

# Check if my craving is emotional or physical

When we raise our awareness about food cravings it can help us manage them. When experiencing a craving, ask: *"Is it emotional or physical hunger?"* and keep track.

Food Cravings 01

## Is my craving emotional hunger?

- Craving comes on suddenly
- The craving is for specific food
- I'm not satisfied when I'm full
- I feel guilty or ashamed after eating

## Is my craving physical hunger?

- Craving comes on gradually
- The craving is for most any food
- I am satisfied when full
- I don't feel bad about myself after eating

## Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Check if my craving is emotional or physical

When we raise our awareness about food cravings it can help us manage them. When experiencing a craving, ask: *"Is it emotional or physical hunger?"* and keep track.

Food Cravings 01

## Is my craving emotional hunger?

- Craving comes on suddenly
- The craving is for specific food
- I'm not satisfied when I'm full
- I feel guilty or ashamed after eating

## Is my craving physical hunger?

- Craving comes on gradually
- The craving is for most any food
- I am satisfied when full
- I don't feel bad about myself after eating

## Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Remove foods I am trying to avoid from my house

If food cravings strike, but the food is not in the house, it makes it harder to indulge the craving.

Food Cravings 02

The foods I remove from my house are:  
(example: "chips"; "cookies")

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Remove foods I am trying to avoid from my house

If food cravings strike, but the food is not in the house, it makes it harder to indulge the craving.

Food Cravings 02

The foods I remove from my house are:  
(example: "chips"; "cookies")

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Use a meal plan to eat three meals a day, each day

When we let ourselves get too hungry, we are more likely to grab any food that's available. Eating three meals that include protein (*eggs, meat, nuts*) and a complex carbohydrate (*fruit, veggies, beans*) will help us feel full longer. Planning our meals ahead of time can be powerful Personal Medicine.

Food Cravings 03

My meal plan:

Breakfast:

Snack:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Snack:

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me (*describe*):

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Use a meal plan to eat three meals a day, each day

When we let ourselves get too hungry, we are more likely to grab any food that's available. Eating three meals that include protein (*eggs, meat, nuts*) and a complex carbohydrate (*fruit, veggies, beans*) will help us feel full longer. Planning our meals ahead of time can be powerful Personal Medicine.

Food Cravings 03

My meal plan:

Breakfast:

Snack:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Snack:

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me (*describe*):

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Talk back to food cravings

Researchers have found if we say, “*I can’t eat that*”, it actually makes food cravings worse. If we say, “*I don’t eat that*”, “*I won’t eat that*”, or “*I’m allergic to that*”, we gain power to dismiss the craving.

Food Cravings 04

**I talk back to my food cravings when:** *(example: when it’s time for coffee and donuts after church I say “I’m allergic to that.”)*

## Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Talk back to food cravings

Researchers have found if we say, “*I can’t eat that*”, it actually makes food cravings worse. If we say, “*I don’t eat that*”, “*I won’t eat that*”, or “*I’m allergic to that*”, we gain power to dismiss the craving.

Food Cravings 04

**I talk back to my food cravings when:** *(example: when it’s time for coffee and donuts after church I say “I’m allergic to that.”)*

## Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Find alternatives to emotional eating

Sometimes we stuff down our emotions with food. Dealing with our emotions directly can help reduce food cravings.

Food Cravings 05

If I am depressed, I: *(example: exercise)*

If I am lonely, I: *(example: call a friend)*

If I am exhausted, I: *(example: pamper myself)*

If I am bored, I: *(example: change what I am doing)*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Find alternatives to emotional eating

Sometimes we stuff down our emotions with food. Dealing with our emotions directly can help reduce food cravings.

Food Cravings 05

If I am depressed, I: *(example: exercise)*

If I am lonely, I: *(example: call a friend)*

If I am exhausted, I: *(example: pamper myself)*

If I am bored, I: *(example: change what I am doing)*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Surf my food craving until it disappears

A food craving is like a wave. It builds in intensity until it comes to a crest. Then it slowly goes away. Most food cravings last 3–10 minutes.

Food Cravings 06

When I am surfing a wave of food cravings, I say to myself: *(example: "This will pass.")*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Surf my food craving until it disappears

A food craving is like a wave. It builds in intensity until it comes to a crest. Then it slowly goes away. Most food cravings last 3–10 minutes.

Food Cravings 06

When I am surfing a wave of food cravings, I say to myself: *(example: "This will pass.")*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

## Get plenty of sleep

Research has shown not getting enough sleep makes us more hungry and makes it harder to feel full after eating.

Food Cravings 07

In order to improve my sleep, I: *(example: "No screen time at least 30 minutes before bed.")*

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

## Get plenty of sleep

Research has shown not getting enough sleep makes us more hungry and makes it harder to feel full after eating.

