

“TOXIC HUNGER”

. . . is at the foundation of food addiction and the major cause of obesity

By

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Most people never experience the healthy sensation of feeling hungry. In fact, most desire to avoid it. Feeling hungry is actually a wonderful guide to ingesting the amount of calories you require for health and maintaining your ideal weight. When we eat out of true hunger, food tastes much better and we are physiologically primed for proper digestion. Hunger, in the true sense of the word, indicates to us that it is time to eat again.

Consider that real hunger is not often experienced in our modern, overfed population. Most people no longer even remember or are aware what hunger even feels like. Most are surprised to find that true hunger is felt in the throat and not in the head or stomach.

Instead of true hunger, people are experiencing detoxification or withdrawal symptoms that they mistake for hunger. They feel shaky, head-achy, weak, get abdominal cramps or spasms, which they believe to be hunger because they are relieved by eating. I call this “toxic hunger.” Toxic hunger is symptoms a person experiences that are due to toxic wastes being mobilized for elimination. It occurs after a meal is digested and the digestive track is empty, and it could make us feel very uncomfortable.

Generally, we eat to get rid of these withdrawal symptoms and it works. In fact, this is one of the most important contributors to our population’s overweight condition. We eat the wrong foods, and just a few hours later we feel ill, stressed out, shaky, weak, mentally dull, and we are driven to eat again to relieve the discomfort. Did you ever hear someone saying they needed to eat because they felt so shaky? The question is, are these symptoms true hunger, hypoglycemia, or something else? I claim that these symptoms occur simultaneous to our blood sugar decreasing but they are not caused by “hypoglycemia.” Rather, they result from tissue sensitivity to mobilization of waste products which occurs when most active digestion is finished.

Let me reassure you that I do not want you to go hungry and deny yourself food to achieve an ideal weight. There is a better answer. When we eat a nutrient-dense diet, rich with lots of colorful vegetables, we will better meet our nutrient needs, and this will reduce and eliminate uncomfortable “withdrawal” symptoms. High nutrient eating enables us to deal better with all types of stress, but in this case, eating more high-nutrient foods will enable us to avoid “stress hunger” and eliminate cravings and the drive to overeat.

When our diet is low in nutrients, we build up intra-cellular waste products. So when digestion stops, our body goes through a period of “cleaning,” meaning that our tissues release toxic substances into circulation for removal. Our cells can harbor toxic products that build up in the body when our diet is relatively nutrient-poor. Phytonutrients are required for the body to properly detoxify metabolic waste products. When we don’t eat sufficient phytochemical-rich-vegetation and consume excess animal proteins (creating excess nitrogenous wastes), we exacerbate the build-up of metabolic waste products in our bodies.

We get confused because when we eat the same heavy foods that are causing the problem to begin with, we feel better. This makes becoming overweight inevitable: if we stop digesting food, even for a short time, our bodies will begin to experience symptoms of detoxification or withdrawal from our

unhealthy diet. To counter this we eat heavy meals, eat too often and keep our digestive track overfed to lessen the discomfort from our stressful diet-style.

When our bodies have acclimated to noxious agents it is called addiction. Try to stop taking the heroin and we will feel ill. In fact, we must have it, or we will become terribly sick this is called withdrawal. When we stop doing something harmful to ourselves we feel ill as the body mobilizes cellular wastes and attempts to repair the damage caused by the exposure.

If you habitually drink three cups of coffee or caffeinated soda a day, you will get a withdrawal headache when your caffeine level dips too low. Taking in more caffeine or food could make you feel better by retarding the detoxification or withdrawal symptoms.

Likewise, a few hours after eating the standard low-nutrient diet, most people begin to feel "hungry." They feel weak, headachy, tired, mentally dull, and have stomach spasms. I call it "stress or toxic hunger" because these symptoms only occur in those who have been eating a toxic diet. True hunger would not have occurred so early after the meal.

True hunger signals occur when our bodies need calories to maintain our lean body mass. No one would become overweight if they ate food demanded by true hunger and true hunger only. But in our present toxic food environment, we have lost the ability to connect with the body signals that tell us how much food we actually need. We have become slaves to withdrawal symptoms and eat all day long, even when there is no biological need for calories.

Fortunately, this cycle of eating, and then avoiding the symptoms of detoxification by eating again, does not have to continue. There is a way out. When you restore the nutritional integrity and relative cleanliness to your tissues, you simply will not have the desire to eat to get rid of the toxin-induced symptoms.

In an environment of healthy food choices, we would not feel any symptoms after a meal until hormonal and neurological messengers indicated glycogen reserves in the liver were running low. Our bodies possess a beautifully orchestrated ability to give us precise signals which tell us exactly how much to eat to maintain an ideal weight for our long term health. I call these signals "true hunger" to differentiate them from the "toxic hunger" everyone else calls hunger.

Feeding ourselves to satisfy true hunger does not cause weight gain, and if people were better connected with these normal signals it would be almost impossible for anyone to become overweight.

True hunger is felt in the throat, neck and mouth, not in the stomach or head. It is a drawing sensation. It is not very uncomfortable to feel real hunger, it makes food taste much better when you eat, and it makes eating an intense pleasure.

True hunger requires no special food to satisfy it. It is relieved by eating almost anything. We can't crave some particular food and call it hunger; a craving by definition is an addictive drive, not something felt by a person who is not an addict. Remember almost all Americans are addicted to their toxic habits. A disease-causing diet is addicting. A health-supporting diet is not.

In order to achieve an ideal weight and consume the exact amount of calories to maintain a lean body mass we do not have to carry around a calculator and a scale to figure out how much to eat. A healthy body will give us the correct signals. So in order to achieve superior health, maximize our longevity potential, and achieve our ideal weight, we have to eat well enough to get back in touch with true hunger and rid ourselves of this "stress hunger."

Every cell is like a little factory; it makes products, produces waste and then must compact, detoxify and remove waste. If we don't get sufficient antioxidants and phytonutrients from our diet, our cells are unable to effectively remove self-produced waste. If we let waste metabolites build up, the body will attempt to mobilize them when it can; but it can only do that effectively if not actively digesting food. Eating makes one feel better because it halts or delays the detoxification process.

My book, **Eat For Health** explains how eating more micronutrient-rich food is the most effective way to reach your ideal weight and stay there permanently when you get there. There are lots of ways to lose weight, but only by eating lots of nutrient-rich foods as your chosen method for weight loss will you not have to fight off cravings and ill feelings.

In a portion-controlled (calorie counting) diet, it is likely that the body will not get adequate fiber or nutrients. The body will have a compounded sensation of hunger and craving, which for most is simply overwhelming. It invariably results in people losing weight, then gaining back their weight. Calorie counting simply doesn't work in the long run. Diets based on portion control and calorie counting generally permits the eating of highly toxic, low-nutrient foods guaranteed to perpetuate addictive drives. The result is an under-nourished body and uncontrollable and frequent food cravings.

Without an adequate education in superior nutrition and solid principles to stick to, dieters flounder and fail, bouncing from one diet to another, always losing a little and regaining, frequently regaining more than they lost.

We must prioritize our food intake around nutrient dense, high fiber, high water content food, which means fruits, vegetables and beans. For superior health and ideal weight, we must know how to seek nutritional excellence in spite of the misinformation and confusion about food that surrounds us.

This is all about knowledge, not will-power. With the right knowledge, we can get more pleasure from eating, avoid restrictive diets, and protect our precious health. So for superior health and ideal weight, don't diet, **Eat For Health**.

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