

77 Cravings -What They Might Mean

77. Cravings-What They Might Mean Cravings, which can sometimes mean allergies, are more often nature's way of letting you know that you're not getting enough of certain vitamins or minerals. Frequently these specific hungers develop because overall diet is inadequate. Some of the most common cravings are 🥜 Peanut Butter This is definitely among the top ten, and it's not at all surprising. Peanut butter is a rich source of B vitamins. If you find yourself dipping into the jar often, it might be because you're under stress and your ordinary B intake has become insufficient. Since 50g of peanut butter—a third of a cup—is 284 calories, you'll find it easier on your waistline to take a B-complex supplement if you do not want to gain weight. Bananas When you catch yourself reaching for this fruit again and again, it could be because your body needs potassium. One medium banana has 555 mg. People taking diuretics or cortisone (which rob the body of needed potassium) often crave bananas. Cheese If you're more a cheese lover than a cheese lover, there's a good chance that your real hunger is for calcium and phosphorus. (If it's processed cheese that you've been snacking on, you've been getting aluminum, too, without knowing it.) For one thing, you might try eating more broccoli. That's high in calcium and phosphorus, and a lot lower in calories than cheese. Apples An apple a day doesn't necessarily keep the doctor away, but it offers a lot of good things that you might be missing in other foods—calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium—and is an excellent source of cholesterol lowering pectin! If you have a tendency to eat a lot of saturated fat, it could account for your apple cravings. Butter Most often vegetarians crave butter because of their own low-saturated-fat intake. Salted butter, on the other hand, might be craved for the salt alone. Cola The craving for cola is most often a sugar hunger and an addiction to caffeine. (See section 197.) The beverage has no nutritive value. Nuts If you're a little nutty about nuts, you probably could use more protein, B vitamins, or fat in your diet. If it's salted nuts you favor, you could be craving the sodium and not the nuts. You'll find that people under stress tend to eat more nuts than relaxed individuals. Ice cream High as ice cream is in calcium, most people crave it for its sugar content. Hypoglycemics and diabetics have great hungers for it, as do people seeking to recapture the security of childhood. Pickles If you're pregnant and want pickles, you're probably after the salt. And if you're not pregnant and crave pickles, the reason is most likely the same. (Pickles also contain a substantial amount of potassium.) Bacon Cravings for bacon are usually because of its fat.

People on restricted diets are most susceptible to greasy binges. Unfortunately, saturated fat is not bacon's only drawback. Bacon is very high in carcinogenic nitrites. If you do indulge in bacon, be sure you're ingesting enough vitamin C and A, D, and E to counteract the nitrites.

Eggs Aside from the protein (two eggs give you 13 g.), sulfur, amino acids, and selenium protein, egg lovers might also be seeking the yolk's fat content or, paradoxically, its cholesterol-and-fat-dissolving choline.

Cantaloupe just because you like its taste might not be the only reason you crave this melon. Cantaloupe is high in potassium and vitamin A. In fact, a quarter of a melon has 3,400 IU vitamin A. Since the melon also offers vitamin C, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, biotin, and inositol, it's not a bad craving to give in to. There's only about 60 calories in half a melon.

Olives Whether you crave them green or black, you're likely to be after the salt. People with under-active thyroids are most often the first to reach for them.

Salt No guesswork here, it's the sodium you're after. Cravers quite possibly have a thyroid iodine deficiency or low sodium Addison's disease. Hypertensives often crave salt, and shouldn't.

Onions Cravings for spicy foods can some times indicate problems in the lungs or sinuses.

Chocolate Definitely one of the foremost cravings, if not the foremost. Chocoholics are addicted to the caffeine as well as the sugar. (There are 5 to 10 mg. of caffeine in a cup of cocoa.) If you want to kick the chocolate habit, try carob instead. (Carob, also called St. John's Bread, is made from the edible pods of the Mediterranean carob tree.)

Milk If you're still craving milk as an adult, you might need a calcium supplement. Then again, it might be the amino acids—such as tryptophan, leucine, and lysine—that your body needs. Nervous people often seek out the tryptophan in milk, since it has a very soothing effect.

Chinese food Of course it's delicious, but often it's the monosodium glutamate in the food that fosters the craving. People with salt deficiencies usually go all out for Chinese food. (MSG can cause a histamine reaction in some individuals. Headaches and flushing may occur. Most Chinese restaurants will now prepare your food without MSG if you request it.)

Mayonnaise Since this is a fatty food, it is often craved by vegetarians and people who have eliminated other fats from their diet.

Tart fruits A persistent craving for tart fruits can often indicate problems with the gallbladder or liver.

Paint and dirt Children have a tendency to eat paint and dirt. Frequently this is an indication of a calcium or vitamin-D deficiency. A hard reevaluation of your child's diet is essential, and a visit to your pediatrician is recommended. (Vitamin Bible, Mindell, pgs 139-141, 153-156)