

12 Ways to Curb Your Sugar Cravings

You've heard it a million times, but I'll say it again: Sugar isn't something you want to be putting in your body. (Need more evidence? check out some of these studies 1, 2, 3). In moderation, fruits and root vegetables and grains can give your body all the natural sugar/energy that it needs.

Today, we're going to give you some tips on how to curb that sweet tooth and kick that sugar addiction once and for all!

1. Take your fridge and pantry seriously. We're always going to crave things more intensely when they're closer to us, and so if you've got a freezer full of ice cream or a pantry full of cookies, you're going to have a much, much harder time with cravings than someone who doesn't. So set yourself up for success. Get rid of the sweet things, and you'll start to crave something else. (If you've got a spouse who refuses to abandon the sweets, then just ask them politely to hide the sweets in a secret location where you won't be able to sniff them out.)

2. Know if you're an "all-or-nothing" type. Some people can have a single bite of a cookie or a dessert and then be fine and pass the rest of it on. Some people (like me) can have a single bite of something which then leads to another bite and another and then not stop until they've eaten the whole thing! If you're like me and you're really trying to get that sugar intake down, you need to be aware that you're going to have to pass on a lot more "bites" than other people—but that's OK. I'm much better at just avoiding something altogether than trying to really limit myself, and so if that's you, know that going in.

3. If you're really new to this 'giving up sugar' thing, ditch

the sugary drinks first. Coffee with a ton of creamer and sweetener/sugar? A nice Coke midway through the day? A giant “healthy” smoothie that’s really just loaded in sugar? Say no to drinking all that sugar; it’s even worse than eating it because it gets into your blood stream faster and causes that insulin to spike more quickly (which leads to fat retention and weight gain). So pass on the sugary drinks first and then start to pass on the rest of it, too!

4. Eat more of the good stuff. it can be easy to mistake a sugar craving for what’s actually just plain and simple hunger! Healthy fats, fiber, lean proteins and vegetables are what your body really wants, and if you give it what it really wants, it’ll start to treat you better in return. If you’re really, really craving sugar one day, just bake up a sweet potato and sprinkle a little cinnamon on top. Just as good and still satisfying!

5. If you’ve got kids, avoid the easy, go-to sugar traps. It can be really convenient to just run to the grocery store and grab some pre-packaged cookies to have for your kids to bring to their school event. But I’m telling you, some of those cookies are going to be coming home with them, and then who’s going to be eating them? People will eat healthy food if you put it in front of them—even kids. Try grabbing a veggie tray instead, and if leftovers come home? Guilt-free snacking.

6. Get more sleep!! Research has shown that not getting enough sleep increases our sense of hunger, so don’t skip out of the sleep if you can.

7. Buy the dark stuff. If chocolate is just a nonnegotiable for you, then buy the darkest stuff you can find. I’m talking 85 percent and up! “But the dark stuff doesn’t taste as good!” you say. Well, here’s the thing: You can condition yourself to like it. Tell yourself it’s better for you and still chocolate, and you’ll be surprised how much better it’ll taste just from that little self-talk. We’re not saying eat an

entire bar of this stuff, but have a square of it every now and again when you get the chocolate bug.

8. Tell your family and friends. That way, even when the cravings come, you'll have people to hold you accountable, and people who (hopefully) won't try and sabotage what you're trying to do by bringing over fresh-baked cookies every other day. Be honest about why you're avoiding sugar, and don't judge them for not viewing things in the same way. Just ask them to help you in the process, and I think you'll be surprised at how eager people are to help keep you on track!

9. Keep drinking water. This is a big one. A lot of times, we think we're "hungry" but what we're actually feeling is thirst! Add in some cut up fruit into your water if you need to make it a little more appealing. [I personally love drinking sparkling water (nothing else added in there, just the water and carbonation) and then squeezing some fresh lemon or lime juice in there. So good!]

10. If cutting out the sugar is a goal, then write it down. This might not seem like it'll help with your cravings, but I'm telling you, writing things down can be so powerful and motivating. Grab a small note card and write down why you're ditching sugar and then tape it on your fridge or bathroom mirror. Slightly weird when guests come over? Maybe, but if you're more concerned with what people think then your sugar-related/health goals, you're going to have a hard time accomplishing them anyway.

11. Know where you're weak! If you're going to a party, and you *know* there's going to be a ton of desserts there, eat beforehand (or bring a square of your dark chocolate with you). If you're going grocery shopping, maybe don't walk down the dessert aisle. If you drive past a Krispy Creme doughnut shop every day on your way home from work and you just can't resist, then start driving a different way home. That sounds extreme, but we're talking about your health here (and

potentially, a few extra years of life!).

12. Accept that, for the first 2-12 days, you're not going to be feeling great. No withdrawal is pretty, and sugar withdrawals are no different. You take the alcohol away from an alcoholic and it's going to be a painful, detox process, but one that is ultimately so beneficial for your body. Know going in that reducing/cutting your sugar intake isn't going to feel great at first, but the benefit—a healthier, possibly longer and more active life—is so worth the short-term struggle

If you want to eat healthier so you can feel stronger and more energized, [click here](#) to check out our menu plans. {eo}

Michelle Spadafora started *Faithful Workouts* in 2009 after 22 years in the fitness industry. She created *Faithful Workouts* to be a place where you can come and strengthen your relationship with God while you strengthen your body and mind, a place where you can find great workouts for all fitness levels, receive simple, practical nutrition information and connect with a real community who knows that the journey to better health is more about encouraging each other and less about being perfect.

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