

# Employee Newsletter



### Special points of interest:

- 100 Miles—100 Days Challenge Concludes on August 8th
- Current Quarterly, Online Class/Webinar: "Budgeting Basics—The Key to Becoming Financially Healthy"
- Fitness Center access code changed on 7/15

August, 2020

Volume 7, Issue 8

## 6 Food Cravings & What they Mean - *Emily Abbate*

Recent We've all been there: It's 4:30 p.m. and out of nowhere it hits you; a craving for a bag of chips or a candy bar. Surveys estimate almost 100% of women and nearly 70% of men report having experienced cravings — or intense desire for a specific type of food — during the past year.

"A craving is a signal from your body telling you that something is needed," says Michele Sidorenkov, RDN. To suppress that craving, you can do one of two things: give in to it or find an alternative distraction like phoning a friend or taking a walk.

Here, a look at six common food cravings and what they could really mean:

**1) Sodium** (aka salt) is an essential electrolyte for many vital functions in the body — like helping your heart beat. "The body craves salt because, in the wild, it's pretty rare to find foraged sources of sodium," says Sidorenkov. When you find salt, "the body is wired to light up and signal that you should eat more because it's so vital to survival." However, too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure and other heart issues, which is why the Daily Recommended Value (DRV) is 2,300 milligrams.

*The fix:* To start, it's a good idea to keep a food journal to track intake. Avoid turning to processed foods, which are often loaded with excess sodium and contain fewer nutrients," says Sidorenkov. Instead, you can get sodium from healthy, whole foods like beets (which also contain powerful antioxidants) and leafy greens like spinach and chard (which are also rich in iron and vitamin K).

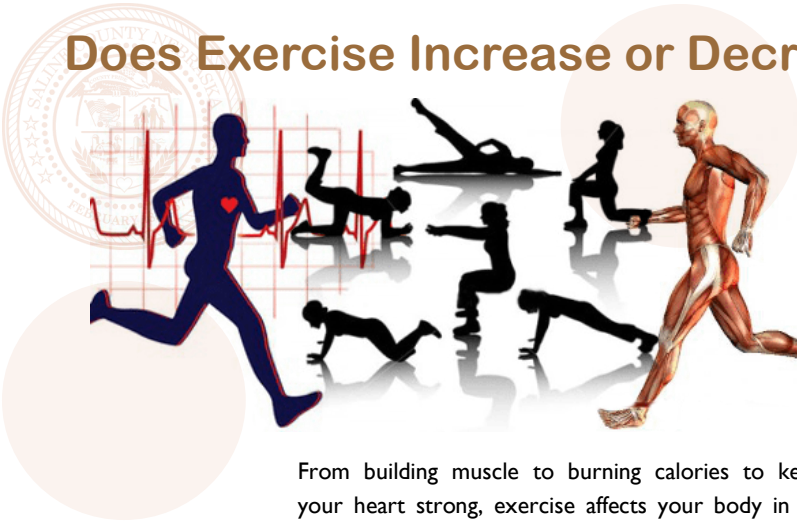
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# Does Exercise Increase or Decrease Hunger?—*Lauren Bedosky*



## ONLINE LEGAL RESOURCES

Continuum EAP's online resources includes a library of 100+ free fillable legal forms, including:

- Wills/Living Trusts
- Bill of Sale
- Rental Agreements
- Promissory Note

To get started, visit [4continuum.com](http://4continuum.com) and click "MEMBER LOGIN" at the top of the page. Use Saline County username and password. Contact HR for login information or give Continuum a call if experiencing difficulty.

### \*Next Wellness

#### Committee Meeting:

The next Wellness Committee meeting is yet TBD—possibly via teleconference.

#### \*Next Safety Committee

**Meeting:** Wednesday, August 12, 2020 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.—possibly via teleconference.

From building muscle to burning calories to keeping your heart strong, exercise affects your body in many ways. Exercise — especially long and intense exercise — can even change how your body responds to hunger cues. At least, for a time.

Here's what you need to know about hunger and your workouts.

