

food, it's not a filling one. "Drinks have weak satiating properties," says Richard Mattes, PhD, a distinguished professor in the department of nutrition science at Purdue University. That's because feeling satisfied isn't only about how much you consume—the sensory experience matters, too. Beverages are problematic because they deprive you of the act of chewing, which contributes to a feeling of fullness. "A drink is in your mouth for just a few seconds, and it leaves your stomach faster than food," Mattes says. So even a smoothie that contains a protein-rich ingredient like yogurt often won't ease hunger pangs as well as a solid food with the same amount of protein.

**THE FIX** You don't have to swear off your favorite blend, but swap out some helpings for solid food. In your food journal, rate how full you feel after you eat and drink so you can see whether, say, a bowl of oatmeal with fruit and nuts keeps you more powered-up

than a breakfast smoothie. If you're really in the mood for a drink, make sure it has protein (milk, almonds) and includes ingredients to boost the creaminess (and thus your satiety), such as bananas or avocado.

**CULPRIT #4**

**You're glued to your gadgets**

Researchers at Northwestern University found that people who were exposed to blue light—the type emitted by laptops, tablets and smartphones—right before or during dinner felt an increase in hunger that began 15 minutes after exposure and lingered for almost two hours post-meal. The reason is unclear, but it may have to do with blue light's wakefulness-promoting effects. "It can trick your body into thinking that it's morning and you need to fuel up to take on the day," says researcher Ivy N. Cheung, a doctoral candidate in Northwestern's interdepartmental neuroscience program.

**THE FIX** Try to get more daylight before the sun sets; it will help you become less sensitive to blue light. And consider investing in a tool that blocks blue light on your devices. The app f.lux "warms up" the display light on computers; sites such as lowbluelights.com sell blue light-blocking glasses, as well as filters you can apply to your screens.

**CULPRIT #5**

**You eat low-fat and nonfat everything**

It may seem like a smart move, but cutting out too much fat can make you seriously hungry. While fats do provide more calories per gram than carbs and protein, they keep you fuller longer because it takes more time to digest them (so a little goes far). "A diet too low in fat can also reduce your levels of insulin and testosterone—both of which are crucial for maintaining and building muscle as you lose weight," McDaniel points out.

**HIT "PAUSE"**

► The next time you're tempted to reach for a pint of chocolate ice cream, wait before diving in. "If someone were to ask to borrow a lot of money, most people would stop and say, 'I'll think about it,'" says Coral Arvon, PhD, director of behavioral health and wellness at Pritikin Longevity Center & Spa in Miami. But when it comes to treats, the majority of us don't hesitate to indulge. "Consider your decision for about 10 minutes first," Arvon suggests.

**THE FIX** Make sure that 25 to 30 percent of your daily calories come from fat, primarily from heart-healthy sources such as fish, avocado and nuts. And before you buy a low-fat food, check the nutrition panel. "Manufacturers often add more sugar and sodium to make these products tastier," McDaniel says. When it comes to diet staples like nut butters and salad dressing, pick the full-fat versions and you won't need to snack an hour later. ■

**SURPRISINGLY SATISFYING!**

Seriously, how often can you eat nuts? Branch out a little with these other super-filling foods.



**Peas**

► This green veggie packs a lot of protein (8 grams per cup). For a creamy side dish, try pureeing a serving of peas in a blender or food processor with lemon zest or mint, plus a pinch of salt.



**Fish**

► A study from Deakin University in Australia showed that fish protein may be more filling than either beef or chicken protein. Experts suspect that it's because fish takes longer to digest than the other meats.



**Chia seeds**

► Not only are they rich in protein and fiber—both of which help slow down digestion—but they actually expand in your stomach, making you feel content longer.



**Watermelon**

► The fruit's ultra-high water content—a whopping 92 percent—helps quiet hunger pangs. It's also diet-friendly: There are just 46 calories in 1 cup of cubed melon, and around 86 in a wedge.



**Edamame**

► Also known as green soybeans, they're loaded with hunger fighters: 1 cup has 17 grams of protein and 8 grams of fiber. They're also high in resistant starch, a dietary fiber that fills you up and helps increase your body's ability to burn fat.