Today for our March webinar on food cravings food cravings is that Universal human trait that although we differ in What We crave how often We crave our Why We crave, we can all really respect the fact that we each have cravings So today we're going to go over a few facts about food cravings looking at the evolutionary reason for us and then the wolf and the program with the ways.

And tips to manage some of those Cravings to make them a little less controlling of Our Lives as you can see from the screen, there's some tasty Foods on there I know I'm ready for a snack soon, but we'll see why even just looking at foods can even spark a food craving so just to get started let me introduce myself my name is Christy Goff and I'm a registered dietitian with the.

Living Well Alliance Pacific Medical Team our main goal is to offer programs that prevent chronic diseases and also improve the health of our communities and not only are nine clinics around Puget Sound but for employer groups like you guys and community centers so our webinar today I'll ask you to put your phones on mute or computers on mute additionally you'll.

Get a follow-up email with some resources as well as the presentation slides and then there is a going to be a recording as well, so let's look at our agenda are learning objectives today our first to look at the Y around food cravings I think this will give you a little bit more power to know where they're coming from and then the last part of the presentation like I mentioned will be.

Practical tips for reducing these food cravings week and unfortunately never let them go away we need to eat so we will look at why and then hopefully just have a better understanding of why so the first question is what do We crave anyone getting excited with some of the foods that are seen on the screen anyone maybe if you're really hungry these are usually Bland low calorie.

Foods not many people would normally gravitate to these after a dinner meal, for example, unless it was covered in something delicious so thank dips salad dressing, cheese and why is that why don't we crave the things that are supposed to be so good for us and give us all these nutrients well we know animals including humans will naturally seek out six different flavors or macro-nutrients than any other food group.

So take a moment and see if you can guess what some of those are, maybe you're thinking sugar, fats alt those are probably the three common ones and those are the foods indicated on that first slide right, we got cheese, which is nice fat and salt we have cake sweet decadent fatty and then Pizza is kind of all-encompassing right so that's the.

Six food or items that we crave are usually fat, carbohydrates salt, protein glutamate, which is a specific amino acid and sugar, so these six things we'll see as a reoccurring theme over the course of the presentation so this is because something is going on behind the scenes in our brain that actually dictates our response to these Foods it's not just our willpower so anytime.

Anyone tells you that it is very chemical and something is definitely happening in our brain so let's dive into why first a food craving definition so it's not the state of being hungry, it's a heightened state of eating, emotion or motivation that is directed at a specific food or food group so in essence if we were truly hungry we would essentially eat anything and be okay with that.

When we're craving something we want the texture the sweet the Savory and we go for a maybe a specific food so do you think that the Cravings differ between the Sexes let's open up a poll so do you think men or women typically in general have more cravings so this obviously isn't every individual out there but in general there are some hormonal differences between the two.

Sexes that looks like an astounding pull is leading to women have more cravings and you're correct women on General have more heightened Cravings than men because there are actually more areas of the brain that are linked to desire for it those types of food so it chemically there is something happening and that is different from men and women not everyone like me.

Mentioned but in general typically women have stronger Cravings than men so what actually triggers are food cravings will anything can trigger a food craving you might have something in mind of a recent craving that you had it could be a location that you're in a time of day so typically after lunch for example you might crave sweet it could be a specific place that.

You're in like a mall and been exposed to some of your favorite foods are favorite memories or inactivity so the more often a particular stimulus is associated with the food the stronger the craving when you're inthat place or in that mindset if you, for example always stop and get a cheeseburger and fries at the mall then your brain it actually sets itself out to strongly advise.

You continue getting this meal every time that you're at the mall and we'll find out what hormone is actually driving, but situational Cravings are really a huge thing that happens in our body most of the time I craving is not necessarily telling us what we need, so there's been some series around if different foods are actually crazy because they contain certain nutrients while.

