

What's On The Menu

Avoiding Fatigue and Cravings After a Restaurant Meal

Some foods have a way of increasing food cravings and contributing to fatigue. Of course, there are many reasons we get food cravings and fatigue. For sport parents, tournament weekends can be challenging, especially if you don't get enough sleep before the next work week begins. Fatigue plays a big role in food cravings, and vice versa. The body will demand food that is easy to digest and provides quick energy. Foods that provide comfort will be desired when the mind is tired.

When fatigue cravings hit, broth soups and roasted vegetables are a good combination. These foods aren't likely to create more food cravings later.

Why Do Some Foods Create More Cravings Later?

If we eat food that raises our blood sugar too quickly, we'll get an adult version of a sugar high. We will laugh more and suddenly feel happier. Instead of hyperactivity we experience a very sincere feeling of relaxation and comfort. Later, we'll suddenly feel tired and cranky.

Avoiding the 'Sugar High' When Eating Out

There's a lot of hidden sugar in restaurant food. If you're working hard to keep food cravings under control, these menu items are likely to make your work more difficult.

Bacon

Are you shocked? I sure was. Sugar is usually the 3rd or 4th ingredient listed on packages of bacon. Many bacon products are cured in sugar.

Sauce & Salad Dressing

It's frustrating isn't it? Fried foods aren't healthy for certain reasons, and now salads and stir fries might be causing problems. Fortunately, it's not all of them. Balsamic dressings are usually low in sugar. Creamy dressings tend to be full of flavour because of the fat they contain, so added sugar isn't as much of an issue. These dressings are unlikely to cause food cravings later.

Poppyseed dressing and raspberry vinaigrette seem to cause the most problems in terms of cravings. Cider vinegar dressing and coleslaw dressing may also be problematic.

Stir fry sauces are notorious for causing cravings later. You'll likely have the option of getting your stir fry done in oil instead of the sauce. There will still be plenty of flavour. Plum sauce, sweet & sour, sweet chilli, Thai chilli, teriyaki, and honey garlic are examples of sauces that are high in sugar.

Pad Thai contains a shocking amount of sugar, particularly if you're in a pub style setting.

Barbecue sauce tends to be very rich in sugar as well. This means your burger, wings, ribs, and pulled pork may cause craving later. You can tell them to go easy on the sauce or leave it off. I bet you'll find that your food is still delicious. If you find it a little dry, you can ask for a bottle of olive oil.

Ketchup can be as much as 2/3 sugar by volume.

Juice, Coconut Water, & Chocolate Milk

These beverages are loaded with nutrients. They also may contribute to cravings later. It's best to view these things as foods.

Soft Drinks, Energy Drinks, & Iced Tea

They say that there's about 7-10 teaspoons of sugar in one 12 oz (355ml) can of soda or energy drink. There is about 18-25 grams of carbohydrate in an average 12 oz (355ml) can of iced tea.

Pasta Dishes

Asian rice noodles, egg noodles, pastas, and the ever-popular mac & cheese may not contain as much hidden sugar, but it's quite common to have more cravings than usual after pasta based meals.

Bread & Fries

While beef & chicken burgers tend to be quiet good in terms of protein, the combination of bun and fries trigger cravings in many people. Similarly, breaded foods with fries can cause this problem. This includes fish & chips, chicken parmesan, and wings (commonly breaded, though not always).

Yikes! Now What?

Every body is different. Monitor your cravings and energy levels closely after eating out, you'll likely be able to nail down which foods affect you the most. It's slightly different for everyone.

If there's something on the menu you really want, ask for the ingredients in the sauce. If sugar is one of the top 3 ingredients, it's likely to cause cravings and fatigue later.

These Food Tend Not to Cause Cravings & Fatigue Later

Caesar salad, salmon salad, steak salad, cobb salad, greek salad, chili, soup & sandwich, spinach dip, Mexican bowl, edamame, calamari, fish tacos, guacamole & chips, and nachos with chicken or beef.

If you're lucky enough to find a Souvlaki dinner on the menu, this will provide a nice balance of nutrients and flavour variety.

If you can't find anything you want on the menu, you can always keep it simple and order some side dishes. Many family and pub style restaurants offer sautéed vegetables, guacamole, salsa, and grilled chicken breast on their Sides menu.

Club soda and Perrier are beverages that will get you hydrated while having drinks with friends. These beverages don't contain sugar. Just a note on tonic water...it does contain sugar...quite a bit actually.

Find Your Version of Healthy

This blog tackles the issue of food cravings & fatigue. It's not a comprehensive guide to eating healthy. We all have specific needs, and what's healthy for one person may not be healthy for someone else. I'd be happy to investigate your specific dietary needs with you.