



Artificial Sensation: HOW JUNK FOODS TRICK YOUR BODY

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)—also known as junk foods—are cleverly designed to hijack your senses and override your natural satiety signals, causing you to consume more of these foods than you intended.

By manipulating taste, smell, and appearance, manufacturers purposefully encourage the overconsumption of UPFs that offer no nutritional value, contributing to unhealthy eating habits and potential long-term health issues.

12 WAYS JUNK FOODS HIJACK YOUR SENSES

Food scientists employ various techniques to enhance the appeal and consumption of junk foods.

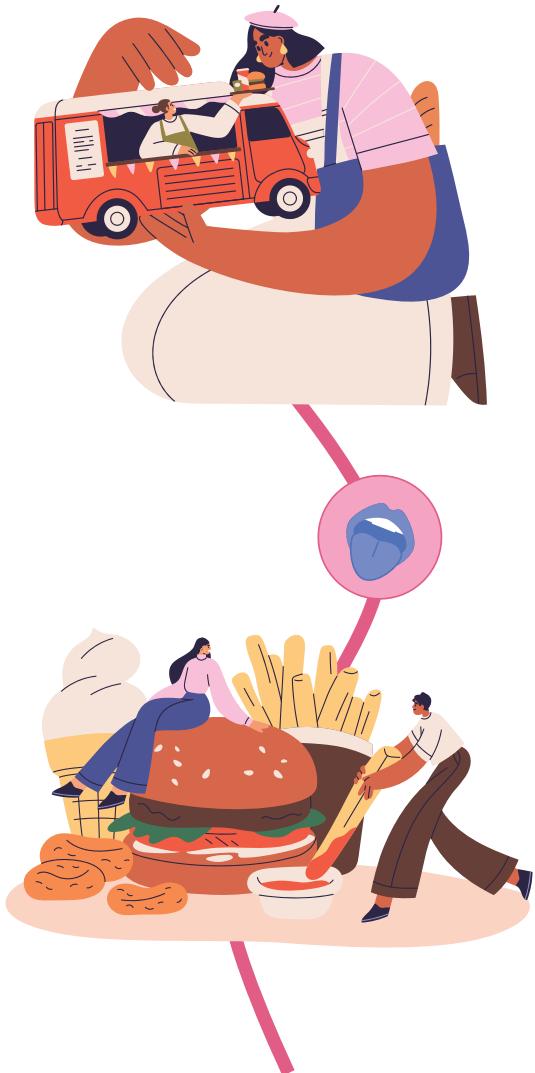
Here are some common tricks they use.

1. Flavor enhancement

Food manufacturers utilize artificial flavors and synthetic ingredients to make UPFs more intense and appealing. By carefully balancing sweet, salty, and fatty flavors, they deliberately create a bliss point that makes it hard to stop eating.

2. Texture manipulation

Food scientists spend considerable effort to create specific textures, such as the satisfying crunch of chips or the smooth creaminess of ice cream, to trigger sensory pleasure circuits in the brain that fuel food addiction and encourage overeating.



3. Color additives

Bright, synthetic colors are often added to UPFs to make them look more appetizing and exciting. These vivid colors catch your eye and trick your brain into perceiving the food as tastier, ultimately increasing your desire to eat more.

4. Aroma engineering

Infusing UPFs with sophisticated artificial aromas helps make food smell irresistible, often stimulating your appetite before you take your first bite. Sometimes, scents are designed to evoke positive memories, making foods seem even more appealing.

5. Portion distortion

The portion sizes of UPFs have steadily increased, making larger servings seem normal and encouraging you to eat more. Additionally, smart packaging can make portions look smaller, misleading you into believing you're consuming less than you actually are.

