



EXERCISE FOR HEALTH!

(CONSULT YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE STARTING ANY EXERCISE REGIMEN)

Physical exercise is any bodily activity that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness. It is performed for various reasons. These include strengthening muscles and the cardiovascular system, honing athletic skills, weight loss or maintenance and for enjoyment. Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the immune system, and helps prevent the "diseases of affluence" such as heart disease, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity. It is a main variable in all wellness prevention. It also improves mental health, helps prevent depression, helps to promote or maintain positive self-esteem, and can even augment an individual's sex appeal or body image, which again is also linked with higher levels of self-esteem. Childhood obesity is a growing global concern and physical exercise may help decrease the effects of childhood obesity in developed countries.

Types of exercise

Exercise is generally grouped into three types depending on the overall effect they have on the human body:

- Flexibility exercises, such as stretching, improve the range of motion of muscles and joints.
- Aerobic exercises, such as cycling, swimming, walking, skipping rope, rowing, running, hiking or playing tennis, focus on increasing cardiovascular endurance.
- Anaerobic exercises, such as weight training, functional training, eccentric training or sprinting, increase short-term muscle strength.

Categories of physical exercise

- Strength training
- Agility training
- Eccentric Training

Sometimes the terms 'dynamic' and 'static' are used. 'Dynamic' exercises such as steady running tend to produce a lowering of the diastolic blood pressure during exercise, due to the improved blood flow. Conversely, static exercise (such as weight-lifting) can cause the systolic pressure to rise significantly (during the exercise).

Physical exercise is used to improve physical skills:

- Cardiovascular/respiratory endurance
- Stamina
- Strength
- Flexibility
- Power
- Speed
- Coordination
- Agility
- Balance
- Accuracy



Benefits

Physical exercise is important for maintaining physical fitness and can contribute positively to maintaining a healthy weight, building and maintaining healthy bone density, muscle strength, and joint mobility, promoting physiological well-being, reducing surgical risks, and strengthening the immune system.

Exercise also reduces levels of cortisol. Cortisol is a stress hormone that builds fat in the abdominal region, making weight loss difficult. Cortisol causes many health problems, both physical and mental.

Frequent and regular aerobic exercise has been shown to help prevent or treat serious and life-threatening chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, insomnia, and depression. Endurance exercise before meals lowers blood glucose more than the same exercise after meals. According to the World Health Organization, lack of physical activity contributes to approximately 17% of heart disease and diabetes, 12% of falls in the elderly, and 10% of breast cancer and colon cancer.

There is some evidence that vigorous exercise is more beneficial than moderate exercise. Some studies have shown that vigorous exercise executed by healthy individuals can increase opioid peptides (a.k.a. endorphins, naturally occurring opioids that in conjunction with other neurotransmitters are responsible for exercise-induced euphoria and have been shown to be addictive), increase testosterone and growth hormone, effects that are not as fully realized with moderate exercise. More recent research indicates exercise may play a greater role than endorphins in "runner's high". However, training at this intensity for long periods of time, or without proper warm-up beforehand and cool-down afterwards, can lead to an increased risk of injury and overtraining.

Both aerobic and anaerobic exercise also work to increase the mechanical efficiency of the heart by increasing cardiac volume (aerobic exercise), or myocardial thickness (strength training). Such changes are generally beneficial and healthy if they occur in response to exercise.

Not everyone benefits equally from exercise. There is tremendous variation in individual response to training: where most people will see a moderate increase in endurance from aerobic exercise, some individuals will as much as double their oxygen uptake, while others can never augment endurance. However, muscle hypertrophy from resistance training is primarily determined by diet and testosterone. This genetic variation in improvement from training is one of the key physiological differences between elite athletes and the larger population. Studies have shown that exercising in middle age leads to better physical ability later in life.

Effect on the cardiovascular system

The beneficial effect of exercise on the cardiovascular system is well documented.

