



Food Cravings

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Do you get sick more than once a year?

A comprehensive blood analysis includes many markers which can determine how severe an illness may be, if there are problematic conditions developing and what exactly the body needs to fight off those infections.

Underlying causes of inflammation, infection, and environmental exposures can also be recognized with a complete metabolic analysis.

Dosages for supplements vary according to age, weight and severity of illness.

Getting tested lends objective guidance to developing a lifestyle program and supplement recommendations unique to each individual.

Whether it's a late night trip to the refrigerator or a mid-day break room encounter, many people experience food cravings throughout the day. Is there a reason why we feel the need to consume more calories right before bedtime and why most of the time the cravings are for unhealthy, fattening foods?

Focusing on controlling these cravings and opting for healthier snacks should become a daily habit, especially with trends like obesity and diabetes increasing. By understanding why you're experiencing these cravings we can come up with solutions to provide you with healthier and more beneficial options.

There is actually a science behind the consumer's addiction to eating the whole bag of potato chips or whole box of crackers. Processed foods are engineered down to an exact formula using math, science, regression analysis, and energy to find the perfect amount of salt, sugar and fat in products to ignite our taste buds.

Expressions researchers in the food industry use to define what's appealing to consumers are terms like mouth feel, maximum bite force, and sensory specific satiety.¹ In a study funded by Unilever (one of the world's largest food companies) researchers found that consumers even perceived a potato chip as crisper and fresher simply based on the sound level of the crunch. They determined these consumers are often unaware of the influence of such auditory cues¹. Did you know that even the reason behind the round shape of chocolate candies has a purpose? The softer shape is comforting and allows the morsel to melt more evenly on the tongue which triggers the proper taste buds to create a satisfying response in the brain.¹

How do they do it? "Salt, sugar and fat are the three pillars of the processed food industry," Michael Moss, author and investigator of the New York Times said after he spent four years prying open the secrets of the food industry's scientists. "And while the industry hates the word 'addiction' more than any other word, the fact of the matter is, their research has shown them that when they hit the very perfect amounts of each of those ingredients ... they will have us buy more, eat more."¹

To mask the bitterness or sourness that the formulations can cause, the food industry uses flavour enhancers. Preservatives are also used to increase shelf life. So the jumbo box of crackers you purchase will stay fresh for months.

One of the most common flavour enhancers is Monosodium Glutamate (MSG). MSG is an excitotoxin, a substance that overexcites cell neurons causing cell damage, and eventually, cell death. These excitotoxins are able to enter and cause damage to the brain which can lead to abnormal development. *Read more about MSG in our August 2006 Newsletter.* You might even see MSG under different names such as hydrolyzed soy protein, yeast extract, or "natural flavors". It adds flavor to the canned chicken soups and salad dressings used by many American home cooks, as well as the cheese of Goldfish crackers in many of your children's lunchboxes. Nacho-cheese-flavor Doritos contain five separate forms of glutamate!² Imagine what they would taste like without it?

References:

1. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/story/2013/03/05/f-vp-crowe-food-addiction.html>
2. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/05/dining/05glute.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

Federal Law requires that we warn you of the following:
1. Your individual health status and any required health care treatments can only be properly addressed by a professional healthcare provider of your choice.
2. The information provided in this newsletter has not been evaluated by the FDA.

Bruce Bradley, a former food industry executive says, "We're not talking about food actually being real anymore. It's synthetic, completely contrived and created, and there's so many problems about that because our bodies are tricked and when our bodies are tricked repeatedly dramatic things can happen, like weight gain" or endocrine disruption, diabetes and hypertension." ¹

Instead of simply blaming the industry for our food cravings, we need to take a step back and take responsibility for our guilty indulgences and late night binges. One of the most simple and overlooked problem solvers is exercise. Not only does exercise boost your mood and get you in shape, but it also releases endorphins... the same neurotransmitter that chocolate releases.

Peppers, spicy foods, and protein are also endorphin releasers that help you stay focused, more alert, and can lift a depressed spirit. You may even want to try a massage or acupuncture. Trained Acupuncturist's can utilize a well documented protocol to help alleviate food cravings, sometimes in as few as 2-3 treatment sessions.

Are you getting enough sleep? Multiple studies show sleep deprivation leads to food cravings (especially targeting sugar and carbohydrates). This is due to the fact that sleep deprivation negatively affects the production of a hormone called Leptin (a hormone responsible for telling the body when it's full), making one want to consume more calories than actually needed.

Sugary and caffeinated beverages (such as soda and energy drinks that many depend on for their mid-day "pick me up") are over-consumed and a non-nutritive food. Basically, you're spending time filling up your tank with volume that's incapable of helping your body heal/repair or overcome infections. In fact, consuming those foods actually reduces your body's ability to heal/repair and increases inflammation. The two most common ingredients found in energy drinks are sugar and caffeine, both of which provide temporary stimulation but can result in actual long-term energy loss and increased inflammation. Also, the processed sugar in energy drinks and soda overwhelms the pancreas, which over time can lead toward diabetes.

Opt for a glass of ice water with fresh organic lemon squeeze or try and snack on protein sources. Energy-efficient snacks like almonds, a fresh piece of fruit, or even a couple bites of leftover chicken balance high-quality calories with the nutrients needed to convert calories into enduring energy. These may seem unappetizing to you but this is exactly what the processed food companies have designed. When you eat their foods containing flavor enhancers, it makes natural foods taste less desirable. Now you've got to go through the pain and discipline of retraining your taste buds.

Another reason why you might be craving those sweet and salty foods may be a deficiency of certain minerals. Common deficiencies of magnesium, chromium, iron, zinc or calcium can all contribute to different types of cravings. But how do you know for sure what you're deficient in?

The best way to find out exactly what you need is to test for it. By getting a comprehensive blood test and tissue mineral analysis, your individualized results can explain what lifestyle habits and deficiencies may be contributing towards the imbalances of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. It's also important to test because being short on key nutrients can lead to many illnesses and diseases, and in children, a failure to grow to their fullest potential. Contact us for a professional assessment and laboratory analysis to detect *your body's* biochemical and physiological state. Let us help you get on the road to better health...today!