

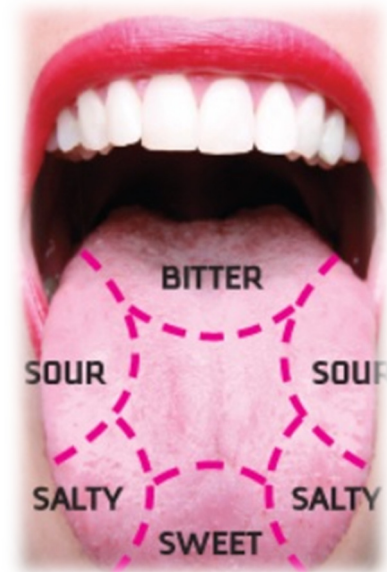
Shift Your Taste Buds, Shift Your Health

Did you know that your taste buds are able to adjust to less sugar, salt, and fat over time? There have been studies that show that if you start reducing your unhealthy food intake, your taste begins to change. You may be able to *taste fat*, just like you taste sweetness, sourness, and saltiness. You may find that the foods you used to eat become less appealing.

The foods and drinks we're surrounded with today are aimed to satisfy our taste buds. We always need to hit that level of "satisfactory" – but did you know that level of "satisfactory" was not always at that *level*? Our taste buds have been so used to eating foods that stimulate our taste buds. If we suddenly eliminate salt or sugar in our foods, we would think those foods are very bland.

Shifting your taste buds takes *time*, but it is possible. A study done in the Netherlands examined 116 students. Students were to eat bread for breakfast like they normally did. However, the sodium content in the bread for students in the experimental group was reduced by 31% in week 2, 52% in week 3, and 67% in week 4. Researchers discovered that even though the bread had less sodium, the students did not have to compensate their overall breakfast by eating additional saltier foods. The students in the control and the experimental group were also asked to rate the saltiness of certain foods, and the latter group rated foods as saltier; the control group thought those foods were not salty at all (Bolhuis et al., 2011).

You can see from this study that shifting your taste buds to acquire new tastes is a gradual process, and it is a *real* physical change – in the study done by Bolhuis et al. (2011), it took about one month. **Be purposeful and persistent, and don't give up!**



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A huge complaint is that healthy foods *don't taste good*. It is because your taste buds may have been **adapted to quick and processed foods** that food manufacturers create. So how can you *detox* your taste buds?

1. Eat less processed foods (i.e. restaurants, fast food, prepared supermarket food, ready-to-eat snacks).
2. Choose frozen over canned foods. Most canned foods are coated with salt to protect the food. Frozen foods also have a greater level of original vitamins preserved.
3. Delay salting. Add salt after you have finished preparing a meal, not during.
4. Gradually reduce the amount of salt you add to food. In a few weeks, you'll eventually dislike fast foods because they will taste too salty for you.
5. Lessen your sugar in coffee. At the start of a new week, add one quarter teaspoon of less sugar to your coffee, and go down to zero sugar.



Remember that this is a **gradual process!** The journey to shifting your taste buds is unique for everyone. Do not give up!

Stewart, J., Newman, L., & Keast, R. (2011). Oral sensitivity to oleic acid is associated with fat intake and body mass index. *Clinical Nutrition*, 30(6), 838-844.

Bolhuis, D., Temme, E., Koeman, F., Noort, M., Kremer, S., & Janssen, A. (2011). A Salt Reduction of 50% in Bread Does Not Decrease Bread Consumption or Increase Sodium Intake by the Choice of Sandwich Fillings. *Journal Of Nutrition*, 141(12), 2249-2255.

Break the Fast-Food Habit

Food manufacturers purposely create flavours that are extremely addictive so we as consumers can keep purchasing their processed foods. Your taste buds have become so accustomed to high amounts of sugar and fats, that they forgot what *real* food tastes like. It takes time and perseverance to break the fast-food habit, but it is definitely possible. These steps will help you on the right track!

1. Eliminating fast food all at once is unrealistic and will make you unhappy – limit yourself to eating fast-food 3 times a week, and then 2, and then 1, and then eventually reaching none or less frequent during the month!
2. Track your meals – determine your eating patterns (e.g. which processed foods you're eating and what time you're eating them).
3. Create a meal plan using Canada's food guide recommendations.
4. Eat a breakfast that includes protein which will decrease your need to satisfy your hunger with a quick fast-food fix for lunch.
5. Keep lots of healthy snacks in your purse and office.
6. Build a support network so they can motivate and encourage you.

Switch from Milk Chocolate to Dark Chocolate

1. Try 50% cocoa chocolate a few times
2. Try 60% cocoa
3. Try 72% cocoa
4. Try 80% cocoa

(and you could go up to 90%)

