

Valerie Duffy, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Allied Health Sciences at University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT, US

Professor focused on how variation in taste affects food flavor and food preference, translated to healthier eating to reduce obesity risk.

Biography

Valerie B. Duffy (PhD, RD) offers a wealth of experience in food, nutrition, and health promotion. The Duffy Lab at the University of Connecticut has two main research interests. First, we attempt to understand variation in taste perception in humans and how this variation influences food flavor, food preference and food consumption. More recently, we study how chemosensory variation influences responses to flavored cigarettes and e-cigarettes as well as bariatric surgery. Our ultimate goal is to understand how taste variation influences our ability to follow a healthy diet and behaviors for the prevention of chronic disease and obesity. Second, we partner with community agencies across the state to promote healthy diets and healthy weights of children and their families, particularly those of economic disadvantage. Through involvement of undergraduate and graduate students, we are investigating the effectiveness of tailored health promotion messages, mhealth, and community-based interventions in primary care and school settings. Dr. Duffy and her students have numerous publications and presentations at national and international meetings. She has received several awards for excellence in teaching, research and service. Students who have trained with Dr. Duffy are advancing nutrition and health promotion through research, practice or public health leadership. Dr. Duffy has served as major advisor for and completed thirty-four students in their Master's degree and four students in their Doctoral degrees. She has served as associate advisor for numerous Masters and Doctoral students, and provides research experiences for many undergraduates into her research laboratory each year. She currently serves as major advisor for five Masters students and one Doctoral student.

Areas of Expertise

Community-based Interventions, Flavor, Smell, Nutrition, Food Preference, Taste, Health Promotion, Obesity

Education

University of Connecticut
Ph.D. Nutritional Sciences

Rush University
M.S. Human Nutrition

Cornell University
B.S. Human Ecology

Accomplishments

Associate Fellow

5-year appointment, Pierson College, Yale University, New Haven, CT

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