That research is still kind of in its infancy, most of the time we Cravings are more directed at the feel-good aspects that we get from eating the food so it's more of a product of your body wanting calories rather than a specific nutrient again, not all the time and there can be individual differences in that but in general the survival of craving food is more purposeful for getting.

The most calories in the food that we're eating so let's get back to the basics about our brain what it's been designed to do and how we evolved evolutionary so typically we were hunters and gatherers back in the day and people had to get adequate food in order to survive in order to reproduce in an order to pass along our healthy genes so as a species we need to eat in.

Order to survive essentially there for our brains have the ability to seek out certain foods that are actually higher in calories and fat this is where a lot of our six main sources of Cravings round remember it was sugar cubes, fat protein, salt and that glutamate the brain actually speaks these Foods out by giving you a big reward at the end after you eat it this is going to be the chemical.

Known as dopamine you can see the diagram below just explaining how that dopamine is flooding are receptors and giving us. Feel-good, feel good I'm feeling, I guess so this is a motivation hormone as well as a feel-good hormone so it not only is really delightful to eat these foods, but we also remember the texture The Taste a crunch of the food and this strong release.

Of dopamine happens when we see a food and taste of food so we get kind of a motivation to go get it and then we got the reinforcement of yes that was a good idea I had a really good time eating that cake so this worked great for hunters and gatherers because they might have only ran across tasty tasty treats rarely so think honey from a beehive super rare but when they got it.

They would be a lot of it also protein from a fresh kill so they would again eat as much as they could and hopefully that would sustain them for a while longer, therefore it was beneficial for us to eat as much as we could to store up calories for later when we didn't have access to food since it was sometimes variable whether they'd eat a full meal that day now this is a simple.

Explanation but it gives us a starting point to know why we crave food so strongly at times and go even out of our way to get that pizza or baked goods from even smelling or seeing it from the sign or at a restaurant the dopamine Spike will feel higher and also more intense when we refine the foods listed here so that honey is a little bit more of a complex sugar so to speak but.

When we refine it even more the food industry is actually finding out that We crave it even more drastically the next time so it's giving us a higher amount of that dopamine response so that it feels good and then it's also reinforced so we'll talk about a little bit about the food industry in the next slide as well so can eating these Foods increases dopamine and then we'll look at a.

Little diagram to just see what's happening in for those visual Learners out there right like me so let's look at the graph force will eat that pizza it will be digested and our staff actually sends signals from the digestion phase back up to our brain that starts that release of dopamine in the in the body so dopamine again is that reinforcements there's a surge that happens feels real.

Good it doesn't last very long, so we're more likely to be motivated to eat it again so it's actually targeting a specific part of the brain that's kind of in the Primitive section over there once we've had, maybe this really delicious pizza and hopefully it was a good slice were more motivated to eat a second one a third one even a fourth one and then we're more likely to eat it later on as.

Well, so I kind of like to see this as just a reminder that we get a couple signals throughout the eating process is not as simple as the taste buds for example, we actually get some composition signals from the digestive process, saying this actually had great fat great salt I want to eat this more often essentially and this diagram was taken from a book called The.

Hungry brain, which I'll talk more about at the end, but it's a great resource to follow up on if you're curious and want a kind of easy to understand science around food cravings and how our brain is working for us so one last note on combination Foods this is Foods taken at different and taken in conjunction with each other so above bra sorry I cooked it might not seem as.

As appetizing as a burger with cheese and bread right, so the combination is combining the protein the starch the fat the maybe they even sugars from the catch up on the on the burger so it, in essence the burger is probably going to be craving more height and weight than the individual ingredient and there was a study done and it's listed below on your slide and they put people in.

The front of an MRI machine and expose them to images of a variety of different foods that were all combinations so carbohydrate-rich that rich or rich people fat and curb so kind of a different perspective of just looking at food all the images represented the same number of calories so it wasn't a matter of your body sorry now what has higher calories vs not but then they measured.