Food Cravings 07

In order to improve my sleep, I: *(example: "No screen time at least 30 minutes before bed.")*

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Ask if my medication is causing food cravings

Certain medications can cause cravings for high carbohydrate foods like soda, chips and candy. This is especially true of some antipsychotic medications.

Food Cravings 08

My medications:

Questions for my doctor:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Ask if my medication is causing food cravings

Certain medications can cause cravings for high carbohydrate foods like soda, chips and candy. This is especially true of some antipsychotic medications.

Food Cravings 08

My medications:

Questions for my doctor:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



# Create a power song playlist to distract me from food cravings

Research has shown that willpower alone is not the answer to overcoming food cravings. Music can give us an emotional release and distract us from the food craving.

Food Cravings 09

My power song playlist:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Create a power song playlist to distract me from food cravings

Research has shown that willpower alone is not the answer to overcoming food cravings. Music can give us an emotional release and distract us from the food craving.

Food Cravings 09

My power song playlist:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Beware of foooooody thinking

If you are looking for a reason to indulge a food craving, the universe will always provide you with one.

Food Cravings 10

**My foooooody thought:** *(example: "I already blew my diet today, so I'll just keep eating and start again tomorrow.")*

**My new thought:**

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Beware of foooooody thinking

If you are looking for a reason to indulge a food craving, the universe will always provide you with one.

Food Cravings 10

**My foooooody thought:** *(example: "I already blew my diet today, so I'll just keep eating and start again tomorrow.")*

**My new thought:**

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



## Make a plan to drink plenty of water

Researchers have discovered many people cannot tell the difference between hunger and thirst. Sometimes we think we are hungry, when really we are thirsty. Drinking at least eight, 8-ounce glasses of water a day can help us avoid confusing hunger and thirst.



### To ensure I drink enough water, I:

- ☐ Set a reminder/alarm on my phone
- ☐ Download a water tracking app
- ☐ Get a big water bottle to carry with me
- ☐ Ask family/friends to remind me
- ☐ Replace other drinks with water
- ☐ Use a water flavor/mix
- ☐ My idea:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another



## Make a plan to drink plenty of water

Researchers have discovered many people cannot tell the difference between hunger and thirst. Sometimes we think we are hungry, when really we are thirsty. Drinking at least eight, 8-ounce glasses of water a day can help us avoid confusing hunger and thirst.



### To ensure I drink enough water, I:

- ☐ Set a reminder/alarm on my phone
- ☐ Download a water tracking app
- ☐ Get a big water bottle to carry with me
- ☐ Ask family/friends to remind me
- ☐ Replace other drinks with water
- ☐ Use a water flavor/mix
- ☐ My idea:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

# Make it harder to reach the food I crave

Research has shown that when food is conveniently available, we will eat more of it. Make it harder to reach the food you crave (*example: lock the cabinet and put the key in another room.*)

Food Cravings 12

I put the food I crave:

- ☐ In another room
- ☐ In a locked cabinet
- ☐ High on a shelf, out of reach
- ☐ My idea:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

- ☐ Yes – it helps me (*describe*):
- ☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Make it harder to reach the food I crave

Research has shown that when food is conveniently available, we will eat more of it. Make it harder to reach the food you crave (*example: lock the cabinet and put the key in another room.*)

Food Cravings 12

I put the food I crave:

- ☐ In another room
- ☐ In a locked cabinet
- ☐ High on a shelf, out of reach
- ☐ My idea:

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

- ☐ Yes – it helps me (*describe*):
- ☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

# Name the oppression contributing to my food cravings

Poverty, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression can leave us feeling bad about ourselves and our bodies. We might turn to food as an escape. Eating will not make the oppression stop. Naming the oppression we experience, how it affects us and joining with others to fight it can help.

The oppression I experience:

How it affects me:

**Organizations or groups I can join:**  
(name and contact info)

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

# Name the oppression contributing to my food cravings

Poverty, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression can leave us feeling bad about ourselves and our bodies. We might turn to food as an escape. Eating will not make the oppression stop. Naming the oppression we experience, how it affects us and joining with others to fight it can help.

The oppression I experience:

How it affects me:

**Organizations or groups I can join:**  
(name and contact info)

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

## Avoid food porn

Mouth-watering pizza ads on TV at night. Pictures of food on social media. Baking shows. Fast food billboards. These types of "food porn" can trigger food cravings. Avoiding food porn is a great way to get control over cravings.

