

# HOW TO Identify “Junk” Foods

**1.**

**How many calories am I consuming in one serving?**

The higher the consumption of calories with no nutritional value, the worse the food serving is.

**2.**

**What is the quality of the ingredients used to prepare this food? How fresh are they?**

Fresh ingredients tend to have fewer preservatives (chemical substances used to prevent or delay natural decomposition) than processed foods. Fresh and natural ingredients have more beneficial nutrients. Avoid foods that contain trans-fats, high fructose corn syrup or any other type of corn syrup, and refined grains. If one of the first two ingredients is either oil or a form of sugar, especially high fructose corn syrup, then it is likely a junk food.

**3.**

**What are the healthy nutrients I am consuming from this food?**

Many foods have sugars, fats, and salts, but if a serving of food has more proteins, vitamins and minerals than non-nutritional components, then it is not considered junk food.

**4.**

**Is the food being advertised and camouflaged as healthy and marketed for the nutrient profile?**

It is important to check the ingredients and nutritional values of foods being advertised as healthy (such as certain breakfast cereals) and a beneficial alternative to other “junk” food. In reality, they might be processed and contain nutrients that are not beneficial, including sugar, corn syrup, and artificial flavors. It is important to avoid replacing healthier alternatives with “junk” foods as that can diminish the nutritional benefits one could potentially be obtaining. For example, when drinking lots of soda, one is typically going to be lacking nutritious foods such as low-fat dairy. When eating cookies and chips in excess, one loses the nutritional benefits they could be obtaining from alternatives in fruits and vegetables.

**5.**

**Do you still feel hungry after consuming “junk” food?**

This is likely due to the fact that “junk” foods are low in satiation value, which indicates that people do not tend to feel as full when they eat them, thus leading to overeating and/or binge-eating.



# My Plan to Reduce Junk Food

## List of Junk Food Items

## Healthier Alternative

## Non-junk-food Reward

- 1.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.** \_\_\_\_\_
- 7.** \_\_\_\_\_

**What I will do if a slip occurs (something that will motivate me):**

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**Fill in each of the junk food items for each week as a goal (you can color code them). It is recommended that you start with one food and gradually add more.**

**Month:**[illegible]**Month:**[illegible]**Month:**[illegible]

**Month:**

[illegible]