



Suzanne Matthiessen

Conscious Eating: Making Informed Choices for Greater Health & Wellbeing > Sugar, Fat, & Salt





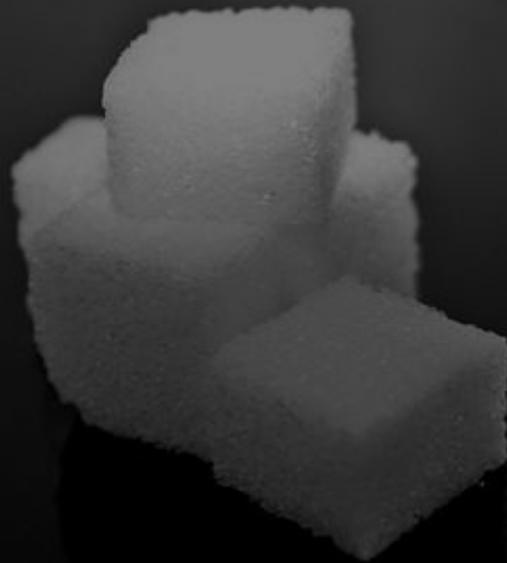
When we are stressed, we tend to crave foods high in sugar, fat, and/or salt. And many of us can't cram it into our gut fast enough. Do you actually want to give Big Food corporations the power to make you addicted to their junk - plus get sick in the process?

Desserts is Stressed spelled backwards.

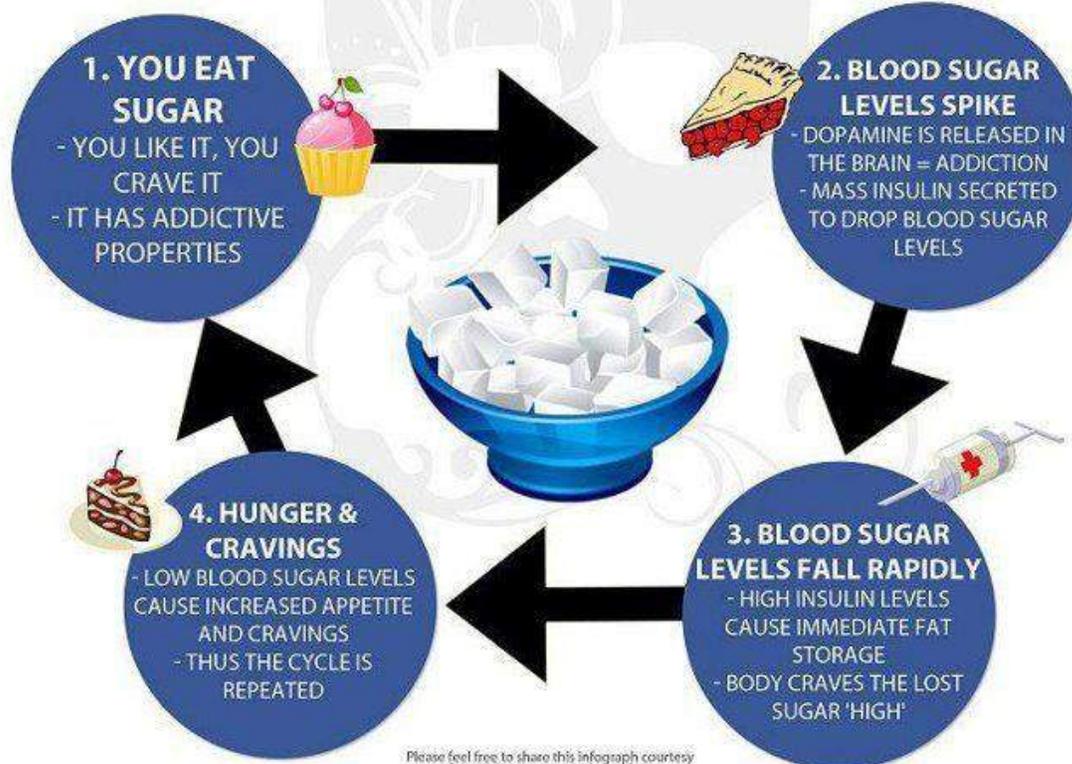
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Michael Moss, author of NY Times Bestselling books *Salt Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us* and *Hooked: Food, Free Will, and How the Food Giants Exploit Our Addictions* went inside the world of processed and packaged foods and learned how those three ingredients became key to their success — and how they are fueling the nationwide obesity epidemic.