Food Cravings 14

**Where do I get my food porn?** *(example: "Pinterest")*

**How I avoid food porn:** *(example: "I unfollow recipe boards on Pinterest and follow interior design boards")*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

## Avoid food porn

Mouth-watering pizza ads on TV at night. Pictures of food on social media. Baking shows. Fast food billboards. These types of "food porn" can trigger food cravings. Avoiding food porn is a great way to get control over cravings.

Food Cravings 14

**Where do I get my food porn?** *(example: "Pinterest")*

**How I avoid food porn:** *(example: "I unfollow recipe boards on Pinterest and follow interior design boards")*

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe):*

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

## Declare my intention

Sometimes overeating occurs in secrecy and is cloaked in shame. Saying out loud, *"I want to be in charge of what I eat"* is powerful. It shines the light of our awareness on how we respond to food cravings. Speaking our intention to stop overeating is the beginning of stopping.

**My intention:** *(example: "In the morning, I look in the mirror and say to myself, 'I am in charge of what I eat today'.")*

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

## Declare my intention

Sometimes overeating occurs in secrecy and is cloaked in shame. Saying out loud, *"I want to be in charge of what I eat"* is powerful. It shines the light of our awareness on how we respond to food cravings. Speaking our intention to stop overeating is the beginning of stopping.

**My intention:** *(example: "In the morning, I look in the mirror and say to myself, 'I am in charge of what I eat today'.")*

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

## Stay in the present

*"I didn't have enough money to buy food."; "We weren't sure where the next meal would come from."; "There wasn't enough food to go around."* These are examples of food insecurity. Food insecurity from the past can leave us anxiously craving food in the present. Self-soothing affirmations can help.

Food Cravings 16

**My past food insecurity:**

**When past experiences with food insecurity come up, I stay in the present by saying:**  
(example: "Today, there is enough food for me.")

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me (describe):

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC

## Stay in the present

*"I didn't have enough money to buy food."; "We weren't sure where the next meal would come from."; "There wasn't enough food to go around."* These are examples of food insecurity. Food insecurity from the past can leave us anxiously craving food in the present. Self-soothing affirmations can help.

Food Cravings 16

**My past food insecurity:**

**When past experiences with food insecurity come up, I stay in the present by saying:**  
(example: "Today, there is enough food for me.")

**Does this Personal Medicine work for me?**

☐ Yes – it helps me (describe):

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



## Remind myself when one is too many

Snack foods are carefully created to be eaten in large quantities. It's very difficult to eat just one. Once we start, it's really hard to stop. Reminding ourselves that even one is too many, and that 1,000 will never be enough, can help.

For me, "one is too many" snack foods include:  
(example: "Salt and vinegar chips")

When I crave these foods, I say to myself:  
(example: "These chips are designed to be addictive, so I choose a piece of cheese instead.")

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me (describe):

☐ No – I will try another

## Remind myself when one is too many

Snack foods are carefully created to be eaten in large quantities. It's very difficult to eat just one. Once we start, it's really hard to stop. Reminding ourselves that even one is too many, and that 1,000 will never be enough, can help.

For me, "one is too many" snack foods include:  
(example: "Salt and vinegar chips")

When I crave these foods, I say to myself:  
(example: "These chips are designed to be addictive, so I choose a piece of cheese instead.")

Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me (describe):

☐ No – I will try another



## Prepare for cravings ahead of time

Consciously preparing for food cravings ahead of time can ensure we don't over-indulge.

Food Cravings 18



### To prepare for food cravings, I:

- ☐ Get portion bags and prepare snack-sized portions
- ☐ Set a timer on my phone for how long I will snack
- ☐ Eat my snacks on a smaller plate
- ☐ Eat my snacks with a smaller spoon
- ☐ My idea:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



## Prepare for cravings ahead of time

Consciously preparing for food cravings ahead of time can ensure we don't over-indulge.

Food Cravings 18



### To prepare for food cravings, I:

- ☐ Get portion bags and prepare snack-sized portions
- ☐ Set a timer on my phone for how long I will snack
- ☐ Eat my snacks on a smaller plate
- ☐ Eat my snacks with a smaller spoon
- ☐ My idea:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:

☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



### Is my Personal Medicine powerful?

- Is it a specific activity, not a feeling/state-of-being? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it something I do now, not a future goal? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it something I do, not something I take? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Does it say how it helps me? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Food Cravings Blank



My plan:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

- ☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:
- ☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC



### Is my Personal Medicine powerful?

- Is it a specific activity, not a feeling/state-of-being? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it something I do now, not a future goal? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it something I do, not something I take? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Does it say how it helps me? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Food Cravings Blank



My plan:

### Does this Personal Medicine work for me?

- ☐ Yes – it helps me *(describe)*:
- ☐ No – I will try another

© 2021 Pat Deegan PhD & Associates, LLC