

THE Cravings SOLUTION



**Presented by
Mike Geary**

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Presented By Mike Geary, "The Nutrition Watchdog"

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MY DISCLAIMER

The legal mumbo-jumbo aside, the truth is that you can go ahead and ask your physician for nutrition advice – but don't expect to get quality answers.

This will offend a LOT of people, but most doctors simply have no clue of what you should eat.

In fact, one study showed that more than 50% of doctors have LESS nutritional knowledge than their patients (which are mostly clueless too). (Reference: Am J Clin Nutr September 1993 vol. 58 no. 3 319-325)

The simple fact that hospitals still serve junk like sugar-laden Jell-O and other processed foods to their patients proves once again that you should never rely on the medical industry to give you nutrition advice.

The only way you can get a different body and life is by taking different steps than the millions of overweight people in the US and around the world. It starts by getting information from independent sources that really care about your results.

Thankfully, that's what you're doing right now.

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Cravings Suck.

Everyone gets cravings.

Trust me – even the leanest and healthiest people I know crave the same foods you do, often on a constant basis.

The thing is: They learned where their cravings come from, and how to deal with them.

I hear you already: “But shouldn’t we be able to listen to our bodies and eat intuitively?”

I wish.

While eating intuitively can help you to some extent – by reducing stress in your life, among other things – it inevitably leads to fat gain and misery in the kind of environment we’re in.

US is often the country cited in many examples of how bad the food around us really is and how out-of-hand the obesity epidemic becomes – but the truth is that countries all around the world are getting fatter as they switch to the processed, lifeless “American diet”.

That's why obesity rates have risen three-fold or more since 1980 in some areas of North America, the United Kingdom, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific Islands, Australasia and China.¹

The secret to ward off cravings AND reduce stress around food, dieting and fat loss is knowledge.

I’m confident that once you understand that willpower has very little to do with how well you manage your cravings – and once you’re armed with my 13 craving killers – you’ll finally be able to shut them off forever.



Craving Killer #1:

Understand Cravings

Know your enemy and know yourself and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster. — Sun Tzu, Chinese philosopher

Listen to the wise man. You can't win the battle against cravings if you don't understand what triggers them.

By the way: You're not alone in this situation... 100% of all women and 75% of all men crave various foods.² I personally crave chocolate — the most craved food in America.

The thing is — I've learned to deal with my cravings the healthy way. It all starts with learning these little-known truths about cravings.

Cravings Are Social

Research consistently finds that cravings are most often related to social rather than nutritional cues.² In plain English, you'll crave foods that you come across often in your environment or that's popular in your culture.

For most us, this means we are likely to crave French fries and greasy chemical-laden burgers, unfortunately.

Understand that there's no such thing as a universal food craving. Many Japanese women actually crave sushi,³ and other people all around the world crave foods that may sound disgusting to us — like the Vietnamese and Cambodian that regularly eat fertilized duck embryos.⁴

We Crave Foods We Eat Often

A study performed by at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia proved that we start to crave whatever foods we eat in large quantities.

The researchers put study subjects on a vanilla-flavored drink low in saturated fat. After consuming it every day for two weeks, about a third of the subjects reported craving the drink, even though the researchers pointed out, "It was chalky and not very yummy."⁵

You Crave What You Can't Eat

Restricting yourself from certain foods and putting them in that "forbidden" category might be the worst thing to do to ward off cravings.

For example — as Marcia Pelchat, a food psychologist at the Monell Chemical Senses Center put it² — the simple fact that you're waiting in a long line at the cinema and unable to buy your popcorn might make you crave it even more — even if it's not the world's best popcorn.

High-Sugar + High-Fat = Cravings

The equation is pretty simple.

Foods that contain a boatload of sugar and fat at the same time bombard your brain's pleasure receptors (dopamine), shutting them down to prevent overload.

After a while, this means you don't get the same satisfaction from simply eating the food you've been craving anymore — you have to stuff yourself and binge.

We Often Crave Memories

Sensory memory food cravings activate the same parts of the brain that drug and alcohol cravings do, including the hippocampus, which helps store memories; the insula, involved in perception and emotion; and the caudate, which is important for learning and memory.

That's why you probably crave foods that made you feel good when you were young.

