

It was easier to be thin 20 years ago

Michael Harthorne, *Newser* 10:05 a.m. EDT October 3, 2015

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NEWSER – It's hard out there for millennials: the economy tanked, the Earth is getting hotter, sometimes Facebook crashes. Oh, and they'll end up fatter than people 20 to 40 years ago even if they eat and exercise the same, according to a study in [Obesity Research & Clinical Practice](#). [The Atlantic](#) reports that after looking at data from nearly 51,000 Americans, researchers concluded that a person in 2006 eating and exercising the same as someone of an identical age in 1988 had a BMI about 2.3 points higher, meaning they'd be about 10% heavier. "Our study results suggest that if you are 25, you'd have to eat even less and exercise more than those older to prevent gaining weight," Jennifer Kuk of York University in Toronto says in the story.

Researchers have three thoughts on why that could be, the Atlantic reports. First, we're exposed to more chemicals nowadays, which could be inducing weight gain. Second, prescription drug use is way up, and antidepressants especially have been linked to weight gain. Finally, hormones, antibiotics, or artificial sweeteners in meat and other foods could be changing the bacteria in our guts and hampering weight loss. Kuk says this research is a good reason to be more empathetic to people of all body types. "Ultimately, maintaining a healthy body weight is now more challenging than ever," she says in a York [press release](#). (Good news: [The "obesity gene" may have an off switch](#).)

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Study Says Millennials Needs to Eat Less, Exercise More to Lose Weight

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