Each subject's brain response to the food items on the screen and allowed them to actually bid money on the foods that as a measure of their motivations to eat them later on and they find that not only were people willing to pay substantially more money for food that contains both the fat and the carbohydrates but the brain scans also show that these foods can activate their brain.

To a greater degree, so essentially giving them a bigger dopamine response even by just looking at the foods not even eating them does this suggest that calorie for calorie the brain values carbohydrates and fats together more than eating them alone, so the cake is often craved more than say Smarties right a plain burger might taste good but it's always going to take a little bit better.

When it's got all the stuff on it so what do We crave the most then I'll open up another pole and just guess kind of what we are craving in this day and age, they did a study with some college kids so maybe think back to your college days did they do you think people crave vegetables chocolate pizza bread pasta or evils B&C this is a study done with a thousand males and.

Females so both sexes were involved and they did get a little bit different results based on the Sexes but as you'll see it's pretty interesting what was the highest so we're getting some lot of responses for Eid both B&C choices are chocolate and pizza a couple of pizza any last gases before we move on got one for bread and pasta yeah and that is interesting because it is actually a.

Combination food they usually put a lot of salt in bread so it's salty, it's carbohydrate-rich and often has some fat associated with it so butter or some kind of talk thing on it are we still have the winner as both chocolate and pizza and low and behold you guys are correct so this first study looked at the difference between these Foods over on the left hand side and then the.

Percentage of males and females that they said that these were the highest or the most out of control they felt around these Foods you'll notice that could be substantially higher in females than male and higher than every other food item on there so chocolate also has a steel bromine which is a caffeine site type related compounds that actually heightens our motivation to eat the.

Food so not only are we going to get the dopamine response from the fat and sugar, but we're also getting this additional compound that is I wouldn't say addictive, but slightly more feel-good motivated to eat it so women seem like they have more susceptibility to that than men and as far as this research study goes in another study they also asked for Dutch college students themselves.

Asked 1400 or almost 1,500 people asking about symptoms of food addiction what types of food where there was food addiction symptoms associated with so the conclusion were pretty similar to the one above highly high-fat Savory so Pizza salty foods were pretty much the winner here by a close second of high-fat sweet so that could be the chocolate the ice cream desserts cakes.

In that sort of thing and then you'll see a lot lower is the mainly sugar or mainly low-fat Savory so there's definitely again that reinforcement that's combined foods are going to be the most problematic for a food cravings than just an individual food all right so now we're on the city good part the tricks to kick your Cravings like I said there's no magic cure it is an individual.

Response to Howard even is feeling Cravings are dealing with them and our brain chemistry actually difference between each other so while we might all experience that dopamine High some people will experience it more dramatically than other, so that's still up Prospect of research and hopefully in the coming future so the first method that will go over is.

Called the five D's I just found this and really kind of gravity ordered it because it puts in perspective mindful eating, but also gives you some actual things that you can do while you're experiencing the craving in full force so the first one is delay this one is asking you to wait before diving into a craving if possible I know that's not always possible for everybody this is.

Gets you allow this allows you to assess if you're truly hungry or if you're just craving the food for comfort for maybe energy because he didn't sleep well emotional Comfort or just out of habit so it can kind of stopped any habitual grabs or gravitates towards a certain food and it also can just give us time to assess are we really hungry or is this trying to do something else for our bodies.

This leads us to the next. Which is called distract so while you're waiting you obviously need some distraction or else you'll probably just go for that food so distraction could be doing a different activity, it could be distinct oh my gosh, I'm not going to say that we're trying to find something to do call a friend talk to a dog or a cat go for a walk I watch a show even while you?

Help wait, wait your self-destruction could also be something you could do at work too, so if you are seeing all the big squids in the breadcrumb maybe you can distract yourself by calling a patient so you that you have again that 10 minutes of just delayed time the third one is distance trying to distance yourself from the food can be easier said than done sometimes but this can be.