### HOW EXERCISE IMPACTS HUNGER & CRAVINGS

Chances are you won't feel hungry during your workout, for example, partially because blood gets diverted from your stomach to power your working muscles, says Jen Sommer-Dirks, MS, a certified specialist in sports dietetics based in Denver, Colorado. "That's why it's hard to digest food when working out."

Incidentally, the fact digestion slows is a common culprit for nausea and vomiting during exercise. "And it's hard to perceive hunger when your gut feels churning or nauseated," Sommer-Dirks says.

Exercise also affects the hormones that regulate hunger, according to Heidi Skolnik, MS, a sports nutritionist in New York City.

For example, research in the American Journal of Physiology reveals that a 60-minute run can cause ghrelin (the hormone that stimulates appetite) to drop, and peptide YY (a gut hormone that suppresses appetite) to rise. A 90-minute strength session also lowered ghrelin levels, though it didn't affect peptide YY, which suggests that mode of exercise makes a difference.

Exercise intensity is another factor to consider. A small study published in the Journal of Endocrinology found running for shorter durations at a higher intensity (36 minutes at 75% maximum heart rate) affected ghrelin levels more than running for longer periods at a lower intensity (55 minutes at 50% maximum heart rate).

Temperature may also play a role. "When you work out intensely and long, you get hot," Skolnik says. "When you're really hot, you're not hungry."

Your appetite often stays suppressed for a time once your workout is over, too, but how long this lasts may depend on the duration and intensity of the exercise. Often, people don't feel hungry again until their body has had a chance to cooldown.

Short and/or low-intensity exercise may also suppress hunger, but it's more likely to happen with longer and/or more intense exercise. "This is likely because the duration or intensity of the workout is not enough to get the same hormonal and blood shift effects," Sommer-Dirks says.

### IF YOUR GOAL IS WEIGHT LOSS OR PERFORMANCE...

Whether your exercise goal involves weight loss or performance, it's important to refuel after a hard workout. "If you don't have an appetite, that might be harder to do, or you might assume that you don't need to eat because you aren't hungry," Sommer-Dirks says.

But if you're trying to build muscle or improve your performance, getting nutrients after a tough session is key for making progress. "You need protein for muscle recovery and repair, and carbohydrates to replenish glycogen stores," Sommer-Dirks explains. (Glycogen is the form of carbohydrates your body uses as a fuel for intense exercise.) If you skimp on food post-workout, you may feel sluggish during your workout the next day, she adds.

### IMPORTANCE OF POST-WORKOUT NUTRITION

Keep in mind the longer or harder the workout, the more important it is to eat a well-balanced meal or snack within 45 minutes of finishing — whether you're hungry or not. "If you're not hungry, liquids may be easier to digest, such as a protein shake blended with milk and fruit," Sommer-Dirks says.

If you're hoping to use exercise's appetite-suppressing powers to eat fewer calories during the day, and therefore speed up your weight loss, you should rethink your approach. "My experience with athletes is they have a suppression of hunger, but then later they're starving," Skolnik says. When your hunger returns, you may find you're ravenous, making you less inclined to make smart food choices.

Also, don't choose your exercises based on how well they suppress appetite. "It's better to include both cardio and strength exercises since they have different benefits, and within that to choose enjoyable activities so you're more likely to stick with them long-term," Sommer-Dirks says. —end

## 100 Miles—100 Days Closing Deadline

This continuing challenge Began on May 1st to which participants may Walk, Jog, Run, Bike or Row in the “100 Miles in 100 Days” Challenge (as per the instructions earlier provided). This was a great opportunity to stay in shape and work off the “Netflix Flab”. Hopefully this journey through spring and summer provided motivation, enabling participants to earn 100 or more Wellness Points in the process!

This challenge concludes August 8, 2020 whereby the return of completed challenge or data sheets should be provided to the Wellness Committee by end of the day, Friday, August 14, 2020. —end

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**“August is a gentle reminder of your not doing a blasted thing from your new year resolution for seven months, and not doing it for the next five.”**

*- Crestless Wave*

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## Overcome Struggles—Tardiness—Continuum EAP

Studies show surprising ripple effects caused by tardiness within organizations, so it’s a problem worth overcoming if you are constantly in a rush to get to work and still don’t make it on time. Start by conquering two hurdles.

