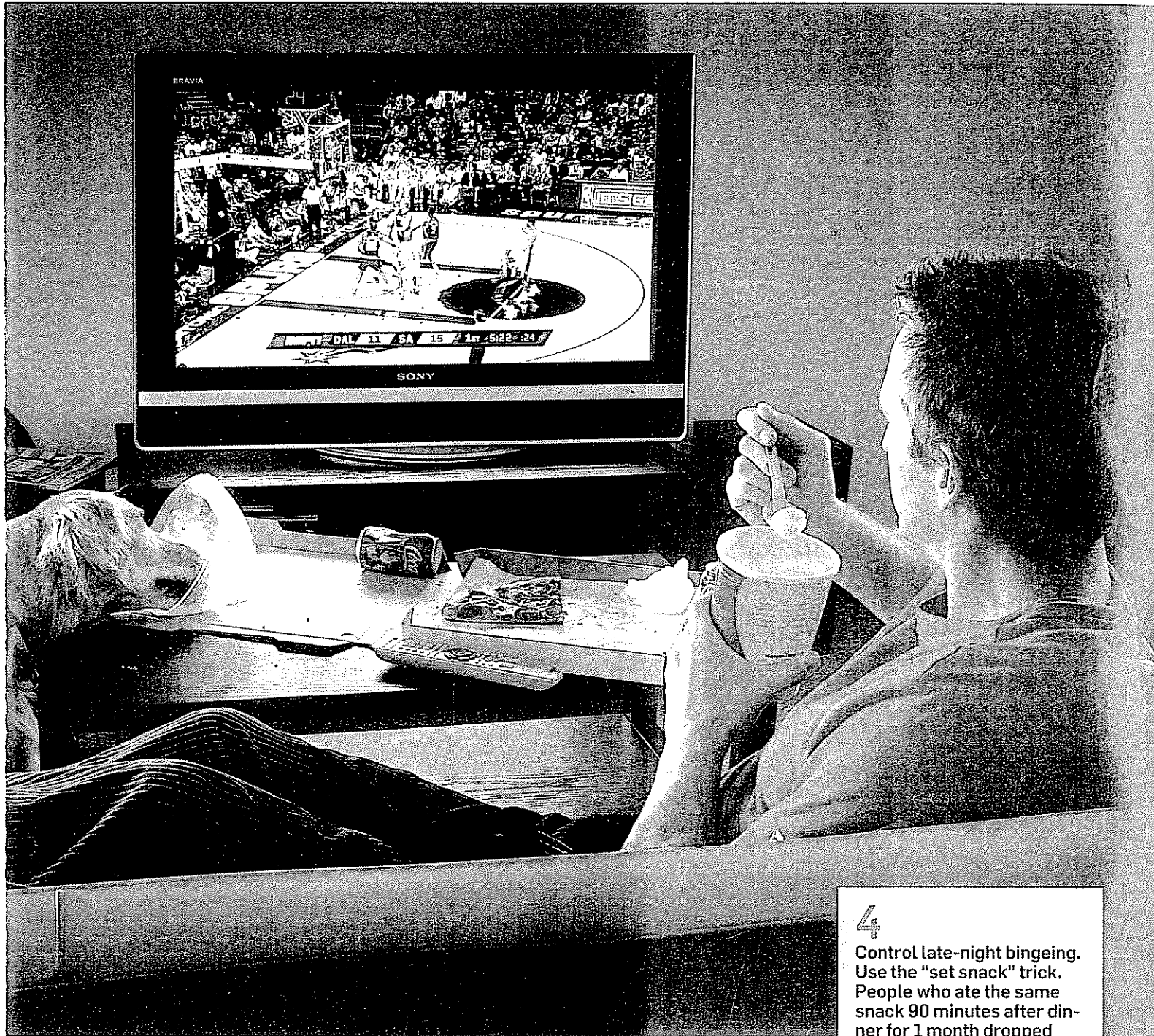
**Tongue scrapers for reducing bad breath**

Yes  No

"A common reason for bad breath is post-nasal drip, which coats the back area of the tongue with bacteria-rich mucus," says June Lee, D.D.S., a spokeswoman for the Academy of General Dentistry. This coating triggers volatile sulfur compounds, which are produced when bacteria and amino acids interact. The compounds stink. A new study in the *Journal of General Dentistry* found that using a scraper removed significantly more sulfur compounds than brushing the middle-back tongue with a toothbrush. Try the DenTek tongue scraper (\$2.50, [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com)).

Scrape, spit, rinse.

Photographs by MELLISSA PUNCH, food styling: Victoria B. Everett



## Conquer your cravings and stop bingeing.

Healthy eating isn't about deprivation—it's about simple planning and smart decisions. This year, skip the rice cakes and sprouts, and eat real food that satisfies your hunger and your body's nutritional needs.

HERE'S YOUR FOUR-STEP GAME PLAN

1

### OUTSMART YOUR CRAVINGS.

"People tend to eat around their cravings, snacking and nibbling until they've taken in 500 calories and still aren't satisfied," says D. Milton Stokes, M.P.H., R.D. Don't fight the urge—find a healthier way to satisfy it. Sweet tooth? Try a Stonyfield Farm Smoothie: big on protein and creamy flavor, low in calories and fat. "You curb the craving, and you get solid nutrition," says Stokes.

2

### EAT WELL ON THE ROAD.

To avoid a Cinnabon relapse at the airport, pack mixed nuts, energy bars, and granola bars. Make your own trail mix by combining ½ cup each Bran Chex, dried cranberries, sunflower seeds, unsalted cashews, and raisins. Bag small servings and go.

Go to [MensHealth.com/food](http://MensHealth.com/food) court to find lists of healthy dishes at chain restaurants.

3

### SNACK SMARTER.

It's not snacking when you're elbow deep in a Doritos bag—that, friend, is gorging. Control the quantity. Buy pre-packaged portions, like 1-ounce bags of Baked Lay's and snack-size Pacific Gold jerky. Warehouse stores like Costco and Sam's Club have huge boxes of these. Even ice cream comes in small cups. "For most guys, the carton becomes a trough," says Stokes.

4

Control late-night bingeing. Use the "set snack" trick. People who ate the same snack 90 minutes after dinner for 1 month dropped 4 pounds in a Wayne State University study. (They ate cereal.) And beware hunger spurred by boredom or TV ads. "Take the dog for a walk; do anything to buy some time for your brain to tell you you're not really hungry," Stokes says. Or brush your teeth and gargle: "Nothing tastes good after that."

58%

OF MEN WANT TO CONQUER CRAVINGS