You Can Crave Foods You Don't Like

People usually crave foods they enjoy – but not always. It's possible to like a food without craving it, and crave a food without liking it.

This is also true for non-food cravings like those people with pica experience. This condition leads them to eat objects like nails, sofa stuffing or anything that's usually not eatable⁶ – and eventually get featured on TLC.⁷

Summary

- + Everyone has cravings.
- + Cravings have little to do with your personal preferences, but are related to your environment and habits.
- + You're not born or stuck with cravings; they can be modified to your liking with the techniques you're going to learn in the next pages.

Craving Killer #2:

Understand Hunger

I could eat a horse!

— Popular idiom

Hunger and cravings are closely related, but they're not the same. The thing is – if you're trying to burn more fat, chances are you'll have to learn how to control your portions better.

Normally, your appetite should match your nutritional needs – which means you would naturally stop eating when you had enough food, enough calories or enough nutrients.

But more often than not, various factors screw up your hunger mechanisms and you end up being hungry all the time.

The following little-known truths about hunger will help you understand it better and finally take control of your cravings.

Satiation And Satiety Are Very Different

Let me define these two words:

Satiation: the factors which make us stop eating

Satiety: the factors that cause us to feel hungry or not hungry

The tricky thing is – these two processes are very different, and follow very different mechanisms in your body.

For example, if all that's available to eat is cotton candy, you'll soon be satiated, with no desire to eat more – but you won't experience satiety, because you'll still be hungry for real food. This proves once again that taste buds have nothing to do with reduction of hunger.⁸

The signal to shut down hunger is actually delivered when nutrients reach your intestinal wall,⁹ 2.5 to 3 hours after eating your meal, in some cases.

If your body is still screaming for nutrients, it will never send the signal to your body that it's fed well, and won't shut down your hunger properly.

Hunger Is Both Physiological And Psychological

Ever felt your stomach growling, your energy dipping and your hands shaking because you skipped breakfast? That's the physiological part of hunger.

No one ever talks about this, but hunger also has a strong psychological base.

For example, the mere thought of certain foods that are related with pleasant memories can trigger our "hunger". That's where cravings kick in.

It's OK To Be Hungry

Hunger is not an emergency mechanism that signals famine and a near-death experience. In our society where there's enough food around to stuff yourself to death, real hunger is nowhere to be found.

Do you freak out if it's 12:01 PM and you usually take your first bite of lunch at noon? It's about time you learn to deal with hunger.

If you're imprisoned in a state where being hungry is very uncomfortable, I highly suggest you try to fast for an entire 24 hours. You'll be surprised after you see what happens if you skip meals... exactly nothing.

That's right: You won't die, your metabolism won't be destroyed and chances are that your hunger will eventually die off too. A very eye-opening experience for most people.

The Size Of Your Stomach Doesn't Matter

Most people think that their hunger is somehow related to the size of their stomach, and that it can “stretch” out of control until they feel hungry all the time, for the rest of their life.

I call B.S.

In one study, only 14% of people who had lap-band surgeries maintained their weight loss long-term, which clearly shows that the size of your stomach doesn't affect your food intake or hunger.¹⁰

Your Hunger Is Triggered By Your Environment

A lot of proponents of the “eat intuitively” mentality say that we should naturally be able to eat foods our body needs, in the quantities it needs. Yes, we should.

In reality, a lot of external factors affect how much we eat and how much we feel “hungry” for certain foods:

- + The mere sight of food – like on TV ads – can trigger hunger¹¹
- + Food served in larger plates leads you to eat more.¹² In one study, participants ate 71% more pasta if served in a bigger bowl¹³
- + People eat more from a candy dish right in front of them but much less from a candy dish 6 feet away.¹⁴

Summary

- + Satiety – which means your body sends you the signal that it's fed – can only happen with the right nutrients intake. In plain English, you can never effectively curb your hunger with processed foods that contain no nutrients.
- + Hunger won't kill you.

Doing a 24-hour fast is a very eye-opening experience. Try it.
- + The size of your stomach has little to do with your hunger.
- + Hunger can be physiological (your body NEEDS food) – but more often than not it's triggered by psychological cues in your environment.

Craving Killer #3: Stop Dieting

Oh I can't have that. I'm on a diet.