There is a direct relation between physical inactivity and cardiovascular mortality, and physical inactivity is an independent risk factor for the development of coronary artery disease. There is a dose-response relation between the amount of exercise performed from approximately 700 to 2000 kcal of energy expenditure per week and all-cause mortality and cardiovascular disease mortality in middle-aged and elderly populations. The greatest potential for reduced mortality is in the sedentary who become moderately active. Most beneficial effects of physical activity on cardiovascular disease mortality can be attained through moderate-intensity activity. People who modify their behavior after myocardial infarction to include regular exercise have improved rates of survival. People who remain sedentary have the highest risk for all-cause and cardiovascular disease mortality.



Effect on the immune system

Although there have been hundreds of studies on exercise and the immune system, there is little direct evidence on its connection to illness. Epidemiological evidence suggests that moderate exercise has a beneficial effect on the human immune system while extreme exercise impairs it. Moderate exercise has been associated with a 29% decreased incidence of upper respiratory tract infections (URTI), but studies of marathon runners found that their prolonged high-intensity exercise was associated with an increased risk of an infection. Immune cell functions are impaired following acute sessions of prolonged, high-intensity exercise, and some studies have found that athletes are at a higher risk for infections. The immune systems of athletes and non-athletes are generally similar.

Biomarkers of inflammation such as C-reactive protein, which are associated with chronic diseases, are reduced in active individuals relative to sedentary individuals, and the positive effects of exercise may be due to its anti-inflammatory effects. The depression in the immune system following acute bouts of exercise may be one of the mechanisms for this anti-inflammatory effect.

Effects on brain function

A 2008 review of cognitive enrichment therapies (strategies to slow or reverse cognitive decline) concluded that "physical activity and aerobic exercise in particular, enhances older adults' cognitive function".

In mice, exercise improves cognitive functioning via improvement of hippocampus-dependent spatial learning, and enhancement of synaptic plasticity and neurogenesis. In addition, physical activity has been shown to be neuro-protective in many neurodegenerative and neuromuscular diseases. For instance, it reduces the risk of developing dementia. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that frequent exercise may reverse alcohol-induced brain damage.

There are several possibilities for why exercise is beneficial for the brain:

- increasing the blood and oxygen flow to the brain
- increasing growth factors that help create new nerve cells and promote synaptic plasticity
- increasing chemicals in the brain that help cognition, such as dopamine, glutamate, norepinephrine, and serotonin

Physical activity is thought to have other beneficial effects related to cognition as it increases levels of nerve growth factors, which support the survival and growth of a number of neuronal cells.

Effects on depression

A number of factors may contribute to depression including being overweight, low self-esteem, stress and anxiety. Endorphins act as a natural pain reliever and antidepressant in the body. Endorphins have long been regarded as responsible for what is known as "runner's high", a euphoric feeling a person receives from intense physical exertion. When a person exercises, levels of both circulating serotonin and endorphins are increased. These levels are known to stay elevated even several days after exercise is discontinued, possibly contributing to improvement in mood, increased self-esteem, and weight management. Exercise alone is a potential prevention method and/or treatment for mild forms of depression.



Effects on sleep

A 2010 review of published scientific research suggested that exercise generally improves sleep for most people, and helps sleep disorders such as insomnia. The optimum time to exercise *may* be 4 to 8 hours before bedtime, though exercise at any time of day is beneficial, with the possible exception of heavy exercise taken shortly before bedtime, which may disturb sleep.

Public health measures

Signs that encourage the use of stairs, as well as community campaigns, have been shown to be effective in increasing exercise in a population. The city of Bogotá, Colombia, for example, blocks off 113 kilometers (70 miles) of roads on Sundays and holidays to make it easier for its citizens to get exercise. These pedestrian zones are part of an effort to combat chronic diseases, including obesity.

