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Reactor has contingency plan

MU officials briefed on preparedness.

By Janese Silvey

The University of Missouri Research Reactor is considerably smaller than the Ameren Missouri nuclear power plant in Callaway County and has a 40-year record of being a safe operation. In a worst-case scenario, though, the campus has a plan.

MU leaders last week asked to see those emergency plans in light of the earthquake and nuclear disasters in Japan, according to a string of emails from MU Health Care administrators that ultimately landed in Chancellor Brady Deaton's inbox.

Officials at the MU Research Reactor, or MURR, have considered a number of scenarios and deemed the chance of an accident leading to the release of fission products — airborne nuclear fragments — is virtually nil, spokesman Christian Basi said in a statement. Basi worked with MURR Director Ralph Butler to provide this information.

"There are no credible accident scenarios that can lead to an explosion at the facility," Basi said. "In all cases, safety systems have been designed such that the likelihood of an accident involving the release of a significant amount of fission products has essentially been eliminated." There is a worst-case scenario, though, that the reactor must prepare for by law. Although highly unlikely, it is the most credible situation, according to the emergency plan sent to Deaton.

In that hypothetical scenario, four of eight inner fuel plates would melt, releasing iodine and noble gas fission products into the primary cooling system and ultimately through the ventilation system into the building. Once the building detected an increase in radiation levels, systems would shut down. In that scenario, the most radiation the nearest neighbor — about 830 yards north of MURR — would get would be less than 1 millirem. That's about the same dose the average American gets from naturally occurring radiation.

If such accident were to occur, MURR has evacuation plans and would call on the Columbia Fire Department to dispatch its hazardous materials team. The greatest threat, according to the plan, would be worried but healthy residents flooding area hospitals. The medical centers have the capability to check for contamination using nasal swaps.

MURR is about 200 miles from the New Madrid Seismic Zone in southeast Missouri — enough distance to mitigate effects, Basi said.

Good mood affects working memory

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COLUMBIA, Mo., March 31 (UPI) -- Being in a good mood decreases the brain's working memory -- the ability to recall items in a conversation as a person is having it, U.S. researchers say.

"This explains why you might not be able to remember a phone number you get at a party when you are having a good time," Elizabeth Martin, a doctoral student of psychology at the University of Missouri, says in a statement. "This research is the first to show that positive mood can negatively impact working memory storage capacity. This shows that although systems in the brain are connected, it is possible to affect one process but not others."

The researchers gauged study participants' mood before and after showing them a video clip -- some saw a bit of a stand-up comedy routine, while others saw a video on how to install flooring.

Those who viewed the comedy routine were in significantly better moods after viewing the video, while the mood of flooring group had not changed. Both groups were then given a memory test.

The study, published in the journal *Cognition and Emotion*, found those who watched the comedy routine performed significantly worse on the task.

United Press International

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Best Diet Plan: 6 Mini Meals or 3 Squares a Day?

Study Suggests 6 Small Meals per Day Won't Help Reduce Hunger Pangs

By [Denise Mann](#)

WebMD Health News

Reviewed by [Laura J. Martin, MD](#)

March 31, 2011--Eating small meals frequently throughout the day may not help take the bite out of your hunger while you are dieting, according to a new study.

Many diets and dietitians promote such mini meals, but they may not be any better than three square meals a day when it comes to feeling full and satisfied, according to a new study in *Obesity*.

“You hear a lot in the lay press claiming that mini meals were better, but there was no scientific evidence to support these claims,” says study researcher Heather J. Leidy, PhD, an assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Leidy was getting her PhD at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., when the study was conducted. “We are not saying three meals a day is the best, but mini meals are not any more beneficial at controlling appetite,” she says.

3 Meals vs. 6

Twenty seven overweight or obese men were placed on a reduced-calorie diet in which either 25% or 14% of the calories came from lean protein for 12 weeks. Men were asked to eat the same diet as three meals or six meals a day for three days starting at week seven, and then they switched to the other eating pattern for three more days.

Men recorded their feelings of hunger or satiety every hour that they were awake during the three- or six-meal-a-day portion of the study using an electronic device.

Men who ate low-calorie, high-protein diets felt more satisfied and less hungry than those eating a low-calorie, normal protein diet, the new study showed.

Those men who ate six mini meals a day showed no improvement in appetite control or perceived fullness compared to those who ate three meals a day.

The findings are likely applicable to overweight or obese women, Leidy says. Some people such as athletes, recreational runners, and people with diabetes or prediabetes, however, may benefit from eating smaller meals more frequently throughout the day, she says.

“But eating more frequently is not the best diet strategy to combat obesity,” she says.

No One-Size-Fits All Strategy

This is a tricky one, says Dana Greene, MS, RD, a nutritionist in Brookline, Mass. “Some people enjoy eating small meals throughout the day, and others don't have the time and/or don't care to eat so frequently,” she says.

