

# Ask America's Ultimate Experts

## Q "Help! My cravings are out of control!"

Whether you're yearning for something sweet, salty or crunchy, top health and nutrition experts reveal the easiest-ever ways to satisfy any craving without hurting your health or your waistline:

### 1 Turn off your sweet tooth!

Cookies and candy beckoning? Erin Palinski, R.D., Fred Pescatore, M.D., and Rovenia Brock, Ph.D., reveal how to ignore their call:



#### Eat a baked apple with cinnamon!

Have to have something sweet? Choose this healthy treat, says Brock. Not only does it pack just 190 calories and 5 grams of fat, but the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* reports that cinnamon helps stabilize blood sugar and prevent future spikes, causing fewer future sugar cravings. Plus, apples provide soluble fiber, which is slowly digested, keeping you feeling full for hours!

#### Pop an amino acid!

The amino acid L-glutamine can nix a sugar craving in as little as five minutes! Speedily absorbed into your bloodstream, it provides fuel to the brain in much the same way glucose does, eliminating the urge for energy-boosting sugary foods. Aim for 800 mg. daily. Try: GNC Pro Performance L-Glutamine, 180 capsules for \$20 at GNC.com. (Check with your doctor first.)

#### Walk up and down the stairs!

Research suggests a five- or 10-minute burst of activity can thwart a sweet tooth, says Dr. Pescatore. Scientists believe many sugar cravings stem from a blue mood—and this small amount of exercise releases feel-good endorphins in the brain, squashing the desire for sweets!

### 2 Satisfy your need for salt!

Scientists say salty cravings tend to happen due to dehydration or certain mineral deficiencies. Our experts promise you can tame the craving without devouring a bagful of chips:

#### Sip mineral water!

Try drinking an 8-oz glass of your favorite mineral water, such as San Pellegrino or Perrier, the next time you have an urge to eat fries, suggest Palinski and Dr. Pescatore. Why? A top reason the body craves salt is because it's dehydrated and depleted of important minerals and electrolytes. By drinking mineral water, a beverage rich in these vital nutrients, you're satisfying the need—without added calories!

#### Sprinkle on faux salt!

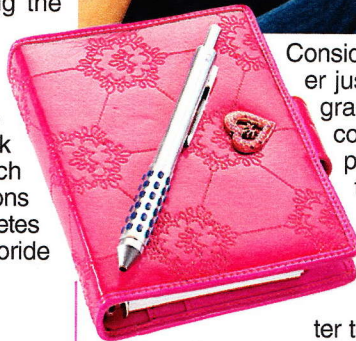
Potassium chloride is a sodium-free alternative to salt that tastes very similar to the stuff in the shaker! Just be sure to ask your doctor before making the switch because it can react with certain medications and isn't recommended for those with diabetes or kidney problems. Try Potassium Chloride Powder, \$4.45 for 8 oz. at iHerb.com.

### 3 Appease crunchy cravings!

Want the feel of a satisfying crunch between your teeth? It's most likely because you're feeling tense or stressed out, say our experts. Here's how to overcome the urge:

#### Snack on pine nuts!

Not actually nuts, these little seeds give you a satisfying crunch—without all the fat and calories of similar snack foods.



Consider: 20 pine nuts deliver just 12 calories and 1.5 grams of fat! Plus, they contain pinolenic acid, a polyunsaturated fat that triggers the release of two appetite-suppressing hormones!

#### Pick up a pen!

Whether it's a letter to a friend or even just to yourself, pouring out your emotions on paper is a great outlet for any pent-up frustration, which may be causing your crunchy urges. Plus, it requires your full concentration, making it an effective distraction, which an Australian study found significantly decreases cravings.

#### Pop a piece of gum!

Chewing sugar-free gum reduces tension by more than 17%, according to researchers—stopping crunchy cravings in their tracks. Bonus: Chewing gum cuts your calorie intake! The proof? In a study, people who chewed sugar-free gum ate 40 fewer calories during an afternoon snack than those who didn't chew beforehand, according to the Pennington Biomedical Research Center and Louisiana State University.

—Jennifer Leonard

## Our expert panel



**Erin Palinski, R.D., L.D.N.** (ErinPalinski.com), is the creator of the Healthy Resolutions Weight Loss Program and the owner of the Vernon Nutrition Center, LLC, in New Jersey. She's also a certified diabetes educator.



**Fred Pescatore, M.D., M.P.H.** (DrPescatore.com), is a physician, president of the AHCC Research Association and the bestselling author of *The Hamptons Diet*, *Thin for Good* and *Feed Your Kids Well*.



**Rovenia Brock, Ph.D.** (EverythingRo.com), is a national nutrition coach seen on *The Dr. Oz Show*, as well as the author of *Dr. Ro's Ten Secrets To Living Healthy* and an award-winning health journalist.