Common misconceptions

Muscle and fat tissue

One misconception is that muscle tissue will turn into fat tissue once a person stops exercising. This is not literally true—fat tissue and muscle tissue are fundamentally different—but the common expression that "muscle will turn to fat" is truthful in the sense that catabolism of muscle fibers for energy can result in excess glucose being stored as fat. Moreover, the composition of a body part can change toward less muscle and more fat, so that a cross-section of the upper-arm for example, will have a greater area corresponding to fat and a smaller area corresponding to muscle. This is not muscle "turning into fat" however—it is simply a combination of muscle atrophy and increased fat storage in different tissues of the same body part. The muscle is being *replaced* by fat. Another element of increased fatty deposits is that of diet, as most trainees will not significantly reduce their diet in order to compensate for the lack of exercise/activity.

Excessive exercise

Exercise is a stressor and the stresses of exercise have a catabolic effect on the body—contractile proteins within muscles are consumed for energy, carbohydrates and fats are similarly consumed and connective tissues are stressed and can form micro-tears. However, given adequate nutrition and sufficient rest to avoid overtraining, the body's reaction to this stimulus is to adapt and replace tissues at a higher level than that existing before exercising. The results are all the training effects of regular exercise: increased muscular strength, endurance, bone density, and connective tissue toughness.

Too much exercise can be harmful. Without proper rest, the chance of stroke or other circulation problems increases, and muscle tissue may develop slowly. Extremely intense, long-term cardiovascular exercise, as can be seen in athletes who train for multiple marathons, has been associated with scarring of the heart and heart rhythm abnormalities.

Inappropriate exercise can do more harm than good, with the definition of "inappropriate" varying according to the individual. For many activities, especially running and cycling, there are significant injuries that occur with poorly regimented exercise schedules.



In extreme instances, over-exercising induces serious performance loss. Unaccustomed overexertion of muscles leads to rhabdomyolysis (damage to muscle) most often seen in new army recruits. Another danger is overtraining in which the intensity or volume of training exceeds the body's capacity to recover between bouts.

Stopping excessive exercise suddenly can also create a change in mood. Feelings of depression and agitation can occur when withdrawal from the natural endorphins produced by exercise occurs. Exercise should be controlled by each body's inherent limitations. While one set of joints and muscles may have the tolerance to withstand multiple marathons, another body may be damaged by 20 minutes of light jogging. This must be determined for each individual.

Too much exercise can also cause a female to miss her period, a symptom known as amenorrhea.

Exercise trends

Worldwide there has been a large shift towards less physically demanding work. This has been accompanied by increasing use of mechanized transportation, a greater prevalence of labor saving technology in the home, and less active recreational pursuits.

Nutrition and recovery

Proper nutrition is as important to health as exercise. When exercising, it becomes even more important to have a good diet to ensure that the body has the correct ratio of macronutrients whilst providing ample micronutrients, in order to aid the body with the recovery process following strenuous exercise.

Proper rest and recovery are also as important to health as exercise; otherwise the body exists in a permanently injured state and will not improve or adapt adequately to the exercise. It is necessary to refill the glycogen stores in the skeletal muscles and liver.

Nutrition and recovery can be compromised by psychological compulsions (eating disorders such as exercise bulimia and anorexia), misinformation, a lack of organization, or a lack of motivation.

Delayed onset muscle soreness can occur after any kind of exercise, particularly if the body is in an unconditioned state relative to that exercise.

One must understand that they must consume even more calories in any given day that they increase their regular physical exercise. If they do not consume more calories to undo the catabolic stress, more harm than good may come to their bodies.

History

The benefits of exercise have been known since antiquity. Marcus Cicero, around 65 BC, stated: "It is exercise alone that supports the spirits, and keeps the mind in vigor." However, the link between physical health and exercise (or lack of it) was only discovered in 1949 and reported in 1953 by a team led by Jerry Morris. Dr. Morris noted that men of similar social class and occupation (bus conductors versus bus drivers) had markedly different rates of heart attacks, depending on the level of exercise they got: bus drivers had a sedentary occupation and a higher incidence of heart disease, while bus conductors were forced to move continually and had a lower incidence of heart disease. This link had not previously been noted and was later confirmed by other researchers.