The three meals in this study were calorie controlled, which is what helps weight loss, Greene says.

“It was thought that eating small meals more frequently helps stabilize blood sugar and better controls appetite, but if those frequent meals aren't appropriately portioned, this won't work,” she says. “I don't think there is a one-size-fits-all answer.”

Unrealistic Expectations

Tanya Zuckerbrot, RD, author of *The F-Factor Diet* and a New York City-based nutritionist, says that “a diet consisting of six meals throughout the day can be unrealistic to maintain considering people's hectic lifestyles.”

In an email, she says that “when you eat a more substantial meal, you get increased sensory stimulation because you have more food going through your mouth and you're eating for a longer period of time, both of which help to promote feelings of satisfaction.”

Zuckerbrot promotes a combination of lean protein and fiber at every meal. “Meals consisting of a combination of fiber and protein will help keep you feeling full longer because they take the longest time to digest,” she says. “They also keep blood sugar levels stabilized and thus prevent drastic spikes and crashes in sugar levels that can ultimately lead to increased hunger, bingeing, and/or making poor choices at mealtimes.”

The National Pork Board and the American Egg Board funded the new study. Eggs and lean pork were among the main sources of protein in the diets



Not every story has a villain

By Joe Walljasper

You can begrudge Matt Painter for eating a week of your life. You can bemoan Mike Alden's inability to seal the deal. You can wonder why the media's anonymous sources are the only living humans with an endless supply of optimism that fate will smile upon the University of Missouri athletic department.

Wouldn't blame you if you did.

But in the case of Missouri's pursuit of Purdue's basketball coach, I don't believe Painter was just playing MU to get more cash from his employer. It did work out that way for him and his assistants, of course, but that doesn't mean it was a trick.

I think Painter felt unappreciated by his bosses and, on an intellectual level, strongly considered leaving for a school where he could make more money, have nicer facilities and enjoy a more advantageous recruiting base. But, as with any life-changing decision, the brain makes plans and the heart has the last say. It's awfully hard to walk away from your school, your state, your people.

That doesn't make Alden a buffoon for trying and failing to land a coach who would have been a sure-fire winner at Missouri. Why not take a crack at Painter if he's underpaid and disgruntled?

Unless Alden coveted Cuonzo Martin, the former Missouri State coach who was recently hired by Tennessee, there was no rush to make a quick decision. The only other current BCS schools looking for coaches are Oklahoma and North Carolina State — Utah, which will become a BCS school next year, is also open — so it's not like Black Friday at Wal-Mart out there.

You can question Alden's ability as a closer — it's true he is not a great communicator or a natural salesman — but in the case of keeping Mike Anderson or acquiring Painter, he was fighting an uphill battle to win over coaches whose loyalties were elsewhere.

I'll give him a pass.

As for the media, we can do better. Anonymous sources are a necessary evil, but we need to ask ourselves if the people talking to us have agendas and, if so, make that clear in our reports. We need to make sure our own agendas aren't leaking into news stories. By that I mean reporters covering a coaching search want to see a hire made so they can end a stressful around-the-clock

ordeal. Reporters covering the pursued coach often dismiss the idea he could leave because they don't want to be sucked into the vortex.

Once inside, a reporter is motivated to break news and tempted to be first. More powerful is the fear of being last.

"I don't know" equals "I am irrelevant." Pretty soon, the opinion of a few anonymous sources passes as fact.

If you followed the pursuit of Painter intently yesterday, you know that St. Louis Post-Dispatch columnist and radio host Bernie Miklasz reported in the morning that a source told him Painter was coming to Missouri.

Miklasz wasn't the only one, but he was the first and the most notable. Many MU fans got their hopes up. Now, Miklasz is getting beat up pretty good and beating himself up, too. To his credit, he didn't make up a story after the fact claiming he was right until Painter changed his mind. He just believed the wrong person.

It's a reminder for everyone who has a keyboard. Your reputation is on the line with every story, blog and tweet.

If I had one suggestion for Alden moving forward, it would be about managing misinformation. A misconception that has persisted since last year's conference-realignment saga is that Alden leaks too much information to the media, creating false expectations. If anything, the opposite is true. He says nothing, even when erroneous reports could use some refuting.

After Missouri was snubbed by the Big Ten last summer, I asked Alden what he would have done differently if he had it to do over again. He said he would have shot down an incorrect report on a Kansas City radio station that Missouri had received a bid to the Big Ten. By saying nothing, MU appeared to be agreeing with the report.

It was a similar situation yesterday. A few phone calls could have given Alden some control over the message and tamped down what became a runaway train of optimism. That fueled the perception that Painter's decision to stay at Purdue was yet another example of Missouri snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

It wasn't that at all. It was a coach deciding between two good options and picking the one closest to his heart. Every story doesn't have a villain.

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