



INCREMENTAL *Health*

My Guide to Hunger, Cravings and Effortless Weight Management

Discover how and why you might find healthy food choices difficult and the strategies to overcome it

WHY ARE FOOD CHOICES HARD?

We've all been there, set the intentions of eating healthier and making better choices but often continually fall back into the habit of poor choices, convenient snacking and anything to overcome that sudden urge for a quick energy burst.

BUT, I'm here to tell you that it's NOT a lack of willpower or mental strength on your part, it's your mind and body playing tricks on you due to lifestyle habits and hormonal dysregulation.

The little decisions you're making every single day with your sleep, stress and also foods are all combining to create the perfect storm for your struggles with making healthier choices last long term without wrestling with willpower 24/7.

This guide will help you understand WHY this happens and WHAT you can do to avoid it to achieve effortless weight management.

WILLPOWER?

Firstly, lets talk about willpower. The main tactic people use to improve food choices but also the least effective. Willpower is a limited resource, you can only rely on it for so long during a day before it runs out. When it does, you're fighting a losing battle with those cravings.

Instead of relying on this inconsistent and ineffective long term method, why don't we strive to understand what is really driving the cravings in the first place, remove that self blame, then develop strategies and habits to ensure we avoid them altogether leading to effortless healthier choices and no need to rely on willpower?

WHAT CAUSES CRAVINGS

SLEEP

Cravings and/or excessive hunger usually centre around processed sugary foods. This is for good reason, but food choices aren't top of the list of driving factors.

Poor sleep quality is one of the biggest players in unwanted food cravings and poor consistency with good choices, but why?

Poor sleep disrupts certain hormones which are crucial for blood sugar regulation and appetite control:

- Insulin - Responsible for ensuring your blood sugar levels stay in a healthy range (critical for reducing cravings).
- Leptin - Responsible for signalling to the brain that you've eaten enough and are satisfied/full.
- Ghrelin - Responsible for signalling that we're hungry and need to eat, also promotes the storage of fat.

Now you know what these things do, it's obvious to see why disrupting these hormones with poor sleep and/or stress can have a dramatic effect on your cravings and hunger the next day.

WHAT CAUSES CRAVINGS

STRESS

Stress also plays a similar role to Sleep with dysregulating appetite control, with the added effect on Cortisol levels. When Cortisol is increased by stress or poor sleep, this also disrupts blood sugar control which leads to cravings for sweet and sugary foods and energy crashes.

After all this, you can see why poor food choices are mainly driven by a disruption in hormone signalling as a result of poor sleep and/or stress.

You get trapped in the downward spiral of reaching for those highly processed foods to fill a gap that's been created by other issues. You blame yourself for your lack of willpower, but you're fighting a losing battle that you never even knew was happening.

WHAT CAUSES CRAVINGS

NUTRITION

Another reason for poor food choices is because our education on food/nutrition has been very poor.

We have been led to believe that food is just energy, just a means for calories to fill us up until we're no longer hungry. But this couldn't be further from the truth and massively contributes to why so many people struggle with food choices.

The food we eat should contain every single vitamin, mineral and nutrient that our bodies need to grow, develop function and repair. Looking at food as just calories or energy allows us to disregard the **QUALITY** of the food we eat in place of focusing solely on **QUANTITY**. The problem is, your body will want to keep eating until it has had what it needs to function, this is why eating nutrient poor foods leads to hunger between meals even though you've eaten plenty of food.

This lack of awareness makes it easier to just go with the quick and easy processed option, further driving this downward spiral of poor choices. The viscous cycle continues.

WHAT CAUSES CRAVINGS

FOOD CHOICES

Here we are, finally talking about food choices impacting hunger, cravings and unwanted urges to eat bad quality food.

On top of all the things I've just discussed, the choices you make with food also have a great impact on your relationship with food throughout the day.

If you start your day with a carbohydrate based breakfast, especially if it's something processed like cereal or bread, you're setting your blood sugar off on a rollercoaster ride. This quick rise in blood sugar followed by an equally quick drop is the easiest way to set yourself up for a day battling with uncontrollable cravings and hunger because of your unstable blood sugar.

This leads to consistent snacking and the urge to reach for sugary foods which keeps this blood sugar rollercoaster going all day.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

Here's what you've come for, what are the strategies you can implement to rid yourself of unwanted cravings, persistent hunger and poor food choices?

SLEEP - Focus on improving your sleep quality, this alone will drastically improve your relationship with food by balancing the hormones responsible for blood sugar control and appetite regulation. Click the link below to access the Sleep Guide, if you haven't already seen it.

[Private Client Facebook Group - Sleep Guide](#)

STRESS - Work on reducing stress levels, this will reduce the urge for quick and easy snacks for energy.

MINDSET - Think of food as the building blocks for your mind and body, not just energy. Thinking of food in this way makes it easier to discount certain food groups like processed foods so they don't even come into thought when you're thinking about food.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

STRUCTURE YOUR MEALS BETTER - Starting your day with a protein and fat based meal will keep your blood sugar levels stable and rid you of those mid morning and afternoon cravings.

Protein and Fat are also much more satiating, meaning they make you feel fuller for longer compared to carbs. Basing your meals around these and only eating carbs along with protein and fat will keep you fuller for longer and keep your energy much more stable throughout the day.

This will lead to much less cravings or hunger between meals and more consistent energy.

AND ULTIMATELY, USING THESE STRATEGIES TO REDUCE CRAVINGS AND HUNGER WILL RESULT IN EFFORTLES WEIGHT LOSS AND MANAGEMENT.