

Conversation Corner



A Newsletter for Fitness Professionals

Your Appetite Drives Your Waistline; So What Drives Your Appetite?

Just about everything! You don't eat—you die. So trust me, you are wired to eat whenever possible. Unfortunately some of us are wired two or three times *harder* than others, making avoiding food in order to control our waistline next to impossible and basically unnatural.

That said, if the extra food that leads to continuous weight gain isn't there, then no matter how you're wired, you won't gain weight. But moving to a deserted island where food is scarce—and most of it probably moves or requires some sort of discovery, forcing you to continually move/run after it—is not everyone's first choice in dieting.

Controlling appetite was something our species never planned for. In fact, the human gene structure has evolved completely opposite from what is needed today. In other words, food has only become readily available in the last 100 years. So we needed the 90,000 years of eat-all-you-can-when-you-can wiring. Remember, evolution represents an on-going interaction between a species genome and its environment over the course of multiple generations. And because it takes more than 10,000 years for a significant human gene adjustment to take place that might *unwire* or *rewire* our appetites based on our new environment, we are stuck trying to figure it out ourselves for, oh, about another 9,000+ years. And trust me, the whole scientific/business world is on it. He who finds the key to controlling the human appetite will reign king, analogous to Alexander Fleming, the famous scientist that discovered penicillin, which, as we all know, changed everything not only about medicine but life in general—arguably the greatest discovery of our time.

The main reason the solution has been so elusive is that the appetite mechanism has many redundancies, which means if you shut down a specific part of the body that triggers appetite, another area will compensate. The purpose of mammals being wired this way is that if you are born or develop a defect in part of your appetite mechanism, another one will kick in so that you don't just stare at food and starve to death.

So who are the ones that are actually screwed up?

Based on the above, I would argue it's the people who manage to stay lean, not the people who don't!

What I am suggesting is that it's the adults that stay in shape (in today's world), whose natural energy balance system has at some point been compromised by something learned, because there is no clear advantage for any species to simply eat just enough food to maintain energy balance. It is clearly the goal of all mammals to exceed energy needs in order to store for potential shortages of availability, which was common for most of our history. Therefore, it seems unnatural not to keep eating, or at least grazing if food is always available. Unfortunately, this process leads to that slow, steady weight gain, with devastating health

and often psychological consequences. It is especially so, now that our species lives long enough for that 1-2lbs/year to become harmful.

Knowing these genetic facts, there was probably an external force at work that started at some point in the life of these lean people that has become engrained. That force might have been parental influence, vanity or simply the fact that their ability to make a living is based on a certain body-type (e.g. athlete, actor, etc.).

In other words, at some stage of life in the majority of perennially lean people, a conscious effort to control appetite was taking place, or they were simply too busy moving to eat regularly based on lifestyle/necessity (e.g. farming, youth sports, active neighborhood, etc.). In either case, a lifestyle pattern was formed that they prefer, which may be an addiction to moving and/or a now engrained (rewired) automatic recognition of how much food is necessary to stay lean. Not so fast...there's more.

9 out of 10 adults will become overweight and 50% will become obese

That's a crazy number, but a fact according to a recent study. When you think about it, it does make sense.

Sixty-five percent of the adult population is overweight, but only 16 percent of our children fall into this unflattering category. Getting the picture yet?

The 35 percent of adults who are not overweight are simply not overweight YET. It's the same for kids, because they will become adults. Getting fat has become virtually unavoidable for almost everyone at some point in life. Observing the lives of children highlights why this disturbing information is true.

Children are often "too busy" to eat. What I mean is that activity, especially if it's fun, trumps foraging for food. In a kid's life—because they generally don't acquire their own food and have specific times set up to eat—most can't eat during many times when they are not busy, such as sitting in class (food would not be allowed here as it might be for an adult sitting in their office and snacking). On the other hand, children who do get fat are generally not busy based on environmental issues, such as not being able to go outside without a chaperone, both parents working, or they simply prefer TV and video games over moving. These are the kids that make up the 16 percent. To add to this unfortunate group's woes, they often have unlimited access to snacks. And because they are not moving, they can easily continue grazing.

1+1= fat

We now know that being lean as a child or young adult does not spare you from the final fate. For almost all humans in developed nations, adulthood will eventually make you fat because the very things/lifestyle that kept you lean

as a child are no longer possible to maintain: You now acquire your own food so you don't have to wait for it. You are trapped in a sedentary occupation that allows grazing. You don't run around the house or in restaurants, banging into things all day—there's no recess, you don't beat up your brother or sister anymore, you don't have sleepovers where you stay up all night, you stop playing sports or exercising because it now hurts or you can't afford an injury, etc. So now appetite/hunger trumps being active/busy. And when you are *busy*, you are sitting or standing, which has the two-fold negative effect of allowing you to still eat while burning only a few calories.

