



Hunger – Thirst In Disguise

You are probably familiar with the long-standing diet tip that says you should drink water before, during, and after a meal to help you “feel full.” This isn’t just a gimmick. There is another genuine, though little-known, scientific explanation behind it. If you go back to high school science, you’ll remember that osmosis is simply the process of water or other substances moving across a barrier, such as a cell wall. Food and other particles, especially salt, draw water out of tissues in your body and into the bloodstream immediately after a meal.

This process happens in all cells, including the ones in your brain. It affects thirst primarily, but also hunger. After a meal, food in your bloodstream pulls water out of your cells—sensitive cells like the ones in your satiety center. The areas for thirst and hunger are very close in our satiety center so the strong thirst signal we receive after a meal (especially a large one) can also affect the hunger center. Our craving for water can be confused with a craving for more food. When you feel the need for a second helping, drink a glass or two of water instead. Most likely, it is water, not food that your body is craving. Your thirst will not only stop masquerading as hunger, but the volume of water already in your stomach will help you eat less.