

# 10 Ways to Outsmart Food Cravings

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Losing weight and keeping it off require effective management of food cravings that can easily undermine plans to eat healthfully. Use these 10 tips to manage yourself through the crazy maze of cravings:

1. Eat at regular intervals. To avoid becoming overly hungry, don't go more than five hours without eating.
2. Include protein in each meal to control appetite. Skinless poultry, fish, eggs and low-calorie dairy products are good sources.
3. Stay hydrated with water, since thirst can mask as hunger. Avoid sugared, artificially sweetened and stimulant drinks that trigger cravings.
4. Distract yourself if the impulse to eat is triggered by emotions, especially if you are SAD: sad, angry or depressed. Instead of giving in to the craving, go for a walk. Besides getting you out of the kitchen, the exercise will burn calories.
5. Chew sugarless gum. Chewing satisfies mouth hunger without adding calories.
6. Brush and floss your teeth. Changing the taste in your mouth shifts your perspective, and the craving may simply disappear.
7. Replace refined foods (for example, white flour and sugar) that trigger cravings with whole grains. Whole grains produce a sense of satiety for a longer than refined foods do, and unlike refined foods, whole grains do not trigger cravings.
8. Just say no and then wait. Most cravings begin, crest and recede in minutes. While you're waiting, review what you have eaten during the day and reassure yourself that your body is well nourished. Willpower is a muscle that strengthens with exercise.
9. Call for support. If you are in danger of polishing off a container of peanut butter ice cream, call your best friend and talk your way through the crisis.
10. Get outside and into sunlight daily, exercise regularly and get a good night's rest. Sunlight and exercise lift your mood, and rest restores perspective.



Armed with these tips, you will have the tools to respond when cravings surprise you. Even so, to paraphrase President Lincoln, you may be able to fend off all of your cravings some of the time and fend off

some cravings all of the time, but you probably won't be able to fend off all of your cravings all of the time. If you do slip up now and then, forgive yourself and move on. Forget the past and move toward the future. You'll no doubt have many more opportunities to practice these tips.