6. Hyper-palatability

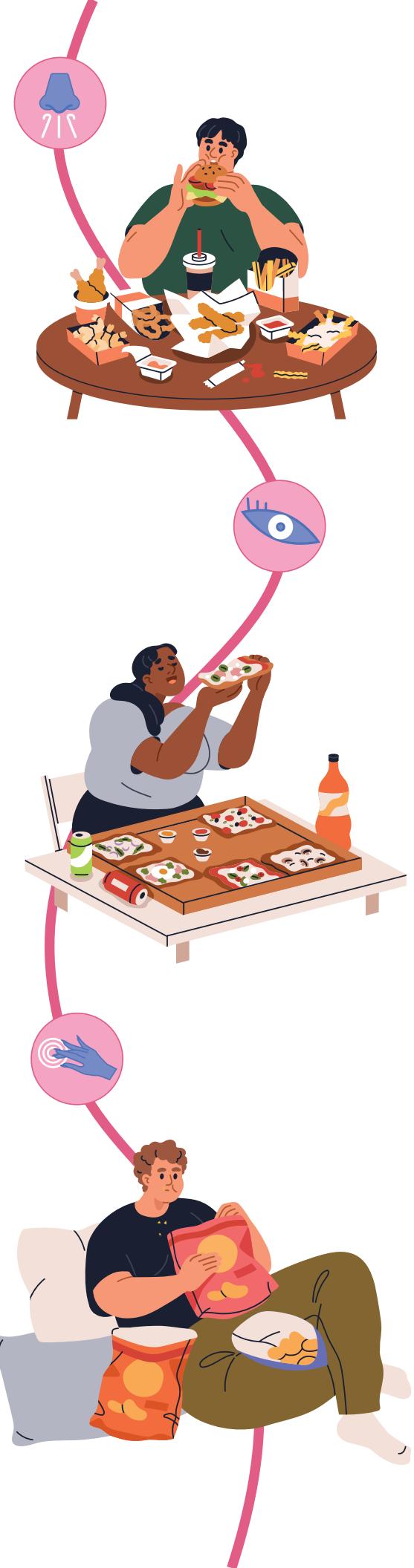
UPFs are formulated to achieve the perfect blend of fat, sugar, and salt to engage a wide range of taste sensations. This makes these junk foods hyper-palatable, which can override natural fullness cues and fuel food addictions.

7. Mouthfeel optimization

Certain foods, such as Cheetos, are designed to melt quickly in your mouth, tricking your brain into thinking you consume fewer calories. This quick melting also encourages you to keep eating, making it easy to overindulge in junk foods with no nutritional value.

8. Strategic use of additives

Emulsifiers create smoother textures in foods, while synthetic stabilizers maintain consistency and extend shelf life. These additives keep food appealing over time but may pose long-term health risks.



9. Flavor layering

Flavor layering combines different tastes and textures to engage your taste buds fully. Using contrasting flavors helps prevent boredom from eating the same foods, which encourages the continued consumption of UPFs.

10. Psychological tricks

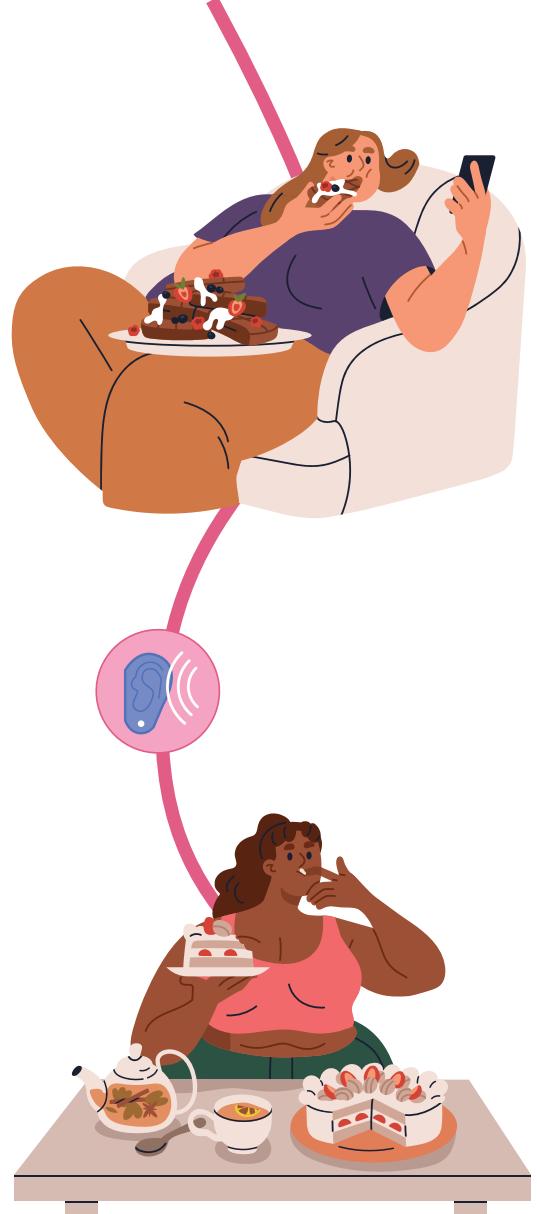
Companies often use nostalgic flavors that remind you of happy memories to create an emotional connection to foods. They also design packaging to catch the eye of specific demographics, making food products more attractive to certain groups of people.