About accessibility to our food cravings so if we see a commercial or sign how far away are we from that food that we can distance ourselves from again, it's not self-control all the time will naturally gravitate towards these foods and there's so many foods that are supposed to buy cards are dopamine response in in the media so getting distance again while you can still.

Indulge in some Cravings just think about where you might put that food craving item, is it going to be in your cabinet is it going to be only when you are out to eat for example, can you make some distance around that food craving the last two D's are determined and decide they're related to mindful eating here so this is a good chance to reflect on the craving strength how.

Strong is it, today is there anything else that will satisfy that craving at this point is if your go-to dessert is chocolate, however can you be satisfied with something that still sweet like Add a fruit based variation for some reason I won't go as far as to say it's the same as chocolate but sometimes just having something else in place that can be enough to satisfy you after a meal.

Or That Snack mode also can you return it where the craving might be coming from is it truly hungry did you miss a meal, for example where you sleep deprived are you stressed out is it just there and you're bored this can be really helpful to just being a little bit more control over that craving then not knowing or just guessing for example and then deciding this one can be hard.

Because once you start eating the food We crave it sometimes really hard to stop right so it can you eat it slower can you eat it more mindfully without distraction from a phone or TV around can you described yourself how good it really is to really Savor the Flavors of it if it's not worth savoring is it something that maybe you eat today but you choose something else next time.

Sometimes just slowing down can make us realize that some of these foods that are notoriously been really delicious for us are not as good as we might have once thought see if you're able to make to eat a smaller portion of it, that's again really hard to do, but there is research that says the first three bites of your food is going to taste the best so it's new deer taste buds there's not.

A flavor fatigue aspect yet and there again is that first burst of dopamine response to make us feel good and to make us motivated so can we potentially use this to our advantage at times in addition to those tricks I'll have some other ones that can be used intermittently just to see if they work for you again some of these might not work for yourself and you've tried everything.

But these are kind of some low-hanging fruit you can try to really help kick those Cravings again this one is all about blood sugar control by using balanced meals and snacks and looking at your meal timing a little bit closer so this is not someone again who has diabetes per se but everyone goes through fluctuations of their blood sugar when we eat when we're eating plain.

Sugar we have this kind of a roller coaster ride you'll see on the screen here that we have insulin Peaks and an insulin Falls as it as insulin starts putting the sugar back into the body and sometimes they do this in a really quick fashion to even out again our blood sugar they like to be at a certain amount so that fast and increase of insulin into the bloodstream can often make us.

Feel a little tired moodiness and then if Isaac crashes, it could leave lead to more Cravings later on so we don't want that right, so how do we do that we want to eat balanced and that means eating your carbohydrates are your sugar with a little bit of protein and fat as he's been slower to digest in the body and they end up taking the cards a little bit are they slow the carbohydrate.

Digestion down a little bit as well, so that your body is more like that bottom line nice even slightly hilly road, but not these drastic Peaks and valleys throughout the day so that could be some fruit with stinky cheese or nuts as opposed to just the fruit themselves whole grain crackers again are going to have a little bit more fiber in it but then you can add some protein on top you.

Could do an egg with toast veggies with hummus lots of different suggestions here so just think about what you're eating and then see if it's I would say just cards just protein or maybe even just fat and then see if you can balance it and try to find all those micronutrients in everything that you're eating meal timing is also really important and it's often where I start with crate with.

Food cravings just trying to see when are people eating and how often and are there big gaps where they're not eating at all that leads them to be more hungry and potentially craving certain foods that are quick energy like sugar cubes in that sort of thing it can help you if you write down when you've eaten your meals and the time frame to see if there are any of those large gaps.

Ideally you don't have to eat every 2 to 3 hours like maybe once. But if you are hungry at it's nice to have a snack in between your meals and vice-versa, you could add one after dinner if you eat really early and then they're still hungry by eight or nine can you do a balanced snack again so that you're not snacking mindlessly on those treats that we use some time the TV after.

