Addicted to Junk Food

Cat Mutiny

A recent study showed that rats fed a healthy diet and later fed junk food would rather starve than go back to eating a healthy diet. Our cats are proving the validity of this study. I've been eating healthier than the average American for years and years. I stopped cooking processed foods thirty years ago when I realized the effect food colorings, preservatives, and additives had on my children's ADHD and allergies. Eating better wasn't good enough. Eating well, really well, took effort and discipline.

I struggled with my diet for years in an effort to battle auto-immune disease. I finally discovered what foods fed Candida and that I was sensitive to gluten. I'm sure I have celiac disease, but I have no intention of spending a few thousand dollars to confirm the diagnosis through conventional means. Why should I go through a biopsy when I know every time I eat gluten I break out in weeping sores and suffer from muscle and joint pain? Obviously gluten and I don't get along.

So I've really cleaned up my diet. And because I eat so well and have eaten so well for so many years, processed foods and fast foods don't taste good to me. The more I eat organic fresh fruits and veggies, the more anything else is second best—a far second. But this is only true because I don't eat junk foods. The truth is, bad food and junk food, is truly addictive.

Recently our cats have reminded us how cheap bad foods crowd out the desire to eat well. We raised our cats on a clean, raw diet. Their typical fare was Bell and Evans ground turkey mixed with a little quinoa, spinach, carrots, eggs and eggshells, and a few other veggies thrown in. They loved it,

so much so, we had to train them not to attack our hands as we lowered their bowls to the floor. Then they growled at one another and at us if we were stupid enough to try and pick the bowl back up.

But our indoor/outdoor kitties started eating junk food. We have a neighbor who feeds her cat regular kibble and leaves the bowl outside. So our cats have started eating out. And now, they have little interest in anything we try to feed them, even plain raw or cooked meat or fish. They sniff at their bowl and reject their food, going so far as to scratch the floor as if they could bury the offensive offering. So we bought a bag of organic kibble and they ate a little, then rushed outside to raid the neighbor's bowl.

Now their health is suffering. Taz is chronically constipated. Both she and Jazz are copiously shedding for the first time in their lives. Obviously, an intervention is in order.

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This is such a reminder to us about the addictive nature of processed foods. If we give in to our children's demands to eat fast foods, candy, sodas, and other junk foods—even as a rare treat, we are training their palates. We are toying with addiction. We are making food that is bad for them, deadly for them, a reward.

We deserve the best food. Our children deserve the best food. And so do our pets-100% of the time.