

SUGAR CRAVINGS AND HOW TO BEAT THEM

Whoa Foods

Why do we get sugar cravings:

Go Foods

When you stop taking drugs and alcohol, you will often crave sugar. This is because sugar causes the brain to release large quantities of dopamine, which gives a 'pleasure' feeling, causing a strong urge to have sugary foods & drinks, as you withdraw.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter or 'chemical messenger' that can cause disruption to the normal flow of chemicals in the brain, causing the body to feel 'pleasure' when anticipating a 'reward'.

Drugs and alcohol can also result in a surge of dopamine in the brain, like a 'reward', unfortunately causing these negative health behaviours to be associated with pleasure.

Sugar has no nutritional value. If taken in excess it can cause an increased risk of obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, tooth decay and depression.

See our Top Tips to help you beat these sugar cravings.



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SUGAR CRAVINGS: TOP TIPS



Replace:

Cakes & biscuits with
currant buns, nuts,
fruit or banana bread
or rice pudding and
yogurts.

Eat regular meals:

(Breakfast, lunch &
dinner) or aim for 6
smaller meals a day
plus 1-2 healthy
snacks.

Keep yourself hydrated:

Choose water, milk
or 150ml of pure
unsweetened fruit juice
/ smoothie per day.
Limit caffeinated drinks
– including coffee, diet
coke, Pepsi and energy
drinks.

Eat enough:

Protein:

Protein foods help your body
repair cells, including your
brain and improves your
bodies ability to produce and
regulate dopamine, without
the need for sugar! Choose
foods like eggs, nuts, beans,
mackerel, sardines, lean
meat, peas, baked beans and
lentils.

Fruit & vegetables:

Eat a rainbow of colours for
vitamins, minerals and fibre,
with natural sweetness to
help you feel fuller for longer.
Try to increase to 5-a-day.

Starchy Foods:

Choose wholegrain types of
breads, pasta and cereals to
keep you fuller for longer.
Have every day with every
meal.

Keep active:

And get as much
natural sunlight as
possible.

Distract yourself for 15-20 min:

Read, go for a walk,
try some relaxing
activities like colouring
/ crosswords. If the
urge to eat goes away
it was a craving rather
than a hunger!

Give yourself a break:

From sugary snacks or
drinks.

Get plenty of sleep.

Be mindful: Eat slowly and enjoy every bite!



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Milk, cheese, yogurt, fromage frais, dairy alternatives with added calcium, canned sardines, pilchards, salmon with bones, tofu, kale, bread, pitta bread

Calcium

Some fruit & vegetables including banana, blackcurrants, spinach, parsnip, beetroot, dried fruit, chicken, turkey, red meat, fish, wholegrain breakfast cereals.

Potassium

Fruit – citrus, blackcurrants, strawberries, kiwi, green vegetables, peppers & tomatoes

Vitamin C

Liver, cheese, eggs, green leafy vegetables, orange fruit & vegetables – carrot, cantaloupe melon, butternut squash

Vitamin A

Oily fish, vegetable oil, nuts & seeds

Omega 3 & Omega 6

Vitamins and Minerals to Support Your Liver

Vitamin D

Breakfast cereals with added vitamin D, oily fish, eggs and spreads. Sunshine (with sunscreen on)

Some nuts & seeds (Brazil, Cashews, sunflower seeds) eggs, fish, shellfish

Selenium

Iron

Beans, pulses, lentils, red meat, nuts & seeds, wholemeal bread, green leafy vegetables - kale, broccoli, spinach & dried fruit

Zinc

B1 (thiamine), B3 (niacin), B6 (pyridoxine), B9 (folate), B12 (cobalamin)

Meat, chicken, turkey, nuts & seeds, wholegrain breakfast cereal and wholegrain/seeded breads

Magnesium & Chromium

Bread, breakfast cereals with added B vitamins, nuts & seeds, meat, fish, shellfish, beans & peas, wholegrains, eggs, some fruit & vegetables e.g. bananas, avocado, green pepper, oranges, berries, green leafy vegetables, milk, cheese, quinoa.

Nuts & seeds (peanuts, almonds), wholegrain/wholemeal/seeded cereals & breads, oats, brown rice, quinoa. Meat & fish (turkey, chicken, lean beef, salmon, haddock), broccoli, kale, bananas, oranges, apples.



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They can be found in:
meat, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs,
cheese, yogurt, sunflower seeds,
legumes, broccoli

Role:
Antioxidant
Decrease cravings

NAC
(N-acetylcysteine)

They can be found in:
meat, eggs, yogurt, milk, cheese,
tofu, kidney beans, dark green leafy
vegetables, wholegrains

Role:
Regulates
neurotransmitters
Decrease cravings

L-glutamine

How to Feel Good With Foods That Have Natural Neurotransmitters (Chemical Messengers) to Help Support You and Your Liver

GABA
(gamma-aminobutyric
acid)

Role:
Decreases cravings
Calms the brain

They can be found in:
sweet potatoes, mushrooms, tomatoes, spinach,
kimchi, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, chard,
beans, peas, brown rice

5-HTP
(5-hydroxytryptophan)

Role:
Improves mood
Decrease cravings

5-HTP is not found in food but tryptophan, an
amino acid is and can be used to make 5-HTP.
This can be found in: full fat milk, soya milk,
quinoa, oats, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, tuna,
salmon, walnuts, cheese, pork, chicken & turkey,
bananas, pineapple, tomatoes.

DO NOT TAKE
these supplements without seeking health care professional advice.



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