His research exposed the reality that food companies hire scientists to dissect elements of the human palate and adjust ratios of salt, sugar and fat to optimize taste, the processed food industry. Moss demonstrated how these intentional calculations has hooked consumers on their products the same way the cigarette industry hooked smokers on nicotine.

Sugar



SUGAR ADDICTION: THE PERPETUAL CYCLE



Please feel free to share this infographic courtesy of WeightLossVanja.org/Sugar-Detox

Sugar is addictive. "Denial is not a River in Egypt..."

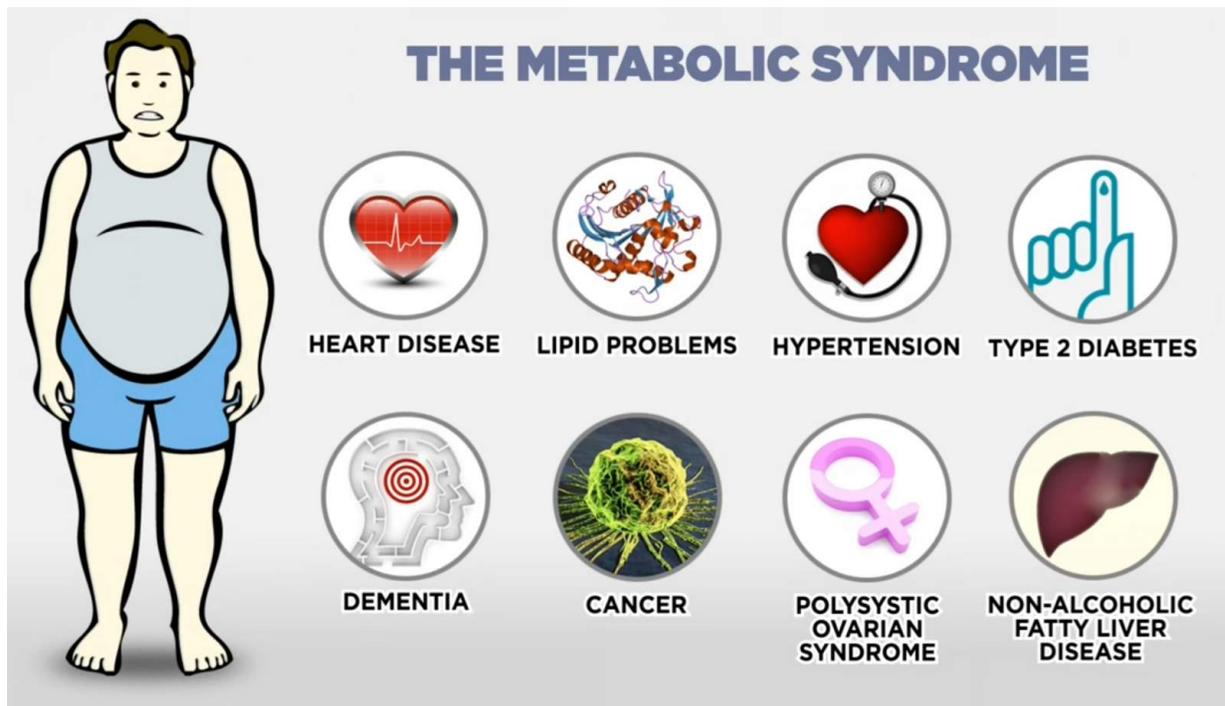


Research has shown that eating foods that are high in fat and sugar has been shown to surge the body's release of its own opioids, which act like morphine in the body. Social media addiction is bad enough. Don't be a sugar junkie too.

It is sugar, not fat, that creates abdominal fat.

The average American consumes 132 pounds of sugar a year. Sugar includes all natural sweeteners, and also carbohydrates – refined ones are considered high-glycemic. High-fructose corn syrup is perhaps the worst of the bunch – and it's in many processed foods.

The rise in sugar intake in recent years has played a key role in the increase in the cellular inflammation - and the soaring obesity and diabetes rates.



You've probably seen lots of people with this big belly issue. Are you one of them?
It's simply not attractive. I mean, come on.

Sugar is connected to Metabolic Syndrome which includes an increased risk of heart attack and dementia, insulin resistance and Type 2 diabetes, obesity, liver problems, arthritis, reduction in beneficial HDL cholesterol, increase in triglycerides, and cancer.

Those with the highest sugar intake had a 400 percent higher risk of heart attack than those with the lowest intake of sugar. It takes only one 20-ounce soda to increase your risk of heart attack by 30 percent. If you consume 20 percent of your calories from sugar, your risk of heart attack doubles.

Ten Things You Don't Know About Sugar

(And What You Don't Know Could Hurt You)

- Kristin Kirkpatrick, M.S., R.D., L.D. Manager of Wellness Nutrition
Services at Cleveland Clinic Wellness Institute

- 1 Sugar can damage your heart
- 2 Sugar specifically promotes belly fat
- 3 Sugar is the true silent killer
- 4 Sugar may be linked to cancer production and may effect cancer survival
- 5 Your sugar addiction may be genetic
- 6 Sugar and alcohol have similar toxic liver effects on the body
- 7 Sugar may sap your brain power
- 8 Sugar hides in many everyday "non-sugar" foods
- 9 An overload of sugar (specifically in beverages) may shorten your life
- 10 Sugar is making us fat



Just because it tastes good doesn't mean it's good for you. But you already know that. Right?

You may have heard people actually say that a Diet Coke 'balances out' the high calorie food they are eating.

Umm ... *nope.*

And even worse, diet sodas can actually cause you to **gain** weight.



Things don't always go better with Coke. Any kind of coke.

A study presented at an American Diabetes Association meeting revealed that people who drank two or more diet sodas daily had a 500 percent greater increase in waist size.

A University of Texas Health Science Center study found that the more diet sodas a person drank, the greater their risk of becoming overweight.

Downing just two or more cans a day increased waistlines by 500%.

But that's not all ...

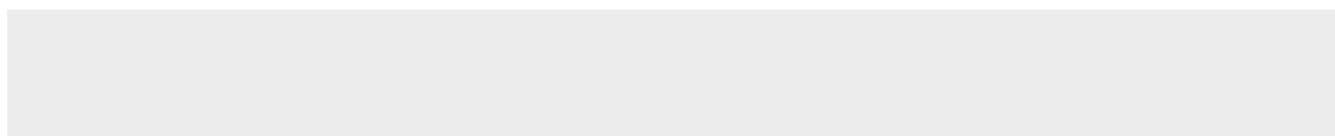
Women who drink the most diet sodas may also be more

In an eleven-year-long Harvard Medical School study of more than 3,000 women, researchers found that diet cola is

likely to develop heart disease and even to die, according to a study from the American College of Cardiology.

Researchers found women who drank two or more diet drinks a day were 30 % more likely to have a heart attack or other cardiovascular event, and are 50% more likely to die than women who rarely touch such drinks.

associated with a two-fold increased risk for kidney decline. According to a University of Minnesota study of almost 10,000 adults, even **just one** diet soda a day is linked to a 34% higher risk of metabolic syndrome, the group of symptoms including belly fat and high cholesterol that puts you at risk for heart disease (see graphic above).