– 99% of people on January 1st

What do the New Year's resolutions crowd in January and the "beach-ready" crowd in April have in common? These avid dieters are setting themselves up for failure by being on a diet that's too restrictive.

That may be why 2/3 of American dieters regain all the weight they lose within a year, and 97% gain it all back within five years.¹⁵

Dieting Doesn't Work. Period.

Changing 100% of your food habits and sticking to bland cabbage soup for 8 weeks straight may help you shed some pounds short term, but it's also a surefire way to gain all the weight back and develop a screwed up relationship with food.

Look, I'm not the only one saying that dieting doesn't work. Science does too:

- + Studies show that most people end up **GAINING** weight when dieting^{16,17}
- + Dieting is proven to increase stress and cortisol in your body,^{18,19,20} which increases your hunger²¹ (how ironic)
- + The average cost of a weight loss diet is \$85.79 a week, 58% more than the \$54.44 that the average single American spends on food²²
- + Up to 50% of women are on a diet at any given time²³
- + Up to 90% of teenagers diet regularly

But the scariest statistic is that 35% of people who start by dieting occasionally become addicted to dieting.

Just to highlight the ridicule of it all, let me sum it up in a single sentence...

As we speak, 50% of all women are on a diet that's proven to cause weight gain, increase stress and cortisol levels, increase hunger and cost 58% more than healthy and sustainable eating habits.

Is this the definition of insanity? You tell me.

Why You NEED Treats

If you think having occasional treats shows a lack of will-power and dedication, gimme a break. This kind of extreme thinking and obsession about perfection is never healthy and sustainable – even in competitive bodybuilders or high performance athletes.

The question you need to ask yourself is: Will this make much of a difference? Will having a treat meal once in a while screw up 100% of my results?

The answer is no, it won't.

Aim to eat clean at least 90% of the time, and use the remaining 10% to eat foods you like and crave. It's as simple as that.

Still not convinced that you can have your treats and still lose weight? This should help you change your mind:

- + One study determined that eating what you like induces a stronger decrease of "wanting" to eat²⁴
- + One 2003 study at the University College in London found that subjects who ate chocolate only in the middle of a meal or just after were more successful at giving it up than those who ate it on an empty stomach
- + A study of 98 female students at the University of Pennsylvania found that the more people try to restrict a food they like, the more they crave it

Also, remember that restricting calories for more than a day decreases your leptin levels²⁵ – one of the most important fat burning hormones.

Eating a high-carb, high-calorie meal (that's comprised of your favorite treat foods) once in while will help you "reset" your leptin and fat loss.^{26,27}

Summary

- + Dieting and restriction don't work – they are proven to make you gain weight and screw up your mind.
- + Having treat foods you like and crave 10% or less of the time is OK, and will keep you sane.
- + Having occasional treat foods will also reset your fat burning hormone leptin. How cool is that?

Craving Killer #4:

Change The Way You Eat

“Ready? Go!”

– The judge of a hot-dog eating contest

Are you eating so fast that people might think you’re a competitive eater? I know I do.

If I were a thin Asian man, I know people could have mistakenly asked me for autographs. Not something I’m proud about.

You see, the way you eat often reflects how well you deal with cravings and hunger.

Here are some techniques I’m trying to implement that’ll help you portion control better, feel full faster and shut down cravings effectively.

Eat Smaller Bites

As a fast eater who likes to take huge bites and plow through a tasty meal in seconds, I know how boring this sounds. But give it a try: Eating with small bite sizes rather than with large bite sizes has been shown to reduce food intake by 50%.²⁸

Stop Eating At 80% Full

In many cultures, stopping before feeling completely full and even stuffed is a common thing to do:²⁹

- ✦ Throughout India, Ayurvedic tradition advises eating until 75% full
- ✦ The Japanese practice *hara hachi bu*, eating until 80% full
- ✦ Islamic guidance from the Qur’an indicates that excess eating is a sin
- ✦ The Chinese specify eating until 70% full
- ✦ The prophet Muhammad described a full belly as one containing 1/3 food, 1/3 liquid, 1/3 air (nothing)

- ✦ There is a German expression that says, “Tie off the sack before it gets completely full.”

The habit of stopping at 80% full will be very hard at first, but you’ll get used to it pretty quick and will realize that you end up feeling full 10-15 minutes after your meal.

