

Module 9



REDUCE CRAVINGS

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One way to curb cravings (and also practice mindfulness!) is to focus on the qualities of the foods that you crave.

Some clients might benefit from brainstorming more nourishing alternatives. However, it's also important to make sure you're addressing the root causes – as well as recognizing that swapping might not reduce cravings. It depends on the client!

When it comes to cravings, you can approach them “in the moment” by thinking about food qualities and trying “swaps” based on those qualities. However, this might not reduce the cravings, and you might end up either overeating the swaps or eating the original foods you craved anyway – perhaps because you merely *suppressed* the cravings, rather than *satisfied* them. Some clients might benefit from a more proactive or preventative approach, which helps them reduce future cravings – for example, incorporating a wider variety of flavors and textures into meals. The goal is to help clients enjoy – and even indulge! – mindfully by helping them explore the root causes of cravings and maintain a sense of empowerment, rather than feel guilty.

For all cravings, remember to check in with your emotions first to explore whether you're eating because you're physically hungry, versus emotionally hungry. Emotional cravings are typically best satisfied through primary food.

Use the chart below to brainstorm some ways of satisfying taste buds with foods that also offer more nutrients.

The chart includes some common triggers for specific food quality cravings, but you know yourself best, so there's plenty of space for you to fill in your personal triggers and ideas. Get creative, and have fun with it! When working with clients, you might want to use these as ideas for swaps.

FLAVORS

Bitter	
Possible Reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sluggish digestion	Cravings:
Preventative Approach:	Swap Approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bitter leafy greens & herbs

Salty

Possible Reasons:

- Low electrolytes
- Taste buds are used to salt

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- A meal/snack of high-quality protein, fresh veggies/fruits, and healthy fats
- Add a sprinkle of sea salt to steamed veggies

Spicy

Possible Reasons:

- Lack of flavor in diet
- Lack of life “excitement”

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Use spices, like cayenne and chili powder

Sour

Possible Reasons:

- Gut bacteria imbalance

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Kombucha, sauerkraut

Sweet

Possible Reasons:

- Skipping meals
- Too much sugar in diet
- Lack of life “sweetness”

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Dates and dark chocolate
- Roasted yams, carrots, and beets

TEXTURE

Chewy

Possible Reasons:

- Wanting comfort (cookies, doughy foods)

Cravings:**Preventative Approach:****Swap Approach:**

- Fresh spring roll
- Dried fruit

Creamy

Possible Reasons:

- Eating too many “dry” foods

Cravings:**Preventative Approach:****Swap Approach:**

- Smoothie
- Acai bowl

Crunchy

Possible Reasons:

- Sensory addiction?
- Anxiety/worry

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Chew more!
- Kale chips, rice cakes

Liquid

Possible Reasons:

- Too many salty/dry foods
- Low energy

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Water (stay hydrated!)
- Fruits and vegetables with high water content, like cucumbers and watermelon

TEMPERATURE

Cold or cool

Possible Reasons:

- Hot, humid environment

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Frozen fruit

Hot or warm

Possible Reasons:

- Cold environment
- Desire to feel “cozy”

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Soups/stews

DENSITY

Heavier

Possible Reasons:

- Too many light/raw foods
- Need to feel emotionally “filled up”

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Roasted root vegetables
- High-quality protein

Lighter

Possible Reasons:

- Too many heavier/warming foods
- Need to fill emotionally “lighter”

Cravings:

Preventative Approach:

Swap Approach:

- Salads
- Fresh fruits & veggies

OTHER CRAVINGS

Carbs

Possible Reasons:

- Restrictive diet
- High stress

Cravings:**Preventative Approach:****Swap Approach:**

- Sprouted bread/muffin
- Brown rice or seed crackers
- Baked yams

Snacks

Possible Reasons:

- Boredom
- Body needs more frequent/smaller meals

Cravings:**Preventative Approach:****Swap Approach:**

- Hummus and veggies
- Mixed nuts



What are your most common food quality cravings?

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Do you notice any patterns in terms of when you crave specific food qualities?

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How can this exercise help you navigate cravings moving forward?

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How can this exercise help you stay within your scope of practice as an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach?

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Which kind of client might swaps work for?

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What might you hear from clients who suggest that swaps might not be a beneficial approach?

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What more preventative approaches might you try instead?

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