Dietary Fats

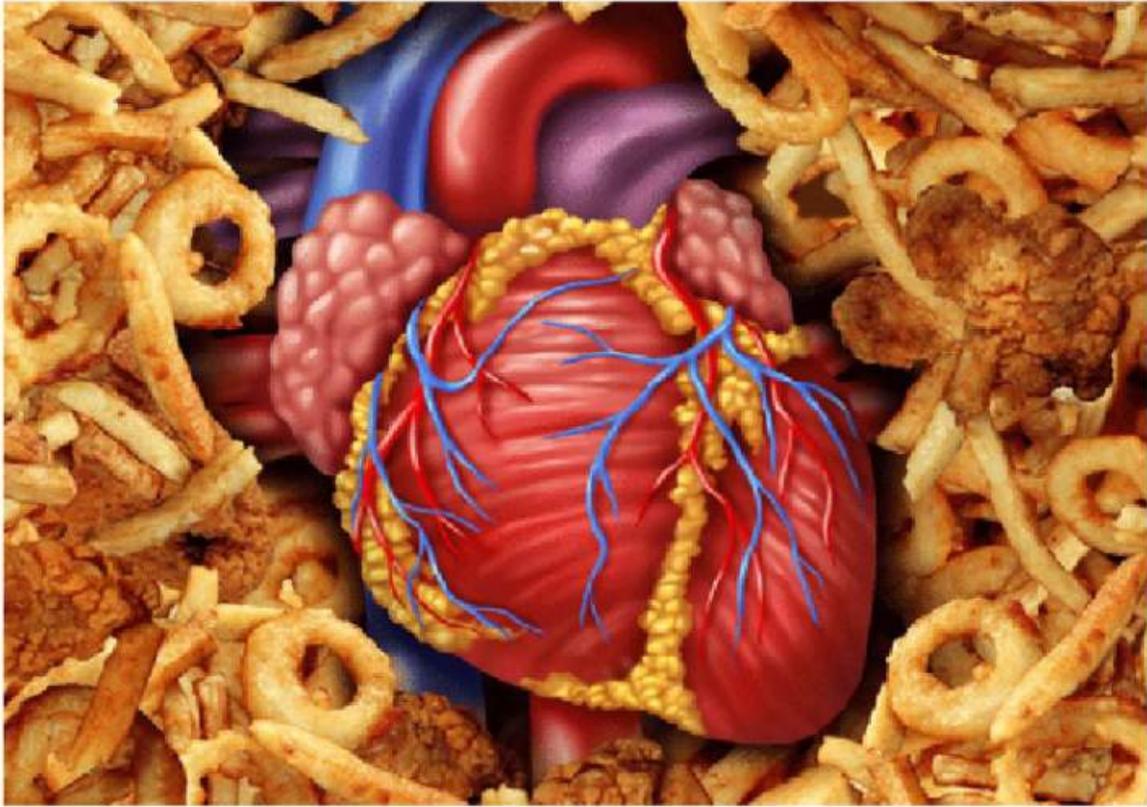
The Good, the Bad ... and the Ugly

Fat is an important nutrient your body needs - just like protein and carbohydrates. It can provide energy, helps to absorb vitamins, and protects heart and brain health.

For years we've been told that eating fat will add inches to your waistline, raise cholesterol, and cause a myriad of health problems.

But now we know that not all fat is the same.

Let's look at the "Ugly" first : **Trans Fats**



Trans fats are not a cozy place for your heart to rest. I mean, duh!

Of all the fats, *trans fat* is the worst for your health, and consuming too much in your diet increases your risk for heart disease and other health problems.

Trans fats are made when liquid oils are turned into solid fats, like shortening or margarine. These are called partially-hydrogenated oils (PHOs). United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has banned food manufacturers from adding PHOs to foods.

Although the food industry has greatly reduced the use of trans fat in recent years, this type of fat may still be found in many fried, packaged, or processed foods.



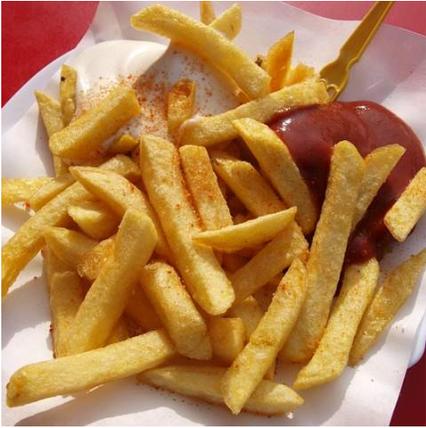
French fries cooked in bubbling, nasty trans fat. And you just know the fry cook smells like grease. Yuck.

—

Where will you find foods that are commonly cooked with **trans fats**?

- Foods cooked in a deep fryer
- Shortening and margarine
- Commercially baked cakes, pies, and cookies
- Refrigerated dough

The Usual Suspects:



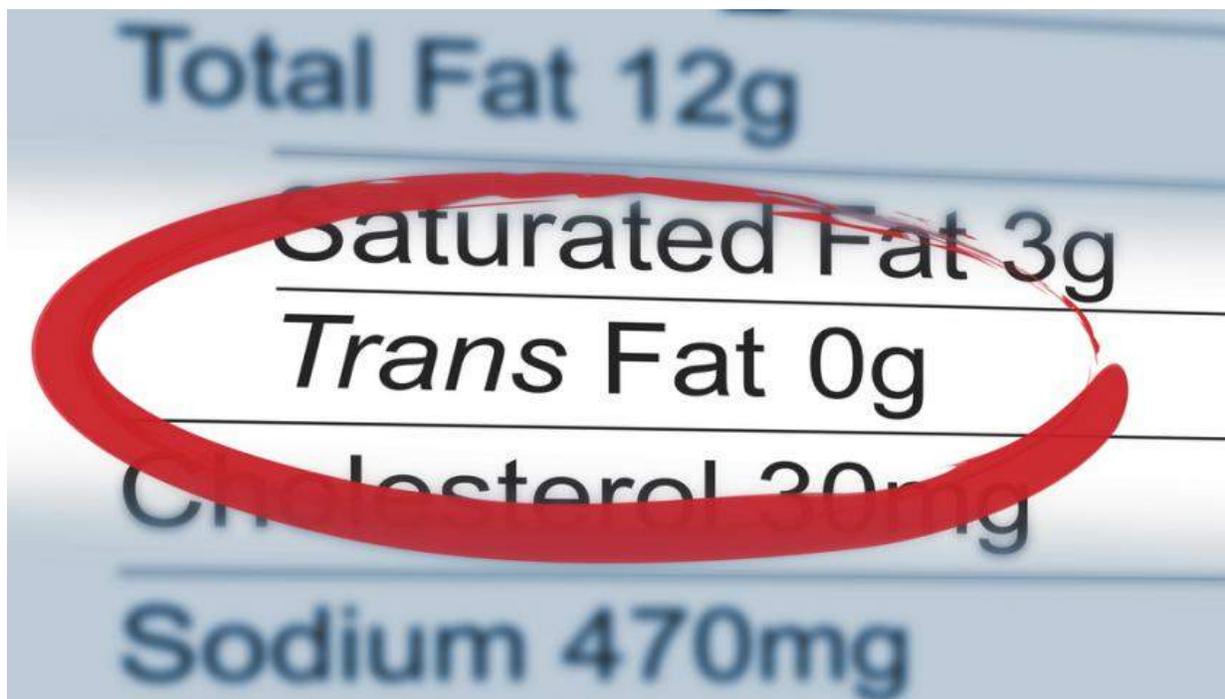
Deep fried foods



Margarine



Commercial baked goods



When it comes to trans fats, less is more ... and zero is smarter. Don't be a dum dum.