Fix Your Plate Size

Endless studies show the simple relationship between the size of your plate and how much you eat.

Brian Wansik, a nutrition professor and the author of “Mindless Eating”, found that people who were given a secret “bottomless bowl” ate 75% more soup than those eating from standard bowls – but didn’t feel fuller at all.³⁰

In another very interesting study, moviegoers who had rated the popcorn as tasting pretty average ate 61% more popcorn if randomly given a large container than a smaller one.³¹

Replace your large plates and bowls with smaller ones, and you’ll naturally portion control better.

Don’t Drink Calories

If you’re stuck with cravings, sipping on drinking sugary drinks during the day is a really bad idea. Even pure orange juice will spike your blood sugar and end up increasing your hunger.

The other problem with liquid foods is that you can eat them way faster than solid foods, and that they don’t make you feel as full – even if you consume the same amount of calories.³²

Aside from tea and coffee – which are proven appetite suppressants if you drink them without added sugar – the only thing I recommend drinking is a protein drink like [BioTrust Low Carb™](#), especially after your workouts.

Don't Eat In Front Of The TV

Eating in front of the TV, computer or anything that causes extra distraction is shown to increase food intake.³³ If you can, take the time to eat your meal while chatting with your spouse, a friend, colleague or family member.

Change Your Goal

Never try to get rid of your hunger as fast as humanly possible and swallow your food without even chewing it.

Instead, the goal of a meal should be to finish feeling:

- + Better than when you started
- + Satisfied
- + Able to move on (not think about food until you are hungry again)
- + Energized
- + Mentally focused

Summary

- + To automatically eat less food, serve it in smaller plates, take smaller bites and avoid eating it in front of the TV.
- + Stop eating when 80% full. You'll feel satisfied after a couple minutes and will be able to stay focused for the rest of the day.
- + Never drink calories except for black coffee, tea or a protein shake (after your workout).

Craving Killer #5:

Eat Real food

If everyone ate nothing but what they could buy at a farmers' market, a lot of doctors and hospitals would go out of business and six-pack abs would be as common a sight as leaves on a tree.

— Jason Ferruggia, world-renowned strength coach

Well said, Jay.

Let me add something else: The best appetite suppressant is real food.

I'm talking about whole, unprocessed, 1-ingredient foods like fruits, veggies, nuts, eggs, coconut oil, beans, meat and fish. If you want to kill your cravings, these are your best allies, and for a lot of reasons...

Real Food Regulates Hunger

Because hunger (satiety) is never really satisfied before nutrients reach your intestinal wall,⁹ foods that are more nutritious are automatically more filling.

Real Food Is LESS Calorie Dense

Processed versions of common foods are almost always more calorie dense.

As an example, 100 g of potato chips will pack more than 563 calories, while 100 g of baked potatoes will only contain 93 calories.

Real Food Regulates Hormones

As you learned so far, hormones like leptin and insulin have huge effects on appetite and cravings.

The more you eat the right foods and avoid sugary processed foods, the more you'll keep everything under control.

Two Cravings Triggers To Avoid

If you struggle with cravings, always avoid aspartame and MSG (monosodium glutamate).

Aspartame has been shown to increase hunger³⁴ and promote fat gain,³⁵ while MSG is a food additive designed by the food industry that's proven to increase your appetite and make you hungry faster.^{36,37}

Summary

- + Eat more real foods and less man-made foods to reduce your hunger and cravings – and make you leaner in the process.
- + Avoid aspartame and MSG, both shown to increase hunger and cause a boatload of other undesirable side effects including fat gain.

Craving Killer #6:

Eat The Right Nutrients

It's not rocket science... simply eat the right foods. Okay, maybe this gets a little bit more complicated... – Me

Eating real food is the first step (see last page). Now, let's look at some macros and micronutrients that can help curb your appetite and kill your cravings.

Eat More Fat

Fat is one of the most efficient energy sources available, and a proven appetite suppressant. In one study, researchers proved that women who ate a high-fat yogurt ended up consuming fewer total calories than those who ate a low-fat snack.³⁸

Also – according to very influential researchers like Dr. Paul Jaminet, cravings for sweets could hide the fact that our body craves healthy fats.³⁹

Avocados, coconut products (milk, oil, etc.), grass-fed butter, eggs and fatty meats are all good sources of healthy fats.

