



Lack Of Sleep Can Lead To More Junk Food Cravings

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Junk food is everywhere we look on daily bases. The accessibility of junk food makes it easier for people to break their diets and not eat clean. “Cravings are a natural response to living in a world where high-calorie foods are all around us,” says Susan B. Roberts, Ph.D., professor of nutrition at Tufts University and founder of the online iDiet weight loss program. But changing your sleeping habits is a easy way to end junk food cravings.

Research shows that sleeping less leads to craving more—and not the healthy stuff. A recent study in the [Journal of Obesity](#) analyzed people’s brain activity while they looked at various pictures of food after nine hours of shuteye, and then repeated the slideshow after the people slept only four hours. After only four hours, areas of the brain associated with pleasure and reward lit up more when subjects viewed pictures of donuts, pepperoni pizza and other junk compared to snaps of carrots and yogurt.

“Sleep deprivation negatively effects all systems in the body, leading the body to crave comfort, whether it’s from a cozy blanket or comfort food,” **says Franci Cohen, a certified nutritionist, exercise physiologist and personal trainer in New York City.** “It also causes a decline in overall brain function, including the ability to make proper food choices.”