This chart shows the estimated number of calories burned while performing a variety of exercises for one hour. Calorie expenditure varies widely depending on the exercise, intensity level and individual.

Activity (one-hour duration)	Weight of person and calories burned		
	160 pounds (73 kilograms)	200 pounds (91 kilograms)	240 pounds (109 kilograms)
Aerobics, high impact	511	637	763
Aerobics, low impact	365	455	545
Aerobics, water	292	364	436
Backpacking	511	637	763
Basketball game	584	728	872
Bicycling, < 10 mph, leisure	292	364	436
Bowling	219	273	327
Canoeing	256	319	382
Dancing, ballroom	219	273	327
Football, touch, flag, general	584	728	872
Golfing, carrying clubs	329	410	491
Hiking	438	546	654
Ice skating	511	637	763
Jogging, 5 mph	584	728	872
Racquetball, casual, general	511	637	763
Rollerblading	913	1,138	1,363
Rope jumping	730	910	1,090
Rowing, stationary	511	637	763
Running, 8 mph	986	1,229	1,472
Skiing, cross-country	511	637	763
Skiing, downhill	365	455	545
Skiing, water	438	546	654
Softball or baseball	365	455	545
Stair treadmill	657	819	981
Swimming, laps	511	637	763
Tae kwon do	730	910	1,090
Tai chi	292	364	436
Tennis, singles	584	728	872
Volleyball	292	364	436
Walking, 2 mph	183	228	273
Walking, 3.5 mph	277	346	414
Weightlifting, free weight, Nautilus or universal type	219	273	327



What is your pulse?

Your pulse is your heart rate, or the number of times your heart beats in one minute. Pulse rates vary from person to person. Your pulse is lower when you are at rest and increases when you exercise (more oxygen-rich blood is needed by the body when you exercise). Knowing how to take your pulse can help you evaluate your exercise program.

How to take your pulse



1. Place the tips of your index, second and third fingers on the palm side of your other wrist below the base of the thumb. Or, place the tips of your index and second fingers on your lower neck on either side of your windpipe.
2. Press lightly with your fingers until you feel the blood pulsing beneath your fingers. You may need to move your fingers around slightly up or down until you feel the pulsing.
3. Use a watch with a second hand, or look at a clock with a second hand.
4. Count the beats you feel for 10 seconds. Multiply this number by six to get your heart rate (pulse) per minute.

Count your pulse: _____ beats in 10 seconds x 6 = _____ beats/minute

What is a normal pulse?

Normal Heart Rates by Age Group
Age Group Normal Heart Rate at Rest
Children (ages 6 - 15) 70 – 100 beats per minute
Adults (age 18 and over) 60 – 100 beats per minute

What is maximum heart rate?

The maximum heart rate is the highest heart rate achieved during maximal exercise. One simple method to calculate your predicted maximum heart rate uses this formula:

220 - Your age = predicted maximum heart rate

Example: a 40-year-old's predicted maximum heart rate is 180 beats/minute.

Please note that some medications and medical conditions may affect your heart rate. If you are taking medications or have a medical condition (such as heart disease, high blood pressure or diabetes), always ask your doctor if your maximum heart rate/target heart rate will be affected. If so, your heart rate ranges for exercise should be prescribed by your doctor or an exercise specialist.

Your actual maximum heart rate is most accurately determined by a medically supervised maximal graded exercise test.



What is target heart rate?