One is figuring out what is really making you run late, and come up with an intervention. For many, this is not as easy as it sounds. You may benefit from working with an EAP professional to discover the right intervention. Of the top five causes of frequent tardiness, three are associated with over-sleeping, being too tired to get up, and forgetting something.

These are internal rather than external causes. This points to the value of working with an empathic EAP professional.

The other hurdle is getting past the fear of asking for help, but once you experience relief and success, you will wonder why you didn’t call sooner. —end

## Try a Formula to Solve Problems—Continuum EAP

At An orderly plan for solving problems can help you arrive at a more satisfactory solution. Unless you are a scientist, social worker or philosophy major, you may not have studied the “problem-solving process.”

There are many variations, but the main advantages are increased focus, better deliberation, and less guessing that can lead to a harmful solution or none at all.

Apply these steps to personal or work-related problems:

- Define your problem — but be sure not to confuse symptoms (that which is undesired) with the problem (that which causes what is undesired).
- Brainstorm solutions.
- Analyze the solutions and pick the best one.
- Implement the solution.
- Review the results.

Each step may have sub-steps. Enlist the help of your team or family members, whoever may also have a stake in the solution, for even greater impact. —end



**July-September, 2020  
Continuum EAP Online  
Webinar Class**

The upcoming quarter offers the following Continuum EAP Webinar. Successful completion provides 75 Wellness points. Offering of points is limited to:

**“Budgeting Basics—The Key to Becoming Financially Healthy”**

(Return Certificate by 10/9)

**August, 2020 Question  
of the Month**

During intense exercise, your body will likely use what type of carbo’ as fuel?

**Fill in the blank:**

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Email your chosen answer to:

[salinewellness@gmail.com](mailto:salinewellness@gmail.com)

\*25 Wellness Points for a correct answer received prior to the subsequent month’s newsletter distribution.

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## Food Cravings and what they mean—continued from page #1

2) You've probably heard of the amino acid **tryptophan** — found in turkey, "it produces melatonin and serotonin to help you feel relaxed and sleepy," says Hickey. That's why many people feel tired after Thanksgiving dinner. But tryptophan isn't limited to turkey, "it's also found in high-fat dairy products," notes Hickey.

*The fix:* Instead of having that late-night cup of ice cream, try to get into bed an hour earlier — quality sleep has been shown to help fuel weight loss and improve overall health. Or opt for an afternoon power nap that lasts 20–30 minutes. In addition to helping reduce stress and cravings, research shows naps can help you be more alert, improve immune function and boost your mood.

3) "**Healthy fats** are essential for survival because they're a reserve fuel for the brain," explains Sidorenkov. "If your diet is low in another macro-nutrient like carbs, you may be more drawn toward fats for sustenance and energy."

What's more, it's a myth that eating fat makes you fat. In fact, certain types of oily fish like salmon are rich in omega-3 fats, which help protect the health of the brain and nervous system. These types of fish have also been shown to help with weight loss and are popular on the Mediterranean diet, a heart-healthy way of eating that includes all of the food groups.

*The fix:* Fat helps you feel full, but because it provides more calories than carbs and protein, you need to be mindful of how much you eat. For example, a healthy portion is 1/4 avocado or 1 ounce of nuts. Aim to consume about 20–35% of your total calories from healthy fats.

4) The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of added **sugar** daily, which equates to about 350 extra empty calories. Sweets like muffins and cookies can provide a temporary calming feeling because the sugar triggers a quick hit of dopamine aka the 'feel-good' hormone. However, processed foods like packaged sweets can lead to blood sugar crashes and feeling sluggish shortly after consuming them.

*The fix:* "With proper planning and preparation, including sweets in your diet in moderation can serve both a comforting and nutritious purpose," says Alana Kessler, RD. However, there are smart ways to satisfy your sweet tooth that won't result in negative impacts of sugar consumption, like chronic inflammation. Rather than reach for processed options, opt for naturally sweet foods, including apples, berries, carrots and beets. These foods include gut-friendly fiber, which helps the sugar get absorbed into your bloodstream slowly, avoiding the vicious cycle of a sugar high and crash that leaves you craving more sugar.

