

The Done Bingeing

PODCAST

EPISODE 50: SPECIAL SERIES—12 KEYS TO END BINGE EATING, KEY #7: UNLEARN THE DESIRE TO OVEREAT (VIII)

What do a bottle and a memo have to do with your belly and your brain? Keep listening!

Welcome to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. This is the place to hear about how you can pair the emerging brain science about why you binge with powerful life coaching to help you stop. If you want to explore a non-clinical approach to end binge eating, you're in the right place. It's time to free yourself. You have more power than you know. And now, your host, Life and Weight-Loss Coach Martha Ayim.

Welcome to Episode 50 of *The Done Bingeing Podcast* and to part 16 of this special series, *12 Keys to End Binge Eating*. We've been talking about the seventh key: Reduce the Desire to Overeat. In the last episode, we began to explore how hormones affect our hunger and fullness signals by taking a look at the role of ghrelin. In this episode, we're going to look at the role of leptin, the other main hormone influencing appetite and satiety.

While ghrelin is the hormone that tells you when you're hungry, leptin is the hormone that tells you when you're full. Ghrelin increases hunger and leptin decreases it.

Leptin is primarily released by your fat cells and sends a message to your hypothalamus in your brain that you're full and, possibly, that you have sufficient fuel onboard in the form of stored fat so you don't need to keep eating. The more fat you have on your body, the more leptin you have.

Now, I know what you're thinking. You're thinking a) "Well then 'Hello!' I'll have me some more leptin!" and/or b) "I have plenty of fat on my body, but my brain tells me to keep on eating."

Um . . . spoiler alert. It didn't get the memo—at least that's a very real possibility. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Let's go back and start with a). Researchers thought the same thing. They had a hunch that giving people more leptin would reduce their hunger and they would lose weight fast. It was a logical hypothesis: get people's leptin levels high enough and—poof!—they'll stop eating so much and start losing weight (Kollias, n.d.). So they tried giving mice excess amounts of leptin. And it worked, right? Wrong. The mice didn't lose weight.

That doesn't seem to make sense, does it? If overweight people have more leptin (because they have more fat cells to release more leptin), why don't they feel full? Why do they tend to feel *more* hungry, rather than *less* hungry? After all, their leptin is saying, "Yo, we're good in here. We've got plenty of fuel. You can stop eating now. Sheesh, nobody ever listens to me."

And that's exactly what's happening. You may have a whole lot o' fat makin' a whole lot o' leptin, but your brain isn't getting the message. So that feeling of fullness you were hoping for? It's not happening. And get this: because your brain thinks you're *low* on leptin, it might even be freaked that you're *underfed*. So what does it do? It sends out a signal for you to eat more.

And, now, we're moving from a) to b). You eat more and you store more fat, which means you make more leptin. But with too much fat on board, now your leptin signal is scrambled. Your brain thinks, "OMG, where's the food already?" and it pokes you in the ribs to eat more. So you eat more, and 'round you go again.

It's like you're on a Ferris wheel. The lights are blinking and the jingle is jingling, but you're not having any fun. You want off the ride, but you don't know how. And the controller who took your ticket is long gone.

Oh, and the name of the ride? It's called "leptin resistance." In other words, leptin insensitivity.

Now, that may all seem like very bad news.

But there's also very good news: You can manage your leptin sensitivity. You can learn to be your own controller.

When you do that, it'll be easier to stop eating because your brain will actually be able to decipher the signal that you genuinely aren't hungry. That's a very different place from trying to stop eating when your brain is telling you that you really *are* hungry. The first is freedom. The second is prison.

Now, if you're thinking what I'm thinking, and you want a jailbreak, you're gonna wanna know how too much insulin blocks leptin at the brain, preventing you from feeling full and possibly even making you feel hungry.

That's where we're headed in the next episode because when you can get to a place where you have enough leptin without an excess of insulin, your hunger will diminish. And if you have excess fat stored on board, and if you've unlearned the desire to overeat, you'll finally be able to access your fat stores and use them for fuel. My teacher, Brooke Castillo, calls this "dining in." Oh yeah, you heard that right—dining on your own fat.

What would that mean?

That would mean no need to order that pizza. No need to drive to the drive-thru. No need to open that pantry door or caress the handle on your fridge. You're good. And you know it.

Whenever I work with physicians, at some point in our sessions, this question comes up: "How did this happen? I'm a doctor."

I get different variations on the same theme from different clients—therapists, scientists, professors, artists, mothers, coaches, you name it. The theme is this: “I can help other people but I can’t seem to help myself.”

I know you’re smart. I know you’re successful in so many areas of your life. I know you’ve accomplished a million things.

But I also know your secret. And I know you’re done.

But here’s the problem. You can’t see the label from the inside of the bottle. The glass might be clean. The light might be right. But you’re on the inside, you’re in it.

I used to be there too, but now I’m not. And that’s why I can help.

If you’ve been on the ride for a year, you can ride for another.

If you’ve been on the ride for five, you can ride for five more.

If you’ve been on the ride for a decade, you can ride on into the next one.

Or, you can let me help you find the controller in you.

So you can pull the lever and slow the roll.

So you can unbuckle your belt and you can open the cage door.

So you can get off the ride.

That’s it for Episode 50. Thank you for listening! If you’re ready to apply the concepts in this podcast at a deeper level, sign up for a free private coaching session at www.holdingthespace.co/book. I’m only able to offer a limited number of free sessions per month and the spots fill up pretty quickly. So reserve yours now, before they’re gone.

Thanks for listening to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. Martha is a certified life and weight loss coach who's available to help you stop bingeing. Book a free session with her at www.holdingthespace.co/book. And stay tuned for next week's episode on freeing yourself from binge eating and creating the life you want.

References

Klok, M.D., Jakobsdottir, S., Drent, M.L. (2007). The role of leptin and ghrelin in the regulation of food intake and body weight in humans: A review. *Obesity Reviews*, 8(1), 21–34.

Kollias, H. (n.d.). Leptin, ghrelin, and weight loss. Retrieved from <https://www.precisionnutrition.com/leptin-ghrelin-weight-loss>