11. Sound engineering

The sounds foods make, like the crunch of chips, are carefully designed to enhance your overall experience. This satisfying sound is part of what makes eating certain foods so enjoyable and makes you come back for more.

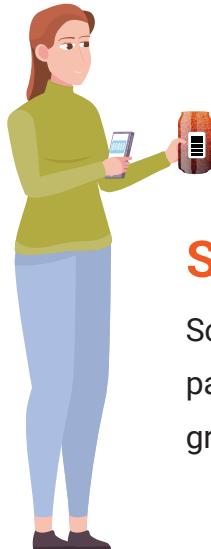
12. Fast dissolving

Many ultra-processed snack foods are designed to dissolve quickly in your mouth, which encourages faster eating. This quick melt-in-your-mouth effect can make it easy to consume more than intended before your body signals that you're full.



DR. BERG'S JUNK FOOD METER

The Junk Food Meter makes it easy to uncover the amount of junk food ingredients in your diet—no food science degree required. Scan a barcode, and the app will do the rest!

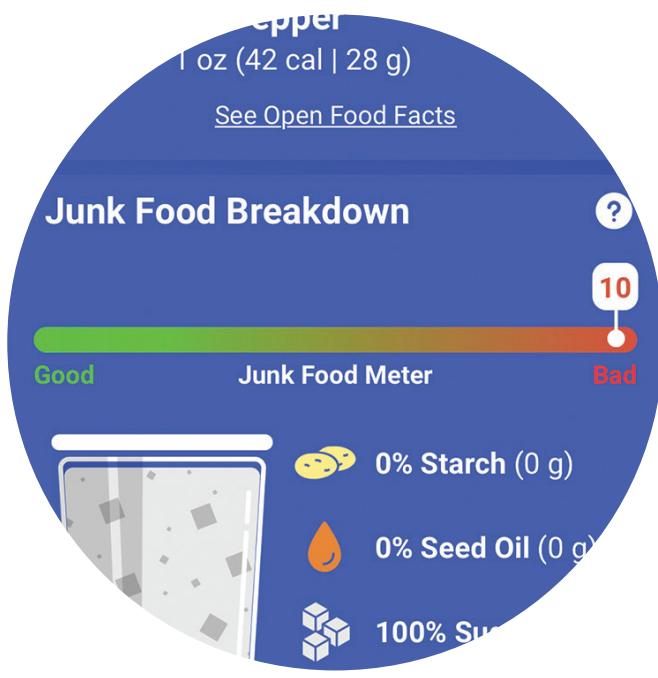


Step 1

Scan food items in pantry, refrigerator, or grocery store

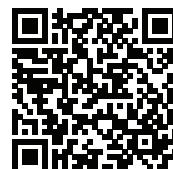
Step 2

See results



Step 3

Observe rating scale to find actual food without UPF ingredients and then click to find food replacements



[Download the app now](#)