Conscious eating tip: not **all** packaged foods have trans fats - that's why it is important to read labels.

While it's fine to treat yourself to high-fat foods *occasionally*, it is best to avoid food with trans fats **completely**.

Cut trans fat by choosing healthier foods instead of less nutritious options. Replace foods high in trans and saturated fats (next section) with foods that have polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats *aka* **the Good Stuff**.

The "Bad" Stuff: **Saturated Fats**



Bacon is a saturated fat that is also often high in salt. Yeah I know it tastes good, but limit your consumption. And don't buy bacon-flavored ice cream.

Saturated fats are found in animal-based foods like beef, pork, poultry, full-fat dairy products and eggs and tropical oils like coconut, and palm.

Saturated fats can cause problems with your cholesterol levels, which can increase your risk of heart disease.

- Meats: beef, beef fat, lamb, pork , eggs, and poultry with the skin
 - Lard, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream
 - Coconut, palm, an palm kernel oil
 - Some baked and fried foods
-

The Usual Suspects:



Hamburger with cheese



Ice cream



Coconut and coconut oil



Trim the fat for better health. You've gotta admit - fat looks kind of gross.

Go for the bullseye:

The American Heart Association recommends aiming for a dietary pattern that achieves 5% to 6% of calories from saturated fat.

For example, if you need about 2,000 calories a day, **no more** than 120 of them should come from saturated fat.

That's about 13 grams of saturated fat per day.

As you have learned, "Ugly" **trans fats** and "Bad" **saturated fats**, are guilty of the unhealthy things *all* fats have been blamed for, including

weight gain, clogged arteries,
and an increased risk of certain diseases.

But “Good” fats such as unsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids have the **opposite** effect. *In fact*, healthy fats play a huge role in helping you manage your moods, stay on top of your mental game, fight fatigue, and even control your weight.

All Good.

The Dietary Fat Heroes:



Avocados



Olive oil



Nuts and seeds - but skip the salt!

Salt



Which of the following is true of salt?

- A. It's addictive
- B. It can make you fat
- C. It can kill you
- D. All of the above

SUBMIT



Salt is present in most processed foods, and is added to appease a palate that is used to having it in copious amounts. Like, massive for some people.

A high-sodium diet raises blood pressure, which in turn can cause heart attacks and strokes. And new studies show that eating too much salt has been linked to osteoporosis, dementia,

cancer, and other serious health problems.

It can also add inches to your waist.

"Sodium is widely present in the American diet (most commonly, but not exclusively) as a result of eating or drinking foods to which sodium chloride, commonly referred to as "salt," has been added.

"More than 70 percent of total sodium intake is from sodium added during food manufacturing and commercial food preparation.

"Average sodium intake in the U.S. is approximately 3,400 milligrams/day (mg/day). The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 advises individuals 14 years and older to *limit* their consumption to **2,300** mg/day; this aligns with recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, which set the Chronic Disease Risk Reduction Intake for sodium at **2,300** mg/day for those 14 years and older."

[Source Guidance for Industry: Voluntary Sodium Reduction Goals, FDA.gov](#)



Salty snacks are not the devil. They don't make you eat them.



Eat more freshly-prepared foods to reduce sodium overload. Yes, that means you'll actually have to cook and clean up after yourself. Got a problem with that?

Where's all that sodium coming from? **The greatest concern isn't the salt shaker – it's the salt that's already in your food.**

The biggest culprits: processed and packaged foods, which load up on salt for flavor but also for color and texture and to prevent spoilage.

80% of the sodium in our diets is found in the premade crackers, cookies, cereals, soups, frozen dinners, and pasta sauces we eat at home – **and that doesn't even cover fast food and other restaurant meals.**

**What has been called the
“King of Addictive Foods”?**



The hands down sugar, salt, and fat King. Or Queen. Either title = bad.