Eat More Protein

Protein is also a very efficient appetite suppressant. A high protein diet increases the hormone known as peptide YY (PYY) – which aids fat loss and curbs appetite.⁴⁰

Protein is less calorie dense than fat, so a protein snacks like eggs, beef jerky, hummus or meat leftovers are your best bet to curb your appetite.

Eat More Omega-3 And Less Omega-6

The optimal omega-6 to 3 ratio is anywhere between 2.3:1 to 1:1, but it goes as high as 25:1 in favor of omega-6 in the U.S.⁴¹

Because a balanced intake of these essential fatty acids can help with appetite regulation,⁴² make sure to...

- + Ditch vegetable oils (full of omega-6, hidden trans fat and other nasty stuff)

- + Eat nuts and seeds in moderation (just a handful per serving)
- + Eat more wild-caught fish and grass-fed meats (both great sources of omega-3)
- + Use a high quality omega-3 supplement high in DHA and EPA if needed (like [BioTrust OmegaKrill 5X™](#))

Eat More Vitamins And Minerals

Nutrient deficiencies can increase your appetite and cravings.⁴³ Eat more real food, and you'll avoid most of the problems.

That being said, the sad truth is that our food is less nutritious than it used to be:

- + You would have to eat eight oranges today to get the same amount of vitamin A your grandparents got from a single orange 50 years ago⁴⁴
- + The amount of minerals in veggies dropped by up to 38% across the board in the last few decades^{45,46}

For that reason, I recommend taking a food-based greens supplement like [Athletic Greens®](#) to prevent any nutritional deficiency.

Summary

- + Fat and protein curb your appetite than carbs, so your snacks should include a combination of the first two.
- + Optimizing your omega-6 to 3 ratio with food or a high quality supplement will help you curb your appetite.
- + Nutritional deficiencies can increase your appetite. Eat plenty of veggies and fruits, and supplement if needed.

Craving Killer #7:

Eat Less Carbs And Sugar

“There is actually no requirement for any “essential dietary carbohydrates” in human nutrition.” – Mark Sisson, fitness author and blogger

Eating massive quantities of sugar or carbs is basically like buying a one-way ticket to Vegas: You’re going to have a great time for a while, but you know that things will get messy pretty fast.

High GI, Big Appetite

On top of being fattening and terrible for your health, sugar and carb abuse increase your appetite and trigger your cravings.

When a team of researchers gave either a high GI diet or a low GI diet to participant of a recent study, they discovered GLP-1, a gut hormone known to increase “fullness and suppression of appetite.”⁴⁷

In short, the more a meal spikes your blood sugar and insulin, the less filling it’s going to be.

Do Not Enter The Carb Madness Cycle

Normally, your body handles carbs by:

- ✦ Increasing insulin to take care of the nutrients
- ✦ Regulating your blood sugar
- ✦ Triggering your appetite again, but only when it needs energy

But when you abuse carbs, your body enters a confused state and starts processing carbs by:

- ✦ Increasing insulin, but in inordinately large amounts
- ✦ Making your blood sugar drop too low
- ✦ Giving you crazy cravings for carbs because your body thinks it needs more energy when it really doesn’t

In that case, listening to your body is a surefire way to stay in this dangerous cycle. Reduce your sugar and carbs consumption, and your body will regulate itself.

Fix Your Insulin

Insulin is one of the master hormones in your body, and can be a huge problem when it doesn’t work properly. Ever heard of diabetes?

Eating less sugar and carbs will help you regulate your insulin, a important key to regulate your appetite.⁴⁸

Fix Your Leptin

Too much sugar and carbs will eventually screw up every single process in your body. Leptin is no exception.

The concerning thing is: This important hormone plays a major role in regulating appetite and fat loss.⁴⁹

Reducing your sugar and carb consumption, having a treat meal at least every week, exercising regularly and implementing a healthy lifestyle will all help you regulate this critical hunger hormone.

Summary

- ✦ Sugar is fattening and dangerous for your health. Consume as little as possible.
- ✦ Unless you workout hours every single day, constant carb abuse will trigger your appetite and actually increase your carb cravings.
- ✦ By reducing your consumption of sugar and carbs and adopting a healthy lifestyle, you’ll naturally regulate both insulin and leptin, two key hormones in appetite regulation and fat loss.

