

《双胞胎姐妹患异食癖：嚼蜡烛、啃旧书！》

Most people bite their nails when they're nervous or get cravings for chocolate or crisps.

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But two sisters from Bradford have taken it to a whole new level - regularly munching on candles and second-hand books.

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Twins Adele and Anita, both 50, suffer from Pica- an eating disorder characterised by the desire to eat items with little or no nutritional value, such as stones, sand, paint and dirt.

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For Adele, the problem began when she was a child. She now eats around two inches of wax every day, much like many people tuck into a chocolate bar.

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'When I was eight or nine I started sniffing fire lighters,' she told ITV's This Morning. 'I then started nibbling on candles and have done ever since.'

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She says candles are an emotional crutch - and the 300 she has eaten in her lifetime have apparently never caused her any health problems.

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'Carrying a candle with me calms my nerves. A whole candle will last me two weeks - I only take a little bit [about at an inch or two] out at a time so people don't see it.'

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For her sister Anita, Pica struck later in life - when she was pregnant 24 years ago.

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'I began having cravings for things that smelled like old bus tickets,' she said.

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'When I found the smell again, it was in an old book - and I haven't been able to stop since.

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'The older the book, the better it tastes. I just love really old books. It's like eating a chocolate bar.'

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She now scours charity shops looking for ripe old tomes - and is unbothered by the germs and dust they may be harbouring.

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once procured, the book is shredded to a tagliatelle-sized strand before being consumed.

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'Sniffing them works up an aroma - and I'm happy with what I do.'

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Commenting on the twins' eating condition, eating disorders psychologist Marcia Karp, told the programme:

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'There are many reasons why people take non-food stuffs into their body.

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'Pregnant women often have bizarre cravings and Pica can be sometimes be due to a mineral deficit.'

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She added: 'I have a friend who eats clay. She says: "It calms me, it soothes me - it's almost like mother's milk".'

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