

Manage Your Food Cues



Types of Hunger



PHYSICAL HUNGER



PSYCHOLOGICAL HUNGER





PHYSICAL HUNGER

- **Physical hunger:** are signals provided by your body letting you know it is time to eat. This is a normal process.
- Is physical hunger a bad thing? No, it is not a bad thing. It is a normal process of our body telling us it is time to eat and refuel our bodies. Food is our fuel. Our bodies require food for energy.

But, if we go too long without eating (greater than 4 – 5 hours) we set ourselves up for extreme hunger. When extreme hunger hits, we find ourselves eating fast and eating too much!

- When we are overly hungry, we look for something, anything to fill the gap. We tend many times to go for foods that provide lots of calories but come up short on nutrients. These foods are often what we refer to as empty calories.

Types of Hunger - Physical Hunger

- Stomach pangs
- Empty feeling in the stomach
- Light-Headedness
- Slight Headache

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PSYCHOLOGICAL HUNGER

- **“Head hunger.”** Head hunger is different from physical hunger, because you are not hungry but go ahead & eat.
- There are a lot of reasons why we eat when we do. “Head hunger” can be based on our senses (sight, smell, taste), emotions such stress, boredom or a particular time of day. Just the sight or smell of food can lead us to want to eat. These eating episodes can be out of habit, such as eating at a certain time of the day. Example: The family eats snacks in the evening so you do to.
- The purpose of this class is to have you start thinking about why you eat when you do. When you eat, ask yourself is it based on a physical hunger or a head hunger?

Types of Hunger – Psychological Hunger

- Food smells good
- Food looks good
- Cravings
- Specific food
- Time of day
- Emotions: stress, boredom, fatigue



Differences between Physical Hunger and Emotional Hunger

Physical Hunger

vs.

Emotional Hunger

Comes on gradually &
can be postponed

Comes on suddenly &
feels urgent

Can be satisfied with any
type of food

Causes specific cravings,
Pizza, chocolate, ice-cream...

Once you're full you can
stop eating

Eat more than you normally
would. Feel uncomfortably full.

Causes satisfaction,
doesn't cause guilt

Leaves you feeling guilty
& cross with yourself.

Environmental Cues

Triggers in our environment that cause you to want to eat inappropriately may be?

- **Social Cues**
 - Family/friends
 - Parties/Special Occasions
- **External Cues**
 - Sight or smell of food
 - Specific food
 - Particular places i.e., kitchen, buffets, car
 - Specific activity i.e., TV
 - Certain times of day:
 - Break time when studying
 - Arriving home from school
 - After dinner, before bedtime

- **Internal Cues (Emotions)**

- Depressed
- Stress
- Anxious
- Lonely
- Bored
- Tired
- Happy

Don't let emotions get the best of you!



12 Signs of Emotional Eating

12 INDICATIVE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL EATING

1. You **eat** when you are **stressed**
2. You **eat** as a response to **your emotions**
3. You **seek solace** in **food**
4. You have **trouble losing weight** (due to the way you eat).
5. Your eating is **out of control** (You can't stop yourself from eating)
6. You eat to **feel happy**
7. You eat **when you feel happy**
8. You are **fascinated** with **eating / food**
9. You use **emotionally-charged** words to **describe** food / eating
10. You **eat** even though you are **rightfully full**
11. You **think of eating** even though you are **rightfully full**
12. You have **random food cravings** out of the blue

- Do you use food to medicate or make yourself feel better?
- Is food your friend?
- Is your motivation to eat healthy reduced when you are tired?
- Do you have, at times, negative thoughts or feelings of failure when you are not able to accomplish your goal of healthy eating



If you answered “**yes**” to one or more of the questions on the left, you may be an emotional eater.

DO NOT LET EMOTIONAL EATING GET THE BEST OF YOU

- We all have emotions and have learned to deal with those emotions in various ways. There are different ways to effectively deal with emotions, but REMEMBER food is not one of them.
- Not all emotions are negative. What do we often do when we are happy & celebrating?
- Now is the time to identify those emotion(s) that trigger you to eat inappropriately. If you are an emotional eater, now is the time to find non-food ways to deal with the emotional cues in your environment that trigger you to use food to feel better or self-medicate.

Coping with Food Cues

1. **Identify** the type of hunger: physical or head hunger.
2. If **physical hunger**, include a healthy snack if the meal is greater than 1 hour until your next meal.
3. If **head hunger**, identify the trigger that is cueing you to eat.
4. How will you deal with this cue?
Practice overcoming it.



Two basic strategies to deal with cues:

The logo for 'strat·e·gize' is displayed in a white box. The word is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font with dots between the 't' and 'e', and between the 'e' and 'g'.

1. **Adapt** your response to the cue by using preplanned strategies.

or

2. **Eliminate** the cue.



Cue



1. Can this cue be avoided?
2. If not avoidable, how can I adapt my response to this cue?
3. What is the best solution for coping with this cue?
4. What steps do I need to take to implement this solution?
5. How will I know when I have successfully managed the cue?

Identify, strategize, practice

1

Identify the trigger that cues you to eat.



2

Brainstorm for ways to avoid or adapt to the problem cue.



3



a plan for attaining the goal.

Identify, strategize, practice

4



5

Don't give up!



6

Revise the plan as needed and
continue to practice 😊

Adapt by planning for alternate activities

- Develop a list of “Alternate Activities”
 - Activities you enjoy
 - Activities you need to accomplish
 - Activities you want to try

Plan ahead and make a list of activities that you ENJOY and can choose to get involved in when the urge to eat hits and it is not a meal or snack time. The more you plan ahead, the more likely you are to succeed.



Example of Cue Adaption

- You have a big test that you are studying for. You go to the kitchen to get some water. You see a bag of chips laying on top of the cabinet. The chips are your favorite ones. You are not hungry but you take the chips to your room and begin to eat them. Help! The bag is almost gone.



Examples of adaptation:

- 1) Keep healthier low calories snacks in the house that you like as well as chips to eat in place of chips.
- 2) See if family members will put foods that trigger you to eat such as chips up in the cabinet... instead of leaving them out for you to see when walking into the kitchen. (If we don't see a food, we will be less likely to want it.)
- 3) If you must have the chips, take 1 serving from the bag, place the rest of them in the cabinet, out of sight.
- 4) Eat a single serving of chips in the kitchen. Do not eat in your room

Example of Cue Elimination

I was tired when I was getting ready to study for a test . I walked to the kitchen prior to going to my room to study. I see a package of my favorite candy bars out on the table. I cannot resist these candy bars as they are the best..



Example of elimination:

- 1) Do not bring this type of candy bar in the house as it is a trigger for you to eat.
- 2) If others in the house want candy bars, see if they will buy ones that you don't like as well.

Managing Your Food & Activity Cues

- Urges to eat can be thought of as waves: they start small but quickly build.
- Learn to ride out the urge to eat!





**GETTING HEALTHIER TAKES TIME, PLANNING AND
PRACTICE!**

REVIEWED 1/2023