

## What are The Most Addictive Foods in the World?

By Sarah Landers, Natural News



Most of us wake up every morning with a commitment to getting healthy and losing some extra pounds. We all promise ourselves that we'll have a salad instead of a pizza, some fruit instead of chocolate, and a nice piece of salmon for dinner. Our resolve is normally fine for the morning – but by the afternoon, the intense longing for some unhealthy food kicks in.

The problem with unhealthy food is that you crave it because it's addictive. When you're stressed, having a bad day at work, or just feeling a little low, some chocolate is all you want to make you feel better. Emerging science shows that food addiction is a real thing that not only leads to weight gain, but also causes genuine changes in your brain that mimic the same affects as an alcohol or drug addiction.

### How food addiction works

Food addiction makes pathological eating a little more complicated than lack of self-control and will power. As reported by the *Poliquin Group*, studies into the neurophysiology of addiction show that addictive substances have the following three traits:

1. "They are rarely in their natural state," and have most commonly been processed in some way to increase their addictive potential. "For example, grapes are processed into wine and poppies are processed into opium." Those are extreme examples, however something similar occurs as we process food and intensely refine it to create our most addictive foods.

2. "They provide a higher concentration of the additive agent than occurs in nature." This increased potency increases the potential for addiction. The addition of "man-made" fat and

refined carbs increases the dose of these ingredients beyond what you would find in natural whole foods such as fruits and nuts.

3. "They are altered to increase the rate at which the addictive agent is absorbed into the bloodstream." Compared with naturally occurring foods, highly processed foods are rapidly digested and induce a blood sugar spike. This rise in glucose levels causes activation of areas of the brain that are involved with addiction. The sugar spike means that once the glucose levels decrease, you crave more sugar and feel tired without it.

When you eat an addictive food, the blood sugar spike makes you feel good. Dopamine and opioid receptors in the brain are activated, which triggers a feel-good sensation in the same way that alcohol and drugs do.

Bingeing on sugar increases dopamine, while bingeing on fat-rich foods avoids the opiate-like withdrawal that occurs in response to foods that are high in sugar but lack fat. This means that foods which are high in fat and sugar affect the opioid system in the brain to make these foods even more addicting.

### **The most addictive foods**

A recent study has compiled a list of the most addictive foods and analyzed them to identify the factors that contribute to obsessive eating. A key discovery of the study was that without exposure to an addictive food, a person vulnerable to bingeing would not develop an addiction.

This means that your first line of defense against food addiction is to avoid "trigger" foods. The next step is to make sure you have healthy, satisfying foods handy that you can turn to instead.

The most addictive foods are:

- **Pizza** – its quickly digested, lacks protein or fiber, and has little effect on satiety.
- **Chocolate** – killer combination of processed fat and sugar, unless you choose the healthier dark chocolate options.
- **Chips** – spike blood sugar and are packed with processed fat.
- **Cookies** – fat and sugar combination that is highly addictive.
- **Ice cream** – high in calories and fat that create a calorie imbalance.
- **French fries** – tossed in salt or dipped in high-fructose corn syrup.
- **Cheeseburger** – processed carbs, saturated fat and sodium.
- **Regular soda** – liquid so has no effect on hunger but is full of sugar.
- **Cake** – one of the most refined foods with processed flour, sugar and fats.
- **Cheese** – easy to over-indulge, and mostly served with a refined carbohydrate.

The good news is there are healthy, great tasting alternatives to these foods, that will leave you feeling fuller for longer, and won't cause devastating sugar spikes!

### **Sources include:**

Main.PoliguinGroup.com