

# When Your Food Cravings Depend on Your Mood

**BUSHRA ZAMAN**

I always crave chocolate ice cream when I'm upset and fried chicken when angry. I have two friends who continuously test their spice level limits by picking different spicy ramen whenever they are frustrated and need a pick-me-up. One of my siblings has noodle soup as comfort food for stressful days, and I have a brother who always celebrates a good day with *fuchka*.

As one might guess, there is a connection between one's mood and their food cravings. According to an article published on *Healthline*, dark chocolate has theobromine as a constituent, the consumption of which can help elevate your mood. Some experts have also mentioned a general psychological effect.

So if you, like myself, get yourself a treat in the form of chocolate when upset, maybe this explains the reason why chocolate helps. The same *Healthline* article also mentions how bananas are high in Vitamin B6, which aids in the synthesis of dopamine and serotonin, both of which are quoted as "feel good neurotransmitters."

There are obvious examples of food affecting a person's feelings. The biggest example of this, in my opinion, is perhaps caffeine. Coffee has helped me stay awake to study for an exam even after a hectic day. Caffeine gives you a boost of energy which can change both your mood and thereby the mood of those around you, because how you feel can no doubt reflect on others too.

However, mind you, too much of a good thing can be bad. Too much coffee is a big no-no, on account of negative physical health involving irregular heartbeats, for example.

In an article, the FDA mentioned that 400 milligrams is the limit for caffeine consumption per day, without any negative effects on one's health. This is roughly equivalent to approximately four to five cups of coffee.

Stress eating has even been verified as a phenomenon according to an article published by Harvard Health Publishing. The article also mentions that scientific research connecting particular dietary factors or food to depression was still inconclusive when the article was written. An example of food being connected to depression would be blueberries because it has often been said to help those who are feeling low, although the exact mechanism of this is still unclear.

Do you have particular cravings based on your mood?

#### References

1. Healthline (February 5, 2020). *9 Healthy Foods That Lift Your Mood*.
2. USFDA (December 12, 2018). *Spilling the Beans: How Much Caffeine is Too Much?*
3. Harvard Health Publishing (February 15, 2021). *Food and mood: Is there a connection?*

*Bushra Zaman likes books, art, and only being contacted by email. Contact her at bushra-zaman31@yahoo.com*

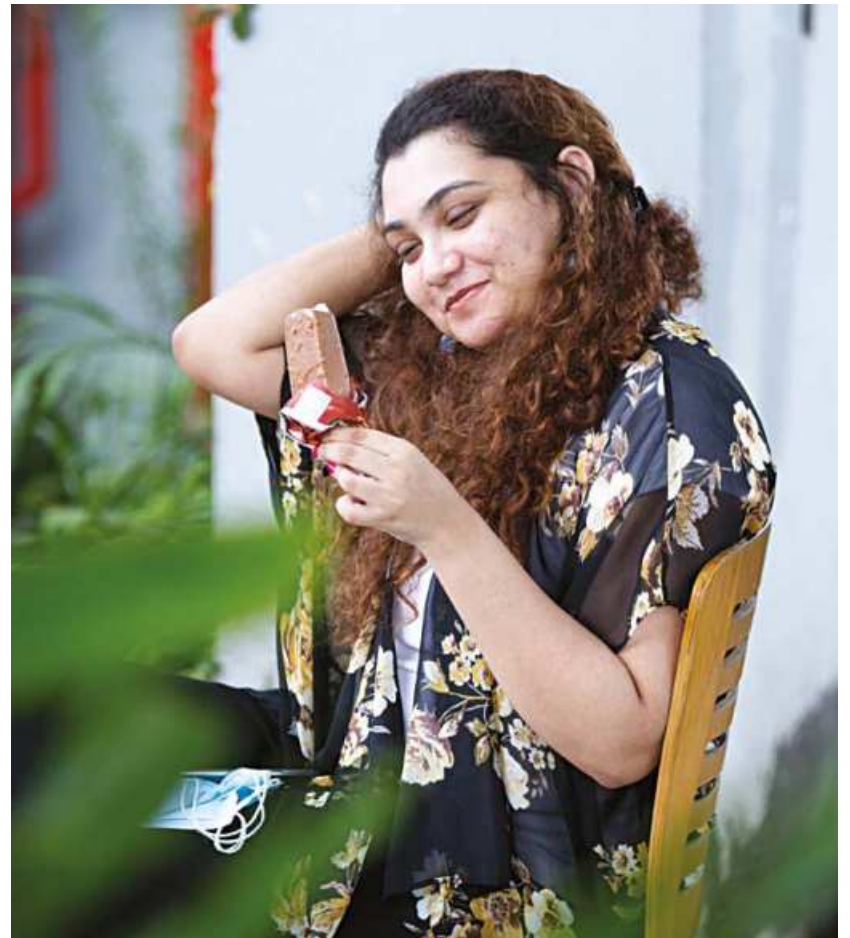


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satire.

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