"Betcha can't eat
just one."

– *iconic slogan from
Lay's potato chips*

“Potato chips are the most weight-inducing food on the market, as they contain targeted amounts of salt, sugar and fat to ensure addiction.”

- Michael Moss, *Salt Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us*



Just Say No. But don't put your weights on the table. That's just weird.

Choice is our human Superpower.

“They may have salt, sugar, and fat on their side, *but we, ultimately, have the power to make choices.* After all, **we decide** what to buy. **We decide** how much to eat.”

- Michael Moss,

Salt Sugar Fat:

How the Food Giants Hooked Us



“ A desire for real food is a fundamental part of our basic biological blueprint. Given the chance, our taste receptors will naturally gravitate toward the inherent sweetness found in vegetables, fruits, and even nuts and seeds.

So, how do you reprogram your taste buds to ditch the cravings for sugar, salt, and fats? You can start by eating real, fresh, whole foods. Avoid fake, commercialized foods that come in convenience packages or are made in a lab.

- [Dr. Mark Hyman](#)

Here are 10 more tips from the above [piece](#) by
Dr. Hyman to help you ditch the sugar, salt, and fats:

- Sauté or roast your veggies to bring out their natural sweetness. Properly searing your chicken or meat brings out the inherent sweetness by way of the Maillard reaction. This is a fancy name for what happens when you create that nice, brown crust on your meat.
- Play with herbs like cilantro, parsley, dill, basil, and oregano to add flavor and phytonutrients! Finish a meal by adding fresh herbs before plating or serving. This last-minute addition kicks the flavor up a notch!
- Healthy fats found in avocado, coconut, and tahini not only increase the flavor of your meal, they also add that creamy, luscious texture found in many rich foods
- Try creating a savory, umami (Japanese for “delicious”) flavor. Add moderate amounts of tamari, umeboshi plum paste, balsamic vinegar, tomato paste, dried mushroom, or sea vegetables to your next stew, soup, sauce, or stir-fry.
- Cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, clove, ginger, and even cayenne or chipotle pepper powder are all extremely flavorful additions to a meal. Spices like these excite your taste buds and grab your attention. This is helpful, because, as studies show, when we are focused on actually tasting our food rather than mindlessly gobbling it up, we actually need less food to feel satisfied.
- Befriend some kitchen must-haves like real vanilla extract or vanilla bean or coconut butter. Or use common, every-day foods like lemons in some creative ways. For example, use lemon zest to add real zing to any meal!
- For the most flavor, eat seasonally and locally. Canned or packaged foods or foods that have traveled great distances in the back of a truck just can’t compare to the succulence of a fresh piece of locally grown fruit.
- Check your hydration. Digestion starts in your mouth with your saliva, which helps us taste all the magnificent flavor in food. If you are dehydrated and not producing enough saliva, you won’t really be able to enjoy your food.
- Check your medications. Believe it or not, most medications interfere with the body’s ability to taste and smell. Some of them can even create an unpleasant

metallic taste in the mouth.



Got nutrition? Nutrient deficiency is an important cause of improper taste perception. A lack of certain vitamins and minerals can markedly impair your ability to smell and taste food. Most Americans have several nutrient deficiencies, but there is one in particular that can especially keep you from enjoying your next meal: zinc. Try adding foods like oysters, pecans, sunflower seeds, and lentils to increase your daily intake of this important mineral



Time for some new ones. Good ones.

Making informed choices about **what, when, why and how** you eat helps you create new, sustainable behavioral habits and upgrade your old, worn out internal operating system to one that runs much more efficiently and health-fully.

In the next lesson, you'll learn how to deal proactively with resistance, temptation, and cravings - especially in relation to stress and pressure **from those who don't want you to change.**



Eat your meals on attractive dishes and with good silverware to improve your dining experience. Much nicer than out of a bag while driving. Plus, you're less likely to get it all over yourself or make an utter mess.

To Your Good Health!