Sad summary

So there you have it; almost everyone you know will become fat. Most of us at some point, for some reason(s), will dramatically reduce activity. We will allow that continuous *hardwired message* to eat (which is nothing more than our natural appetite mechanisms working normally) to be heard. And we will respond more frequently, and to a much greater extent, than when we were young. In our youth, that same innate message was calling, but the sound was simply blunted and we were more physically active and did not acquire our own food. As adults, we have more opportunities to think and do something about that constant call to eat.

So what are we left with?

Currently, the average waistline and weight-related diseases validate the fact that our innate appetite mechanisms betray us in today's sedentary environment.

Based on the fact that hunger mechanisms are far more powerful than our satiety signals, we are stuck for the next few thousand years with having to make a conscious effort to control our intake.

If we all went back to that deserted island where we started this conversation, our natural appetite mechanisms would work perfectly. But there is nothing natural about living in the modern, developed world, so we need some sort of external method(s) to control that nagging desire to consume food.

Beating the odds

I'll list some easy-to-incorporate satiety tips (also see our Knowledge Builder titled Satiety) that don't require major lifestyle changes. Implementing one of these minor functions at the end of a normal-sized meal, or during one of those tempting times to snack when you're not truly hungry, may help you "just say no" until you become *rewired*.

- **Stay busy.** Have a mental or physical activity that can occupy you during a time you might otherwise eat.
 - Play a game, work on a needed project, go for a walk
- **Remove tempting foods,** from home and work, out of immediate reach to discourage having to acquire it.
- **Wait 30-40 minutes.** When you finish your normal-sized meal, look at the clock and tell yourself you won't eat anything else (generally it would be dessert) until 30-45 minutes go by. It takes about this long for our satiety mechanisms to overwhelm our hunger signals. By waiting for time to pass, we may no longer feel that nagging sweet tooth.
- **Brush your teeth after every meal.** This modern-day activity sends an unnatural response (learned at some point in life) to the brain that you are finished eating.

- **Chew sugarless gum.** When you get the urge to eat, including something sweet, pop in a piece or two of gum.
- **Find a safe appetite suppressant that works for you.** Use it when needed or until you are finally in control.
 - Refer to our time-tested formulas to see if they work for you. There are many reasons why appetite prevails over satiety. These two products attack the problems differently, so one formula may work better for you than the other.

The bodybugg™: retraining the brain to think differently about food, based on a necessary or desired fitness level

We believe we have the best overall solution to the problem of weight gain. According to our observations in over a year of testing, we may see a nationwide reversal of this weight-related epidemic by putting each bodybugg™ participant in complete daily control of their fitness destiny.

The bodybugg™ program incorporates all the above, plus adds space-age technology to a wearable device that fights the fat-promoting influence of our environment by constantly updating you that you are losing, gaining or maintaining weight before it actually happens. And it tells what to do to reach or maintain fitness. In other words, we have found an external method to *rewire* you or *wire* you to your fitness goal until you are happy about how you look and feel. Once you have reached that goal, life around you changes because something good and different is now happening everyday and there is nothing more addicting than that feeling – in other words you will have been effectively "rewired" for today's world.

Resist Carbs—appetite control formula for carb cravings.

What's new? This new formula features a stronger, more bioavailable* form of hydroxycitric acid (HCA-SX), called Super CitriMax®. It's virtually 100% soluble and contains 20% more HCA than regular CitriMax®.

How does it work? Feel full sooner. Studies show that HCA may promote the synthesis of glycogen. Increased glycogen and storage is the body's natural way to signal the brain that you are full.

What is it? HCA is derived from the South Asian fruit *Garcinia cambogia*. Because it's stimulant-free, it won't cause side effects normally associated with stimulants.

Resist Fat—appetite control formula

For people who tend to eat foods high in fat.

What's new? This new formula features more CCK (Cholecystokinin) per tablet. New suggested use recommendations are based on body weight, for maximum effectiveness.

How does it work? CCK is a compound secreted by the body to support fat digestion and appetite control. During digestion, CCK sends signals to the brain that you are full. Taking CCK as a supplement may help you feel full sooner.

What is it? CCK is a nonstimulant that is both a hormone and a peptide, which helps the digestive system communicate with the brain.

* bioavailable: what your body can absorb and retain.

These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease.