

Causes of Cravings and Balancing Foods

The body is amazing. It knows when to go to sleep, wake up, go to the bathroom, maintain 98.6 degrees, and tighten the eyes when the light gets bright. It knows the miracle of pregnancy and childbirth. Your heart never misses a beat. Your lungs are always breathing. The body is a super-computer, and it never makes mistakes.

Look at the foods, deficits and behaviors in your life that are the underlying causes of your cravings. Many people view cravings as weakness, but really they are important messages meant to assist you in maintaining balance. When you experience a craving, deconstruct it. Ask yourself, what does my body want and why?

The 8 primary causes of cravings are:

- 1. Dehydration.** The body doesn't send the message that you are thirsty until you are on the verge of dehydration. Dehydration occurs as mild hunger, so the first thing to do when you get a strange craving is to drink a full glass of water.
- 2. Lack of primary food.** Being dissatisfied with a relationship, or having an inappropriate exercise routine (too much, too little, or the wrong type), being bored, stressed, uninspired by a job, or lacking a spiritual practice, may all cause emotional eating. Eating can be used as a substitute for entertainment, or to fill the void of primary food.
- 3. Yin/yang imbalance.** Certain foods have more yin qualities (expansive) while other foods have more yang qualities (contractive). Eating foods that are either extremely yin or extremely yang causes cravings in order to maintain balance. For example, eating a diet too rich in sugar (yin) may cause a craving for meat (yang). Eating too many raw foods (yin) may cause cravings for extremely cooked (dehydrated) foods or vice versa.
- 4. Inside coming out.** Oftentimes, cravings come from foods that we have recently eaten, foods eaten by our ancestors or foods from our childhood. A clever way to satisfy these cravings is to eat a healthier version of one's ancestral or childhood foods.
- 5. Seasonal.** Often the body craves foods that balance out the elements of the season. In the spring, people crave detoxifying foods like leafy greens or citrus foods. In the summer, people crave cooling foods like fruit, raw foods and ice cream, and in the fall people crave grounding foods like squash, onions and nuts. During winter many crave hot and heat-producing foods like meat, oil and fat. Cravings can also be associated with the holidays, for foods like turkey, eggnog, or sweets, etc.
- 6. Lack of nutrients.** If the body has inadequate nutrients, it will produce odd cravings. For example, inadequate mineral levels produce salt cravings, overall inadequate nutrition produces cravings for non-nutritional forms of energy like caffeine.



7. Hormonal (women). When the body experiences menstruation, pregnancy or menopause, fluctuating testosterone and estrogen levels may cause strange cravings.

8. De-evolution. When things are going extremely well, sometimes a self-sabotage syndrome happens. We crave foods that throw us off, thus creating more cravings to balance ourselves. This often happens from low blood sugar and may result in strong mood swings.

Balancing Foods

When your diet is dominated by balancing foods, your overall condition, including your mental and emotional states, become more balanced and under control.

Green and Leafy Vegetables

These include broccoli, cabbage, collard greens, kale, mustard greens, chards, and watercress. These foods provide an abundance of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and immune-busting and cancer fighting substances that restore health.

Sweet Vegetables

These include sweet potatoes, yams, parsnips, carrots, onions, rutabaga, and squash. These vegetables provide energy, flavor, and satiety. They also provide gentle elevation in blood sugar, without causing the extreme highs or lows associated with processed foods.

Vegetable Proteins

These include tofu, tempeh, beans, lentils, and some whole grains, like quinoa and brown rice.

Whole, Unprocessed Grains

Whole grains are grains that remain largely in their original state, meaning as nature created them. In the vast majority of cases, they have not been processed or altered. Whole grains include brown rice, barley, quinoa, buckwheat, kamut, corn, millet, and wheat. Whole grains are absorbed slowly by the body, thus keeping glucose and insulin levels low. At the same time, they provide long-lasting energy.

SuperFoods

These include, raw cacao beans (raw chocolate), Maca powder, Gogi berries, Green Superfood powders like; Berry greens, Chlorella, Barley, Spirulina, Blue-Green Algae, Alfalfa, Wheat grasses.