Craving Killer #8:

Fix Your Brain

We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them. – Albert Einstein

It should be clear by now that cravings are as psychological as they are physical. So if you want to achieve your goals, you need to fix both your body and your brain.

Willpower Is Not Enough

Ever heard about how we only get a small amount of willpower every day?

Well, science now proves it. Laboratory tests of self-control showed that:⁵⁰

- ✦ Acts of self-control reduced blood glucose levels
- ✦ Low levels of blood glucose after an initial self-control task made the next self-control task more difficult
- ✦ Consuming a glucose (sugar) drink eliminated these impairments.
- ✦ The phenomenon is even worse for people with poor blood glucose control, such as diabetics

In plain English, you can't rely on your willpower and try to make yourself do things your body and mind don't feel like doing for a very long time — except if you grab a large soda (definitely not recommended).

Stop relying on willpower to fight cravings. Instead, use the techniques in this book to create the right environment for yourself and multiply your chances of success by many folds.

Always Be Learning

Time for a reality check and some honesty: This stuff won't be easy.

No matter how many more tips, tricks and techniques you learn, fighting cravings and developing a healthy and sustainable relationship with food is a life-long lesson.

But if you keep an open-minded attitude, you'll get where you want to go. When it comes to dealing with cravings, here are some things you need to focus on learning to make yourself stronger:

- ✦ Why are you eating? Are you craving certain foods in difficult situations?
- ✦ What healthy snacks can you grab quickly when cravings come up?
- ✦ Are you obsessing about your food choices? What can you do to reduce your stress around that area of your life?
- ✦ How is your body communicating real hunger?
- ✦ Are you saying things like: "This is who I am" or "I'll be stuck with this or that problem for the rest of my life"? These are the kind of limiting self-affirmations you want to replace with an open-minded attitude.

Train Your Taste

Processed foods you might crave were engineered to make your taste buds perfectly happy and stimulate your appetite. Never forget that sad fact.

It will feel weird, but the reason you might crave sugary or salty processed foods is... your "broken" taste buds.

You see, studies show that eating processed foods, sugar and added taste-stimulating ingredients like monosodium glutamate (MSG) will desensitize your taste buds — making everything natural appear bland and boring to you.

If you're eating a diet consisting of more than 10% processed foods or a lot of sugar (or both!), then eating whole foods for 3-4 weeks straight will completely change the way you taste food. After a while, some fruits might even feel too sugary for you.

Change Your Cravings

Here's the part where you'll need a very open-minded attitude.

The truth is that cravings can be changed, like any idea that seems to be "stuck" in your head.

Many people have changed their eating habits or mindset, and ended up craving salad instead of fast food.

If you want to train your mind to crave a certain food, use the different techniques you've learned so far:

- + Eat the food you're trying to crave more often
- + Make sure that food is somehow related to a happy memory
- + Season that food properly (with healthy toppings, though)
- + Think about how much you love that food, even if it sounds like a lie to you for the moment

Warning: People will think you're a weirdo when they see you craving salad, coconut milk and grass-fed beef. But that's another thing you need to learn to deal with.

Summary

- + You only get a small amount of willpower each day. Use it wisely.
- + Keep an open mind about new foods, new habits and a new lifestyle. If you catch yourself thinking that "That's the way you are...", stop.
- + You can change what foods you crave with focused work on your mind, or at least change how you deal with cravings in general.

Craving Killer #9:

Ward Them Off

"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."

— Abraham Lincoln

What the wise Mr. Lincoln meant was: Preparation is key.

If you let cravings take control of your life and dictate how you act and feel around food, the battle is over.

Instead, I suggest you practice these 5 tricks to shut down cravings as soon as they appear.

Drink A Glass Of Water

Hunger and hydration are closely related. Whenever you find yourself craving something sweet, drink a large glass of water and see if that helps you.

If you want to add some taste to your water, add a bit of lemon juice and some stevia.

Modify Your Environment

If you crave bread, why would you keep the bread basket on the table at the restaurant? Bad plan.

Ask the waitress to take it away, or you'll be basically torturing yourself and inevitably increasing your stress.

