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## Ask a Nutritionist! by Tara Postnikoff

**Q:** Any suggestions for a healthy way of satisfying a sweet tooth besides fruit?

**A:** There are many foods to snack on that are healthy. But if it's sugar or something sweet you are craving then you want to ask yourself, why and when? Is your body trying to tell you something specific or do you have a habit? Do you want to satisfy your sweet tooth every day (after a meal) or is it just an occasional indulgence? There are many factors that could be contributing to your sweet tooth. If you can identify why they are happening then you have a better chance of correcting the behaviour.

**The more sugar you eat, the more your body will crave it.**

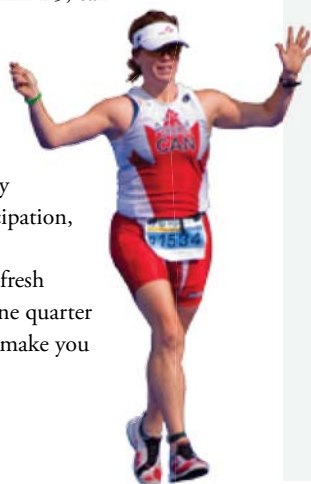
Sometimes sugar cravings in distance runners are the result of consuming insufficient calories. The body recognizes that there isn't enough energy for the daily demand, and it sends out signals to eat more.

Usually the "more" we reach for are the simple, comforting carbohydrates like sugar or breads.

Sugar cravings are often also a result of an imbalance between proteins, fats and carbohydrates. The more sugar you eat, the more your body will crave it. Make sure your carbohydrates are the starchy, complex kind (like squash or quinoa), not the simple sugary kind (like candy or baked goods). If your diet is low in protein, your body may also crave sugar. Also, an imbalance or deficiency in micronutrients, such as mineral chromium or vitamin B5, can increase the desire for sugar.

Check to see if there is a pattern to the timing of your sugar cravings. Are you an emotional eater, are you bored, watching TV or in front of the computer, or are you stressed or sad? Cravings at these times can be eliminated by not giving in. Distract yourself by going for a walk or run. If you are having a sweet snack at the same time every day your body will learn to expect it and produce digestive enzymes in anticipation, causing you to want that treat even more.

When you do snack, find something that is not sweet. Try having a fresh and raw vegetable and a healthy source of fat, such as nuts or seeds or one quarter of an avocado. The high fibre and healthy fat will slow down digestion, make you feel more full and help reduce your sweet tooth. 🗨️



### About Tara

Tara Postnikoff is a registered nutritional consultant and certified personal trainer in Toronto and is the founder of Healthy Eating Active Living. Tara is an avid distance runner and triathlete, a training program instructor and a regular guest speaker for the Running Room training programs. Tara can be reached at [tara@heal-nutrition.com](mailto:tara@heal-nutrition.com) or [www.heal-nutrition.com](http://www.heal-nutrition.com).