

# “Weighing In” August 2017

## Driven by Appetite or Choice

This month newsletter deals with questions that I've gotten recently from many patients saying they think it's their appetite when it is their own choosing..... I'll explain.

It's true that there are some powerful mechanisms involved in adequate nutrition supply and optimal levels of body weight/adiposity. For example, we know that low levels of leptin indicate food deprivation. In addition, depleted fat stores have been identified as the strong signal to induce actions to increase energy intake. When there is a calorie deficit, hunger should increase. Hormones from the gut help to dictate this; these hormones include leptin (our stop eating hormone) and ghrelin (our it's time to eat hormone). In starvation, low leptin levels trigger potent activation of multiple receptors to restore the energy balance to our bodies and regulate body weight.

It's just not the arcuate nucleus of the brain that sends out signals, hormone signals are everywhere in the body. For example, if we are in a starved state where leptin is low, just smelling something or remembering a previous taste of a favorite food can trigger a hormone response. If not enough leptin is present to tell us to stop eating, we will have an innate desire to eat that food! Our bodies connect these senses through hormones and instantly we are reminded of how we felt when we had that food. This can lead us to think of the food as a reward that makes us say "wow that was good" and "I have to have it".

Dieting where we restrict food and deplete fat do the same thing, this can lead us to have a "hungry brain" where we become preoccupied with food. That's why you should never shop the grocery store when you're hungry. It's also what makes you look in the refrigerator or cabinets over and over again for something to eat.

Common obesity results from individuals predisposed to dealing with their restrictive environment. Engraved by genetics, early life experiences and the environment of plenty, these individuals are driven to eat and all these factors are therefore tied to obesity. But the real question is; is it appetite or is it a choice?

It is obvious that our body has a primal energy sensor, the arcuate nucleus that allows adaptation and coordination of metabolism that physiologically demands us to seek out food. But as we remember past experiences with food, particularly if this experience was a great meal, is it always true hunger that causes us to crave it?

You will never forget that one piece of pie that you got from the fair! You look for the same place each time the fair comes to town. This tendency represents some sensory attributes including; taste, color, flavor, time, the location, the social context, the cost and of course the reward expectations.

I believe the above example has nothing to do with physiological hunger but instead pleasure. We do a lot of things for pleasure; for example, the sweet taste of a particular food in the process of satiation is associated with positive emotions. That augments the motivational drive for us to find food and eat it. The feelings of satisfaction and well-being generated by eating results in a high motivation to engage in these behaviors again. Remember that pie at the fair-ground was delicious.

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Dieting among overweight or obese people has a very high failure rate, with most of them developing strong food cravings and bad relapses. Thankfully, we see this less frequently at The Weigh Station because of our requirement that you come once a week which makes you accountable. However, in other programs that do not hold you to be accountable, this is a very accurate statement. Unfortunately, the mechanism of the paradox behavior is not clear to many physicians and researchers as to why it happens the way it does.

The obesity epidemic continues to roll unabated through America and the world with no cure in sight. It's affecting children and adolescents and it's threatening to roll back much of significant process made in developing countries during the last century.

How is it possible that the perfectly negative feedback system signal that regulates adiposity permits the accumulation of excess body fat in the 1st place? We still aren't sure; we do know that leptin treatment does not always reverse obesity. We will argue that the inherited asymmetry for adaptive response to famine and feast may be responsible for the fact that just changing your environment can push adiposity and population upward and result in increased prevalence of obesity.

So what's the answer is it choice or appetite? Most data shows that it's choice and from our experience here at The Weigh Station, choice is a big factor. So the next time you go the refrigerator, maybe you should put a sign there that reads "why am I here?" Accountability changes the way we make choices. If you have someone watching you and making you accountable, you will probably choose better food groups. But if you're traveling down the road in your car by yourself, no one's going to know that you stopped and ate the things that you shouldn't.

There is a whole different neurochemistry to addiction. It is a driving force in our brain that makes us want what we shouldn't have. But don't be discouraged the Apostle Paul said "The things I wish to do, I don't and the things I wish not to do, I do. Wretched man that I am." Make yourself accountable make good choices, and you'll see your weight dissipate.

Blessings,  
Chuck Shaffer MD

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### Loaded Cauliflower Bites– Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 head Cauliflower, bite sized pieces
- Salt and pepper
- 1 C shredded cheddar cheese
- 4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced



*low carb & gluten free*  
**LOADED**  
Cauliflower Bites



Pre heat oven to 350 degrees. Spread cauliflower on baking sheet covered with foil, sprinkle with salt and pepper and roast for 20 minutes. Push cauliflower into a pile and sprinkle on cheese and bacon, cook for an additional 5 minutes. Garnish with onions. Enjoy!

