

How to **STOP** emotional eating

There's no doubt that food can be comforting. Our favorite foods can make us feel happy and relaxed. Sometimes when people feel sad, lonely, stressed, or even bored, they may turn to food for comfort. This is known as emotional eating, and most people don't realize they are doing it. As a result, people eat when their body isn't truly hungry, and this can lead to weight gain and health problems.

The University of Rochester Medical Center says emotional eating can be harmful. It can cause type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity. But, emotional eating can be a hard habit to break. Here are some tips to help you stop:



Learn to listen to your body.

Are you truly hungry? If so, your stomach may be grumbling. With emotional eating, people often crave one specific food, such as a cookie. But if you're really hungry, you'll be willing to eat something healthier, such as fruits or vegetables.

Wait a little while.

If you're not sure if you're hungry, tell yourself to wait 15 minutes. In the meantime, do something else. Take a walk, have a glass of water, or call a friend. See if the urge to eat passes.

Keep unhealthy foods away.

Stock nutritious foods in your house, and don't buy the foods you eat when you're stressed. It's easier to avoid the temptation if the food isn't available to you.

Don't worry about past mistakes.

When you're trying to break a habit, setbacks can happen. Forgive yourself if you end up eating too much or giving in to a craving. Tell yourself you'll start fresh again tomorrow. Don't give up.

Find healthy ways to deal with stress.

Go for a walk, listen to music, or do deep breathing exercises to help you deal with stress. Then you're less likely to turn to food for comfort.

If you have a problem with emotional eating, don't be afraid to ask for help.

Talk with your doctor about the problem. Ask about support groups and mental health experts who help people with emotional eating.