If you find yourself regularly craving sweets, it's a great opportunity to look deeper and figure out if you're feeling stressed or anxious. Try combatting stress eating with positive coping mechanisms like going for a walk, taking a hot bath or calling a friend. Another helpful tool is prioritizing quality sleep, since changes in circadian rhythm (like sleep deprivation) can cause you to reach for sugary foods.

5) "**Spicy food** cravings are a sign that you may need to spice up your life to prevent food burnout," says Kessler. "It's easy for us to get complacent in our everyday routine where we eat the same things, take the same route to work and read the same type of information." Previous research shows picky eaters have lower levels of essential nutrients, so craving spicy foods like salsa could be your body signaling it requests more variety.

*The fix:* If you're craving spicy foods or cuisines you might not normally experience, you might want to take a look at your daily lifestyle and see if you're always eating the same (perhaps bland) foods. Ask yourself how you can diversify your diet, whether that's searching for a new recipe or experimenting with creating your own spice blends.

6) "Your hunger and thirst sensations come from the same part of the brain and sometimes the signals can feel similar or get misinterpreted," says Sidorenkov. This does not mean every time you feel hungry, you should just drink water, but it's important to be aware that those hunger sensations might actually be the first signs of **dehydration**. "We equate dehydration with excessive sweating or eating salty foods, but there are many other factors that affect your hydration status," says Sidorenkov. "We lose water in other less noticeable ways like through dry skin and tiny water droplets in our breath. Just because you haven't sweat in a while doesn't mean you aren't dehydrated."

*The fix:* To fight your body's hunger and dehydration signal confusion, it's best to make sure you are always staying hydrated. The Institute of Medicine recommends 3.7 liters/day for adult men and 2.7 liters/day for adult women. Drink water throughout the day so when hunger strikes, you won't have to worry if those feelings are truly hunger or dehydration because you have been diligent about your water intake. You can also track your water intake with an app like MyFitnessPal, and invest in good water bottles that you'll be excited to use (plus, many will keep beverages cold — or hot — for up to 24 hours.) -end

# Can Cheese be Healthy?—*Kelly Hogan*

Many fad diets tend to restrict entire food groups such as carbs. We've covered the health aspects of bread, rice and pasta, and agree that, on balance, they are delicious, nutritious and not at all "bad" as their reputation as carbohydrates tends to label them.

The same goes for oft-maligned dairy products such as ice cream. If you're wondering about cheese, spoiler alert: It can also be part of a well-balanced diet. Here's why:

## NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Cheese is a good source of calcium and can play an important role in maintaining strong, healthy bones. Cheese is also a good source of vitamins A and B12, zinc and magnesium. The presence of both protein and healthy fat helps make cheese a satiating component of a meal or snack, and can also help prevent spikes in blood sugar.

Cheeses with higher water content, such as goat, mozzarella and feta, contain slightly fewer calories and fat than harder cheeses, such as cheddar. Many cheeses tend to be higher in sodium and saturated fat, which is important to keep in mind for those with high blood pressure or cholesterol. Cheese may cause discomfort in those with lactose intolerance; however, harder cheeses, like cheddar and Parmesan, contain less lactose and may be tolerated better than soft cheeses.

sliced fresh mozzarella on homemade pizzas or crumble some goat cheese on top of your favorite salad. Snacking on a string cheese with a piece of fruit is also much more satiating and protein-packed than fruit alone.

