



Greenbush Health



Are You Eating Your Emotions?

Do you find yourself raiding the pantry or fridge when you're feeling bored or upset? We've all done it, but reaching for comfort foods can make us feel worse in the long run. Use these strategies to help avoid emotional eating and diet damage.

1 | Ask yourself: "Am I really hungry?"

- If the answer is yes, grab a healthy snack or sit down to a balanced meal.
- If not, divert your attention from food with one of these alternatives:
 - Take a short walk or dance to your favorite song.
 - Try a brief meditation, yoga or stretches to reduce stress.
 - Call a friend or family member.
 - Keep yourself busy with an activity that is incompatible with eating. Tackle a task or hobby that keeps your hands busy, such as cleaning, organizing, journaling, knitting or mechanics.

2 | Take away temptation

- Swap processed comfort foods such as chips and ice cream with healthy alternatives like low-fat frozen yogurt or popcorn.
- Keep a bowl of fresh fruit within reach, so it is an easy choice.

3 | Prep and plan for success

- Begin with a beverage! Drinking fluids first helps you feel full, so you eat less. Hot tea is soothing and contains helpful antioxidants and amino acids that can help reduce stress.
- Pre-portion snacks into single servings to control your intake. Eating straight from the package leads to binge eating and overindulgence.

4 | Identify the root cause of your stress

- If emotional eating is a constant struggle, it may stem from a larger issue. Don't hesitate to ask for professional help. A doctor or counselor can help you tackle chronic stress, depression or other negative emotions with a full treatment plan.

Sources:
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/5-strategies-to-help-you-stop-emotional-eating>
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/diet-and-weight-loss/struggling-with-emotional-eating>

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