The same thing applies to where you choose to dine out, what kind of food you keep in your fridge and who you hang out with. Set yourself up for success, not for failure.

Eat Something

This may sound silly, but I still see a lot of people who are trying to ward off cravings with their willpower, thinking they are "strong enough" to resist temptations.

The more you try to resist, the more you're tapping into your limited reserves of willpower. Once they are depleted, you'll feel deprived and weak.

Instead, grab a piece of fruit or a handful of nuts anytime you feel a craving coming up.

Studies on dieters' psychology have proven over and over that eating snacks high in fat and protein like nuts will actually reduce the total amount of calories you eat in a day, even though they are very calorie dense.^{51, 52}

Brush Your Teeth

If you're just opening the fridge and pantry out of sheer boredom, go brush your teeth.

This may sound silly, but a lot of people report not having the intention of mixing anything with the taste of their minty Colgate, effectively shutting down their cravings.

Write Your Cravings List

Cravings are often emotional, but trying to rationalize and see the big picture is a good idea.

If you grab a coffee at your local Dunkin Donuts and end up getting crazy cravings for your favorite glazed donuts, grab a pen and paper and write down the exact kind you would like to eat.

Then, during your weekly treat meal, grab your list of things you crave and choose those that seem the most appealing to you. You might just find yourself thinking that you don't even crave them anymore.

Summary

- ✦ As soon as cravings appear, try drinking a large glass of water, grabbing a quick healthy snack like nuts and fruits or brushing your teeth to ward them off.
- ✦ Keep a list of foods you crave during the week, and enjoy them when it's time to have your treat meal.

Craving Killer #10:

Get Off The Couch

Exercise is the catalyst. That's what makes everything happen. — Jack LaLanne (rest in peace)

Exercise is essential to your health. Your body was designed to move, and ignoring that fact will guarantee problems in the long run. And it's also essential to control your appetite.

Will Exercise Increase My Appetite?

It depends.

Moderate to intense exercise is shown to suppress appetite,⁵³ while low-intensity activities like walking, jogging and biking can increase your hunger hormones.

Now, is this a good reason to avoid physical activity that's not all out? I don't think so. Being active will affect every single organ in your body positively and will support your fat loss.

"I Don't Feel Like Exercising..."

If you have a hard time to find the motivation to exercise, here's what you need to do:

1. Start small. Literally start exercising for 1 minute a day, and gradually build up to 5 minutes. Then to 10 minutes. Then to 15. This approach will dramatically increase the chance you'll stick with your plan because it won't feel as invasive and painful as other "all-in" approaches.

2. Create a routine. People that work out at the same time each day perform better and experience less fatigue, because it eventually becomes their second nature.⁵⁴

Don't Play Mind Games

While regular exercise helps regulate your appetite, it can be a trigger for some heavy self-delusion.

If you "reward" yourself with more food every time you exercise, you'll automatically increase your cravings after your workouts. Stop it.

Instead, enjoy your rewards during your weekly treat meal and celebrate how well you did that week.

Summary

- + Exercise — especially when moderate to intense — is shown to regulate appetite.
- + Never eat more food to reward yourself just after exercise. This is a surefire way to develop a very unhealthy relationship with food.
- + Keep your reward system around your weekly treat meal(s).

Craving Killer #11:

Get Your ZZZ's

ZzZzZzZ... what? – Me, sleeping in front of my computer while writing this book because I clearly lack sleep...

Who am I to talk? As I'm writing these lines, I've had an average of 5 hours of sleep a night for the past several months. The joy of entrepreneurship.

But at the same time, this whole sleep deprivation makes me able to tell you the truth: My cravings are way more frequent when I'm not sleeping enough.

Sleep And Appetite

On top of affecting your energy, hormones, recovery, performance, etc., **lack** of sleep is shown to:

- + Stimulate your appetite⁵⁵
- + Worsen glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity⁵⁶ – which means that you don't feel as full eating the same foods and that you'll be more likely to store fat
- + Increases your brain's susceptibility to food stimuli⁵⁷

When you don't sleep enough and wake up hungry, I highly suggest you break the cycle by having a breakfast that contains both fat and protein, like eggs with pasture-raised bacon or sausages.

