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Unchaining Yourself from an Unhealthy Food Addiction

By Protica Research

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The cry of "I have no willpower!" often emerges from the consumers who jokingly surrender to their lack of will when it comes to eating something clearly unhealthy. However, scientific nutritional research has identified that something much more serious - much more dangerous - is often at work here. For many people, what they perceive as a harmless lack of willpower is actually an addiction an addiction to chemicals that the brain secretes in response to stimulation by certain foods, such as chocolate or cheese[i].

As dangerous as this addiction is, however, recent studies suggest that it is actually much more frightening than it first seems. According to one notable study, the human brain can release dopamine, which is a neurotransmitter linked with feelings enjoyment, when a person merely sees or smells certain foods[ii]. As such, people who may be sensibly avoiding foods that release serotonin and other chemicals (such as chocolate) may still be susceptible to a sight and smell-based addiction to unhealthy food.

Understanding this complex problem begins with understanding the word addiction. Defining a clear-cut definition of addiction is in itself a challenge and a rather hotly debated pursuit at the moment. Still, there is enough unity among credible social and biological scientists to say that a person who is powerless to stop an action is addicted[iii]. When applying this rather grave concept to eating, it becomes starkly clear that choosing an extra slice of pizza or bar of chocolate may be the expression of a very serious addiction to unhealthy food.

Remarkably, unlike how addictions to things like alcohol, drugs, and sexual activity viewed biological and psychological illnesses, addiction to eating is often ignored or, at the very least, diminished to be something that is based on willpower. The insulting advice of "just don't eat it if you don't want to get fat!" that some obese people actually hear from their doctors, relatives, or colleagues is one of the most common manifestations of this often well-meaning, but potentially harmful, ignorance.

The bottom line fact - and one that more medical professionals are accepting based on scientific evidence - is that obesity and related eating disorders are often the results of an addiction they are a

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serious health condition that must be approached methodologically like other diseases[iv].

Understanding that food addiction is indeed a problem - a severe disease, in fact - is a fundamental key in addressing this unique health challenge. At the same time, the notion of "willpower" should be removed, in most cases, from the eating disorder vocabulary, and replaced with the word "addiction". This will make that extra piece of pizza or that third slice of chocolate cake be seen for what they often are: the means to satisfy a bonafide addiction.

Once the "eating disorder as an addiction" paradigm is in place, then and only then can both unhealthy eaters and those supporting them take steps to solve the problem. While there are no overnight solutions, there are paths that eaters can take that head in the right direction: freedom from eating addiction. The first step on this path is to eat a complete and balanced source of nutrition.

Taking this first step, like so much else associated with the addiction to unhealthy food, is easier said than done. Eating sensibly is unusually difficult in a time-starved culture and even more difficult when there are arrays of self-described nutritious dietary sources to choose from. Whether it is energy bars or fad diets, finding a simple, convenient, and practical source of balanced nutrition is hard to find.

However, some exceptional products are garnering serious positive attention from scientific community. These products deliver complete protein in a vitamin enriched formula. Furthermore - and of critical value - is that these products contain no carbohydrates, no unsaturated fat, and few calories none of which are from fat. These products are helping people unchain themselves from food addictions, and reflect a trend towards nutritious and ethical nutritional supplement manufacturing.

Of ultimate importance, however, is that these products return eating choice control back to where it must always remain: with conscious and empowered consumers, and not to some hidden and potentially destructive addiction.

About Protica

Founded in 2001, Protica, Inc. is a nutritional research firm with offices in Lafayette Hill and Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Protica manufactures capsulized foods, including Profect, a compact, hypoallergenic, ready-to-drink protein beverage containing zero carbohydrates and zero fat. Information on Protica is available at www.protica.com

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Food Addiction Can Lead to Death

By Paul Wilson

Food has been described as ambrosia and the elixir of life. For some, eating is a biological necessity for others it is a passion that can turn into an obsession. Experts define food addiction to be a disorder where the addict is preoccupied with food, the availability of food, and the pleasure of eating. There are three recognized addictions:

- Overeating, where the addict has no control over the amount or the number of times he eats. The person has no concept of being overweight or the servings a person must eat normally. Being an overeater, the addict will indulge in uncontrolled eating binges. Being obese, the addict will be prone to hypertension, diabetes, heart diseases, arthritis, and cancer.
- Bulimisa Nervosa, where the addict binges and then tries to maintain weight by vomiting, using laxatives, excessive exercise, or even fasting. Such addicts will develop dental problems like thinning of enamel, excessive number of cavities, swollen salivary glands, fluid and electrolyte disturbances, as well as calluses and scars.
- Anorexia Nervosa, where the addict fears weight gain and so starves himself. Obsessed with weight gain and body shape anorexics will exhibit obsessive behaviors in maintaining themselves. In the process, they develop problems like disruption of menstrual cycle, emacipation, hair loss, unhealthy skin pallor, and a lack of fluids.

The most common health problems are obesity, alcoholism, diabetes, bulimia, food allergies, and food intolerance.

The signs that you are addicted to food are:

- Uncontrolled cravings for particular foods. Some are addicted to sweets, others to soft drinks, yet others to coffee.

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- Continuous or frequent eating. No fixed meal times an addict will eat throughout the day.
- Sharpened hunger on consumption of specific foods.
- Anxiety attacks, feelings of nervousness, low sugar, a headache, stomach gripes and grumbles.
- Withdrawal symptoms.
- Fatigue.
- Extreme irritations.
- Intolerance to foods.
- Feelings of guilt at having eaten.

The very cornerstones to curing the addiction are to:

- Identify and avoid what are known to be trigger foods or drinks.
- Put into practice a diet that is nutrient rich, healthy, and helps maintain or loose weight.
- Make lifestyle changes. Adopt a healthier lifestyle and include plenty of fresh air as well as exercise.
- Focus on personal and spiritual development. Seek inner peace, calm, and joy. Practice meditation and deep breathing.
- Plan to have activity filled days to distract the mind from food.

Even if you have a niggling doubt that you may be a food addict you must seek help. Nip the problem in the bud before it grows into something unmanageable and serious. You must consult a nutritionist, doctor, psychologist, or an eating addiction center or specialist. There are programs run by groups like Overeaters Anonymous that run 12–step programs which are extremely beneficial.

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, the premier REVENUE

SHARING discussion forum for Food Forum, including topics on all about food, food network, food recipe, health food, food gift, different food and more. His article profile can be found at the premier Food Article Submission Directory



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