

January 2010 Issue

YOU ARE DYING FOR SOMETHING FATTENING...  
BUT TRYING REALLY HARD NOT TO GO THERE.  
THESE FOOD SWAPS WILL SATISFY YOUR JONES  
WHILE KEEPING YOUR THIGHS AND ASS IN CHECK.

By Zoë Ruderman

Obviously, eating everything you desire will pack 'em on. But ignoring cravings isn't smart either; you'll just feel deprived and binge later. The secret is to satisfy your appetite for a specific food by swapping in a version with fewer calories that's similar in flavor and texture. Here, common cravings and the alternatives you can enjoy sans guilt.

**If you crave:** Potato chips  
Calories: **250** (a 1.5-ounce bag)  
**Eat:** Air-popped popcorn  
Calories: **60** (in 2 cups, popped)  
Popcorn provides the crunch you want when feeling snappy but without the grease. Jack up the flavor by sprinkling on chili powder, sea salt, or cinnamon.

**If you crave:** A slice of pizza  
Calories: **330**  
**Eat:** A whole-wheat English muffin pizza loaded with veggies  
Calories: **180**  
The most calorie-packed parts of pizza are the cheese and white-bread crust, so just sprinkle on part-skim cheese and pile sauce, sweet peppers, onions, or arugula on a whole-grain lower-cal English muffin instead.



**If you crave:** French fries  
Calories: **380** (in a medium order)  
**Eat:** Baked sweet-potato "fries"  
Calories: **180** (in 1 cup)  
Slice a sweet potato into sticks, mist with cooking spray, sprinkle with salt, then bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. These fries are full of vitamins A and C and allow you to give in to your salt and starch urges. And they're so flavorful, you can skip the ketchup, cutting out another 50 calories.

**If you crave:** A Frappuccino  
Calories: **240** (in 16 fluid ounces)  
**Drink:** Coffee with condensed low-fat milk and TruWhip (1 tablespoon each)  
Calories: **75** (in a large mug)  
These two low-cal sweeteners will make a regular cup of joe taste like a fancy coffee concoction.



**If you crave:** Chocolate-chip cookies  
Calories: **400** (in two medium cookies)  
**Eat:** Dark chocolate  
Calories: **100** (in half a bar)  
Dark chocolate is so flavorful, a few squares are enough to satisfy your urge for something sweet and melty. Plus, dark chocolate has lots of antioxidants and is slightly lower in calories than milk chocolate.

**If you crave:** Fettuccini Alfredo  
Calories: **1,220**  
**Eat:** Whole-wheat pasta with olive oil and Parmesan  
Calories: **280** (in 1 cup)  
What's calling your name? Cheesy, carby comfort food. Get it via fiber-rich whole-wheat pasta topped with three spoonfuls (65 calories) of grated Parmesan and a teaspoon of olive oil, which is actually heart healthy.

**If you crave:** A bacon cheeseburger  
Calories: **550**  
**Eat:** A grilled-cheese sandwich with mushrooms  
Calories: **260**  
What you're after is a sink-your-teeth-into-it sandwich. Grilled cheese offers that experience, and a study found that mushrooms satisfy meat cravings for way fewer calories.

**If you crave:** A fast-food milk shake  
Calories: **400** (in a small cup)  
**Eat:** Frozen yogurt  
Calories: About **200** (in 1 cup)  
You will gratify your sugar jones, and you'll get the cold, smooth taste for fewer calories. Plus, eating with a spoon will slow you down.

**If you crave:** Granola  
Calories: **420** (in ¼ cup)  
**Eat:** Oatmeal  
Calories: **120** (in one reduced-sugar packet)  
Granola is a sweet, grainy anytime snack or meal, but it's actually loaded with sugar and calories. Switch to oatmeal. You'll get a similar taste but without all the calories.

**If you crave:** Chinese takeout stir-fry  
Calories: **500** (in one serving)  
**Eat:** Homemade takeout stir-fry soup  
Calories: **280** (in 2 cups)  
Chinese is one of the most commonly craved cuisines after a night of boozing because your body craves salt, nutritionists say. Stir-fry also provides a ton of other satisfying tastes in one dish. Skip the rice, and put the same ingredients in soup broth made with just water and a beef or chicken bouillon cube.

SOURCES: DAWN JACKSON BLATNER, RD; NATALIE ROSENSTOCK, RD