That we have a couple other things to note first is making recipes tasty and zesty, so you might be like why does this have to do with my Cravings but we do know that when we're not as satisfied with a meal if it was Bland or really boring to us, we tend to crave more food after that so I know when I've had a really boring me all because I'm going to be craving something even.

More delicious, even if I'm full I'll still be craving something additional after that so can you add some sweetness to your meal through even adding fruit to your salad and caramelized onions on your burger if you can even seek a Meats in a certain way to bring out their caramelization or roast vegetables to again get them a little bit sweeter to make recipes tasty we also.

Encourage people to add healthy fats so fast they're going to be really good for causing satiety fullness and then also they carry flavor so they're going to give your may be boring quinoa something to Jazz it up with and feel more satisfying, so that healthy fast again or like Olive Oil avocado nuts or nut oil yogurt things like that are going to really add to your recipe and bring out.

The taste of everything and then another tip for making recipes tastes are adding some herbs and spices so these are you don't need a lot, but they have a lot of flavor and also nutrients so it kicks it up a notch and you can use sweet spices like cinnamon or allspice nutmeg clove or even spicy things like chipotle pepper Cayenne Sriracha those types of things again to just kind.

Of hit all your taste buds and make it more exciting as you go through the meal the next advice is to check your hydration so digestion always starts in her mouth with our saliva and this helps us taste all of the different flavors of our food so if we're dehydrated we actually don't taste our food or enjoy it as much as if we were truly hydrated so keep a check on this there's not in a silly.

One recommendation that fits all four people, but you just want to make sure you're checking your urine to see if it's a nice light yellow or even clear color throughout the day and see if you could add a little bit of more hydration throughout your day hydration dehydration also is you sometimes feel hungry when you're dehydrated so it's good to just check in to see if you've even.

Drink a lot that day number five is sleeping so we could have a whole presentation on this and but there's been a lot of research around sleep and what we're eating after and the kind of the cutoff seems to be about 6 hours or less ends up making people eat more calories and this is because they're striving for energy so they're more drawn to things and then coupled with the.

The fact that were already may be exposed to these Foods in our lives that are spiking are dopamine we're going to be having less control over choosing those foods that we're going to eat additionally stressed as the same thing so stress also has allowed us to have less control over what we're choosing but we also know from studies that when people eat during a stressful.

Situation it does help us calm down so it is a huge Comfort even using of the like neurological matters in our brains so when we eat while we're stressed we feel, so we have to just find other ways to manage stress so that we're not going to food all of the time and then lastly is physical activity we get similar increases of dopamine and some other of the feel good hormones during.

Exercise however, as you imagine it's a much harder to go out for a walk than it is to just grab a doughnut quickly at the drive-thru so it is a little bit more challenging to get those feel good hormones, but regular exercise has been proven to help with food cravings if it's done regularly alright so food cart Cravings are really hard to break I know they're very ingrained in our biology.

But I hope that you have a better understanding of where they're coming from and then some tips on how to manage them again, everyone's different if I asked you all what you craved I bet we'll come up with 10 or 15 different things, but the trick is to try to just be a little bit more aware of what's happening I just was really enlightened after reading the hungry brain and just kind of.

Going on the biology of us because it is very complex and I feel like I have a little bit more understanding about what my own body is telling me at certain times when I have these cravings thanks for listening today feel free to reach out with any additional questions again I'll send you some resources in that follow up email as well as a survey this was the book I was.

Mentioning called The Hungry brain the book is really well written and it has a whole chapter on stress a whole chapter on sleep and then a little bit more detail about what we talked about at the beginning. Response to stem and it goes into a lot of why we eat and how we can kind of change that also provide some recipes for food and nutrition. So there's a lot of different ways.

We can Jazz up our food to make it taste good, so again we're more satisfied with what we're actually eating I can take a few questions in the chat bar if if you want to comment or if you want to just tell me what you're craving today I would love to hear thanks guys.