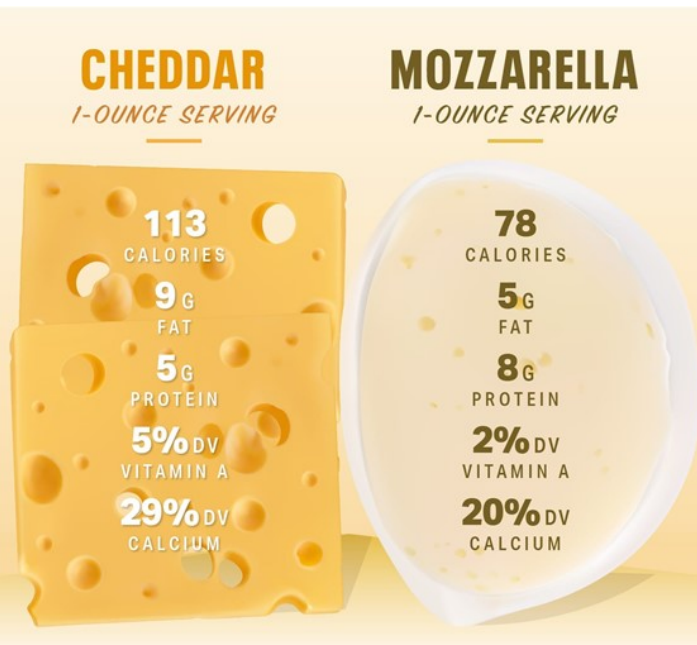
## PORTION SIZE

An ounce (28 grams) of cheese is the recommended portion size. Here's what that looks like:



## THE BOTTOM LINE

Try not to give in to the diet culture mindset of judging foods as "good" or "bad", and instead think of how much more filling and nutrient-dense your meal may become. Not only is the fat in cheese satiating, which lessens the likelihood you will overeat later in the day, but it also helps the body absorb fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. Dietary patterns as a whole matter much more when it comes to long-term health than any one food. —end



## HOW TO EAT CHEESE

Cheese is an energy-dense, flavorful food — and a little goes a long way when creating satisfying meals and snacks. For example, try sprinkling Parmesan cheese on pasta or shredded cheese on tacos; use thinly



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**“Providing opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles and supporting an adoption of habits and attitudes contributing to their positive well-being.” - Saline County Wellness Committee**

*\*NOTE: Articles found in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical or legal professional.*

## Plan Ahead for your Flu Shot this Fall!



An early planning attempt is being made to schedule the 2020 Flu Shot Clinic for all County employees on Tuesday, October 13th, again at two locations:

1. Courthouse from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
2. Law Enforcement Center from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Madonna 'Fit-for-Work' is hoped to be the conduit in which to provide this service. While things may also change over the next couple of months regarding the on-

going social distancing guidelines, and/or other such Directive Health Measure, it appears logical that an appointment schedule would be used. Please stay alert as this develops.

It is also the position of Madonna, under recommendation of the CDC, that due to the heavier weight of importance placed on getting the vaccine shot itself rather than whether/if the higher potency of the high-dose vaccine is at the ready, in addition to the high-dose, pre-filled syringes having not been readily available, Madonna will only provide the single-dose inoculation. Those opting for the high-dose version should contact their own physician. *-end*

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## #1 Trick for Doubling Weight-Loss—*Lisa Fields*

If you're motivated to lose weight but can't seem to get the number on your scale to budge, you might want to consider keeping a food diary. Research shows tracking what you eat is an effective weight-loss tool.

In one study, researchers followed nearly 1,700 overweight participants in a weight-loss program over a six-month period. They found people who kept food diaries lost twice as much weight as people who didn't record what they ate.

Another study followed people who had participated in a six-week weight-management program and lost weight. Keeping a food diary was one of the strategies which kept them accountable when maintaining weight loss for up to two years after the conclusion of the weight-management program, with 70% of participants continuing to keep food diaries post-group.

“A food diary helps people make smarter choices when eating,” says study author Lisa Matero, PhD, a senior staff health psychologist with Henry Ford Health System and a clinical assistant professor at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit. “If someone is interested in losing weight, the first thing I suggest is to keep a food diary.”

### WHY A FOOD DIARY IS SO EFFECTIVE FOR WEIGHT LOSS

1. It holds you accountable.
2. It helps you recognize trends.
3. It can help you overcome weight-loss plateaus.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

It may seem daunting to track everything you eat and drink, but “once people get into a habit of doing it, it becomes much easier and faster,” says Matero. In fact, it shouldn't take much more than 15 minutes out of your day. Armed with more information about your dietary routines, you can adopt healthier habits like mindful eating, meal prep and combatting stress without food, to help you lose weight and keep it off for good. *-end*

**\*Please be aware that on July 15th the access code to the Fitness Center had changed. Please find/complete a new 'Waiver of Liability' found on the County website or available via Tim or Jamie.**