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Our Eating Skills Need Upgrading

OKLAHOMA CITY police administrators have declared war on obesity, questioning whether an overweight officer can do his job.

The department's psychologist is aiming to improve "eating skills" of those involved, probably an unsuspected deficiency in most cases. Proficiency with knife and fork has been more often regarded as a cause of obesity than as a cure.

The psychologist refers to eating too fast and eating in the presence of stimuli, such as TV. Also eating too often.

A stimulus for participation is offered those in reducing groups. They will pay penalties of \$1 a pound for weight they don't lose and collect \$2 a pound for weight they lose. A computer might be needed to calculate this into the family food budget.

A German proverb says "man is what he eats," but are we to infer that the more we eat, the more of a man we could become?

The Public Health Service reported that in 1975, latest year's figures available, 1,109 persons among eve-

ry 100,000 in the U.S. population died prematurely because of obesity. It was not stated how it was determined when these persons might have died "maturely," had they not weighed so much.

Health experts say obesity usually is a result of too much food and too little work or exercise. With citizens complaining of overwork and food costs, we should be a nation of svelte people.

It isn't working that way, even with jogging. Americans seem to have a propensity for becoming overweight, regardless of cost.

"The problem does not lie with the food, but with the people," the director of the Department of Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association told a cattlemen's meeting at Stillwater last year. "People pay lip service to health while chewing their way to their graves."

An eastern food expert has criticized promotional practices of the food industry for encouraging people to fill up on various products because consumers no longer know which foods are good for them. Im-

agine a food company advertising: "This food is unattractive and tastes awful, but buy it because it is good for you!"

Losing weight isn't the only goal of dieters. Some want to look better, rearrange their weight, protect their hearts, lower blood pressure, overcome depression or calm their restlessness.

They try to do these things with more fiber; nothing but organic foods, brown rice and whole grain breads, vinegar and honey, no meat, no vegetables, no milk or, ultimately, no food at all.

A couple of months ago, Medical World News magazine reported that an Ohio doctor has performed 50 "gastric stapling" operations with "very promising results." This involves closing off most of the stomach with overlapping stainless steel staples so that meals will bypass a portion of the food absorbing system.

Elsewhere, compulsive eaters have had their mouths wired shut, a device that could have desirable side effects in some cases.