How To Fix Night Cravings

If you wake up in the middle of the night and crave certain foods, you probably have a night-eating syndrome.⁵⁸

While this sounds scary, it simply means that your leptin and ghrelin hormones – important appetite regulators – are phased forward by a couple hours and that you get hungry ahead of what

you should.

Some researchers hypothesize that this condition is closely related to an overstressed body.⁵⁹

Here are some tricks to fix it:

- + Don't fast and don't skip meals (even if you're a fan of intermittent fasting)
- + Eat a big breakfast comprised of both protein and fat
- + Eat 3-4 meals a day, but don't snack throughout the day
- + Reduce your sugar intake, which can disrupt your leptin hormone
- + If you train a lot, reduce your volume for 1 or 2 weeks
- + Stretch more – a good relaxation session is shown to reduce late night eating⁶⁰
- + Get some sun or use a light therapy device – this is shown to reduce sleep problems⁶¹

How To Sleep Better

A good night of sleep is closely related to your environment.

Always make sure that...

- + You get off electronic devices 2 hours before bed (watching a lighted screen will screw up your sleep cycle)
- + You never keep electronic devices in your room, even your cellphone
- + You relax or meditate daily
- + You go to bed earlier

- + You sleep in a pitch dark room
- + You avoid caffeine after 3 PM
- + You reduce the temperature in your bedroom – between 60 and 68°F seems like the sweet spot

If you still have problems sleeping even when changing your habits, consider supplementing with melatonin for a while. Never rely solely on supplementation, though.

Summary

- + Lack of sleep will increase your appetite dramatically.
- + To sleep better, reduce your stress and create the right environment.

Craving Killer #12:

Fix Your Gut

“All diseases begin in the gut”

– Hippocrates (460-370 BC)

Good health starts in the gut, and more and more leaders in the health community are starting to accept that important fact.

70% of your immune system is actually in your gut, where 3-4 pounds of good bacteria fight against bad bacteria.

Fix Your Gut, Fix Your Appetite

Gut health and appetite are closely related.

In one study,⁶² subjects given antibiotics – which destroy healthy bacteria – had ghrelin levels increased by 6 folds.

A huge bump in ghrelin equals an increased appetite and sends your body the signal to store more belly fat.⁶³

How To Fix Your Gut

Keeping your gut healthy is all about eating well and living a healthy lifestyle, because it's a reflection of your overall health.

Some specific tricks to fix your gut:

- + Avoid food allergens – get tested to discover what foods might harm your gut and entire body (gluten, dairy, soy, peanuts, etc.)
- + Consume more probiotics – in fermented foods like sauerkraut or high quality supplements like [BioTrust Pro-X10™](#)
- + Avoid sugar— it actually feeds bad bacteria in your gut

- + Avoid processed foods
- + Avoid the use of antibiotics
- + Get plenty of sleep
- + Exercise regularly

Summary

- + Your gut is closely related to your appetite and entire health.
- + Fixing your gut starts by eliminating foods that harm it – and adding extra probiotics to support it.

Craving Killer #13:

Stay Hydrated

“Water is the driving force of all nature.”

— Leonardo da Vinci

Water is essential to life. Here's the proof: If you never drank water, you would not be reading these words right now.

Turns out water is also essential to keep your appetite and cravings in control.

The Water Trick

If you want to control your portions the easy way, simply drink a large glass of water (500 ml or about 16 oz.) before each meal.

One study applying this technique on overweight adults discovered that participants dropped up to 4% body fat in 3 months because they naturally ate less.⁶⁵

Another interesting study found that drinking 500 ml of water makes your body use 24% more calories during the next 60 minutes.⁶⁶ The researchers figured that this is because your body has to expend energy to bring your hydration in balance.

Reduce Sugar Cravings

If you crave carbs and sugar, that's a good sign you might be dehydrated.

Here's how it works.

Your brain has a very high demand for water, which it only can get from blood flow. When you eat carbs and sugar, you increase your blood sugar, which increases blood flow to the brain.⁶⁷ Not the best technique, if you ask me.

By staying hydrated and exercising regularly, you'll avoid these useless cravings and keep your brain happy.

Summary

- + Drinking a large glass of water before every meal is a great technique to portion control.
- + Dehydration increases your hunger and cravings for carbs.
- + To stay hydrated, make sure you drink water throughout the day and consume enough sodium if you exercise intensely.

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