## **Is your food making you sick?**

Our food supply is not what it used to be. With the world of convenience surrounding us, the food industry has taken what used to be farm grown whole foods and turned them into food like substances. Unfortunately, even our farm grown food is not the same as it was fifty years ago. New farming practices including pesticide management and GMO technology has changed the way we know food.

Four years ago I became LEAP certified. LEAP, or Lifestyle Eating and Performance is a program geared toward addressing food sensitivities and healing the body. The test allows clients to identify the foods or food chemicals that are actually making them sick. They can then remove them from their diet and begin to feel better. Symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, IBS, joint and muscle pains are just some of the symptoms that food sensitivities can cause. People are suffering with these symptoms and often don't know why. They have seen every doctor, changed their diet and are still hurting. Why? Our food just isn't the same and our immune systems are taking a major hit, reacting to certain foods or food chemicals and causing inflammation. These culprit foods could even be "healthy," I have seen severe reactions to foods like lettuce, broccoli and avocado for various clients.

Personally I have experienced chemical sensitivities. A number of years ago I gave up gum. I joke and say I was a gum addict, but really it's true. We all know sugar addiction is a real thing and I can honestly testify that gum was my "drug" of choice. I tried limiting it and it never worked. I found myself chewing gum more and more. One day I had enough and gave it up cold turkey. I had major cravings for it for about a week and then as time went on it became easier and easier to resist (much like our clients describe when giving up added sugar). This was the only thing that worked! I knew that one piece would send me into another spiral. I was gum free for several years until recently when my husband bought home a pack. I was able to resist it for a little while but one evening after a stressful day, there was the pack, staring me in the face, I caved. I would have several pieces in an hour's time and BOOM, I had a massive headache! I thought there may be a correlation but wasn't sure since symptoms from sensitivities can take as little as a few hours to as much as three days to occur.

The headache lasted all night and well into the morning the following day. It even was accompanied by nausea! Delightful! I decided to avoid the gum for a few days but like every addiction, I found myself starting to chew it yet again and lo and behold another headache! This time I told my husband to get it out of the house as I picked it up to study the ingredients list on the package. This stuff is toxic, reading the ingredients I was horrified to see Sorbitol, Malitol, Aspartame and Partially hydrogenated coconut oil as just some of the ingredients! WOW, no wonder I was miserable!

There are countless stories like this, and unfortunately many are clueless as to what is causing their symptoms. They have masked their symptoms with medicine, gone gluten free and seen

doctors but their symptoms don't go away. Unfortunately gluten often gets demonized and it's not always the bad guy. It's the chemicals they are spraying on the wheat that are the cause for concern!

A recent article from [realpharmacy.com](http://realpharmacy.com) explains: ***Pre-harvest application of the herbicide Roundup or other herbicides containing the deadly active ingredient glyphosate to wheat and barley as a desiccant was suggested as early as 1980. It has since become routine over the past 15 years and is used as a drying agent 7-10 days before harvest within the conventional farming community.***

***Using Roundup as a desiccant on the wheat fields prior to harvest may save the farmer money and increase profits, but it is devastating to the health of the consumer who ultimately consumes those ground up wheat kernels which have absorbed a significant amount of Roundup! This practice is not licensed. Farmers mistakenly call it "desiccation." Consumers eating products made from wheat flour are undoubtedly consuming minute amounts of Roundup. An interesting aside, malt barley which is made into beer is not acceptable in the marketplace if it has been sprayed with pre-harvest Roundup. Lentils and peas are not accepted in the market place if it was sprayed with pre-harvest roundup..... But wheat is ok... This farming practice greatly concerns me and it should further concern consumers of wheat products.***

So what should we do as consumers? Going organic is one approach but often too expensive for many families to afford. I have found that giving up the "food like substances" is the best place to start...for me this includes gum! Other food like substances is products that contain artificial sweeteners, dyes and chemicals. Examples include some medications or supplements, foods like Jell-O pudding, yogurt, snack bars and pre-packaged goods.

Secondly, rinse your produce in vinegar water. If you can't afford organic, vinegar water is a great way to get the majority of pesticide residue off your produce. Finally, read your ingredients! You will be shocked at what additives are actually placed in our foods. If you still can't get to the bottom of why you feel bad, consider a food sensitivities panel, MRT. This panel will address 150 foods and food chemicals with 94% accuracy. It acts like a GPS to guiding patients on a food elimination plan that will lead to healing and eliminate symptoms that are making them miserable.

In health,

Tricia Foley, MS, RD, CLT