

Kicking the sugar habit is no small feat. Steal these hints to make cutting back easier.



At this point in your Restore Kit™ journey, you know well the health ramifications of excess sugar. But even so, sugar is hard to give up – it’s part of what makes life so sweet.

If you’re still struggling to keep your sugar intake in check, here are 10 strategies that can help you manage cravings and sugar withdrawal, so you can get your sugar intake under control.

## 1. Trust that it gets easier

**Fun fact: Food starts tasting better when you avoid sugar.** Your taste buds will begin to recalibrate, and you’ll be able to taste sugar again in its natural form. You’ll notice that foods like almonds and onions actually have some natural sweetness. Knowing this as you cut down on your sugar intake is good motivation to stick with your intention.

## 2. Fill up on healthy fats

Fat tastes good and is satisfying, both mentally and physically. It also helps stabilize blood sugar. That’s key, since dips in blood sugar were shown to activate areas in the brain that produce a greater desire for high-calorie food in study subjects who were shown images of tasty treats, reports the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. So **making sure every meal contains some healthy fat from foods such as avocados, nuts, olives, fish, or cheese can help you enjoy your food and feel less deprived.**

## 3. Get plenty of sleep

Sleep deprivation sets you up for poor food choices: When you’re tired, you’re always looking for that quick fix of energy. Levels of ghrelin, aka the “hunger hormone,” also rise if you haven’t had a good night’s sleep, which makes it extra hard to fight cravings.

Research shows **sleep deprivation actually increases your desire for high-calorie foods while also decreasing activity in the regions of the brain that deal with evaluating food choices.** For instance, one study in the journal *Sleep* found that sleep restriction boosts a

chemical signal in the body that makes junk food taste extra delicious — and keeps it elevated when it would otherwise dip in the evening. What's more, the sleep-deprived study participants binged on cookies, candy, and chips, even after eating a big meal two hours prior, eating twice the amount they did after a good night's sleep.

## 4. Stay hydrated

Adequate hydration keeps up energy levels and helps stabilize hunger, Alpert says, adding that it can also affect blood sugar levels. On the flip side, being thirsty could mess with your ability to make healthy decisions and resist sweets. It turns out that **even mild dehydration (1 to 2 percent less water than your body needs to function optimally) seems to impair cognitive performance, which includes attentiveness and critical thinking skills**, according to a study in the American College of Sports Medicine's *Health & Fitness Journal*.

For this reason, try sipping zero-calorie sparkling or mineral water when you crave something sweet to help deter indulgence. These drinks come in a variety of flavors, or you could add your own flavor, such as a little vanilla extract or tart cherry concentrate. Just stay away from artificial sweeteners — they're linked to serious health concerns and can worsen sugar cravings.

## 5. Write down what you're going to eat

Every morning, think about your meals and snacks for the day, and jot them down. **This helps hold you accountable for your goals and what you're going to do.** If you feel like you're about to give in to cravings, call or text a friend for support. Talking to someone about your plans and asking them to help keep you on track can be a lifeline. A few words of encouragement from someone else are sometimes all you need to stay the course.

## 6. Be mindful, then distract yourself

It's easy to mindlessly grab a handful of sweets when you pass a candy bowl, or automatically reach for the breadbasket when out for dinner. The trick is to think about everything you eat before it goes in your mouth. Do you really want it? Do you really need it? If you find that the answer to both questions is "no," and that instead you're responding to a craving, take a moment to acknowledge the feeling: Inhale a slow, deep breath, and then remind yourself of your goals and that cravings always pass.

Once you've tuned back in to the present, distract yourself. You might read a good book, listen to a podcast, or scroll through social media. Even better, take a short, brisk walk: A study in the journal *PLoS One* found that a **15-minute walk significantly reduced participants' urge to eat a sugary snack** compared to a control group.

## 7. Fight sweet cravings with bitters

Bitter taste receptors aren't only on your tongue; they're found throughout your digestive system and on other organs. They largely go unused if you eat a traditional Western diet, but **stimulating those receptors with bitter foods and herbs positively affects hormones involved in controlling hunger and appetite, which could help keep cravings in check.**

Bitter herbs and aromatic bitters (bitter herb extracts in an alcohol base) are also commonly used in traditional medicine to help stabilize and maintain healthy blood sugar levels. The pancreas, which makes insulin, actually contains bitter taste receptors.

To stimulate your bitter receptors, try adding a dropperful or two of aromatic bitters on the back of your tongue before meals and at your usual snack time. In terms of other herbal therapy, many herbs such as burdock root and dandelion root are naturally bitter, having been derived from bark and roots. Look for both in [Revival Bitters™](#).\* Some bitter herbs also help support healthy blood glucose levels, such as andrographis (in [Advanced Biotic™](#)).\*

## 8. Sniff essential oils

Research has shown that several scents help tame an overactive appetite. When study subjects sniffed peppermint every two hours for five days, for example, they consumed fewer calories and less sugar than when they weren't exposed to the aroma, reports a study by researchers at Wheeling Jesuit University.

Studies also show that **the scent of jasmine and grapefruit may also help control cravings and hunger**. Try diffusing any of these essential oils around your home or office, or look for the scents in natural, essential oil-based perfumes and body lotions or oils.

## 9. Exercise regularly

Regular **exercise and being active naturally decrease appetite and carb cravings**. Find an activity you enjoy — whether it's hiking, biking, tennis, yoga, kayaking or another form of exercise — and make time to move your body each day. Physical activity also mobilizes glucose and fat stores in the body. This has the effect of normalizing blood sugar, an important factor in decreasing the incidence of insulin resistance and diabetes.

## 10. Indulge wisely

Once you feel like you've got the day-to-day sugar cravings under control, it's okay to have something sweet occasionally. But it's key that you eat it without guilt. If you're going to binge and feel bad, it often leads you to make more poor choices and fall off the wagon altogether.

So **make sure your indulgences are intentional, thought-out, and enjoyable**. Keep avoiding processed junk, simple carbs, low-quality candy, and packaged foods with hidden sugars. Instead, treat yourself to, say, a piece of dark chocolate or a small cup of ice cream every now and then. And when you do, be sure to savor every bite.

---

## Stay on Track with Your Recovery

If you're not already on [Subscribe & Save](#) (a simple way to save 10%) don't forget to refill your supplements!

**Inside the Restore Kit:**



- Advanced Biotic (180 ct)
- Adaptogen Recovery (180 ct)
- Mitochondrial Support (180 ct)
- Daily Multi Plus (180 ct)
- Continued access to Dr. Rawls' email & video course

[Refill My Supplements »](#)

\*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

## RESOURCES

### **Additional resources on sugar:**

- How to Quit Sugar: 10 Steps to Fight Cravings and Sugar Withdrawal, [read now](#)  
[»](#)
- The Carb Epidemic: How Carbohydrates Could Literally Cost You an Arm and a Leg, [read here »](#)

### **Restore Kit core resources:**

- [The Restore Kit Resource Page](#) (Bookmark this to reference all the resources and tools you need to succeed with this program!)
- [The Vital Plan Diet e-book](#)

Vital Plan is a company devoted to enhancing wellness through education, support, and herbal supplements.

No longer want to receive these emails? [Unsubscribe](#).

Vital Plan | 2409 Crabtree Blvd Suite 107 Raleigh, NC 27604