- You gain the most benefits and lessen the risks when you exercise in your target heart rate zone. Usually this is when your exercise heart rate (pulse) is 60 to 80 percent of your maximum heart rate. In some cases, your health care provider may decrease your target heart rate zone to begin with 50 percent.
- It is not recommended to exercise above 85 percent of your maximum heart rate. Intensity at that level increases both cardiovascular and orthopedic risk without providing a significant additional benefit from the exercise.
- Always check with your health care provider before starting an exercise program. Your health care provider can help you find a program and target heart rate zone that matches your needs, goals and physical condition.
- When beginning an exercise program, you may need to gradually build up to a level that is within your target heart rate zone, especially if you have not exercised regularly before. If the exercise feels too hard, slow down. You will reduce your risk of injury and enjoy the exercise more if you don't try to over-do it!
- To find out if you are exercising in your [target zone](#) (between 60 and 80 percent of your maximum heart rate), stop exercising and check your 10-second pulse. If your pulse is below your [target zone](#), increase your rate of exercise. If your pulse is above your target zone, decrease your rate of exercise.

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Target Heart Rates And Exercise

Age	Target HR Zone 50–85 %	Average Maximum Heart Rate 100 %
20 years	100–170 beats per minute	200 beats per minute
25 years	98–166 beats per minute	195 beats per minute
30 years	95–162 beats per minute	190 beats per minute
35 years	93–157 beats per minute	185 beats per minute
40 years	90–153 beats per minute	180 beats per minute
45 years	88–149 beats per minute	175 beats per minute
50 years	85–145 beats per minute	170 beats per minute
55 years	83–140 beats per minute	165 beats per minute
60 years	80–136 beats per minute	160 beats per minute
65 years	78–132 beats per minute	155 beats per minute
70 years	75–128 beats per minute	150 beats per minute

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10 Tips for Eating Out While Trying to Lose Weight

Eating out on a diet doesn't have to be cause for panic. Sure, you hear about oversize restaurant portions and the plethora of fattening menu choices available all the time, but that doesn't mean dining out will doom your dieting efforts! Just use these 10 simple tips for eating out on a diet:

1. Cram for tonight's dinner. Many eateries post their entire menu online so you can print it out for reference. If you often eat at "mom and pop" type restaurants that aren't online, call and ask for the menu to be faxed to you, or pick up a takeout menu on your next visit. Highlight the healthiest options for each menu and store them all in a central location. Then, when you are planning your next night out, take the time to decide on your dishes at home before you've been tempted by the sight of other choices.
2. Order your main dish from the appetizer menu. Not only are appetizers more reasonably-portioned, they will save you some money as well. (This is a great way to save enough calories and cash to split dessert with someone!) Too peckish to be satisfied with just a starter? Order a side salad, too -- the fiber-rich veggies will round out your meal. Soup is super-filling, so it's an awesome appetizer add-on, too (just steer clear of cream-based ones).
3. Beware these high-fat menu buzz words: Cream sauce, butter, oil, *au gratin*, breaded, Alfredo, battered or batter-dipped, "with gravy," or smothered. Unless you've spared yourself treats for several days and snacked on salad greens all day, these little "extras" aren't worth the extra calories.
4. Modify the menu. In my neck of the woods, anything and everything can be batter-dipped and fried, so I make special requests all the time. Many restaurants will take your dietary needs into account so you'll be a happy customer and return. Don't hesitate to request anything on the menu to be prepared in a more diet-friendly and for sauces or dressings to be served on the side. It's not likely that you will be denied.
5. The meat is on. As tempting as that bucket of fried chicken looked on the commercial before you left home, order poultry steamed, poached, roasted, broiled, boiled, grilled or baked. Ask for skinless chicken whenever possible or remove it yourself. If you do treat yourself to fried chicken, choose white meat as it has fewer calories than dark. Of course, chicken, chicken and *more* chicken gets old after a while, so if you're asking, "Where's the beef?" allow yourself red meat a few times a week -- just be sure to choose leaner cuts of meat like loin or flank.
6. Keep tabs on that tubing. Endless pasta at your favorite Italian restaurant may be carb-lovers' heaven (Darn near nirvana for yours truly!), but it's a waist-widening trap for those of us who tend to overeat (How are you supposed to know when to say "when" if they keep bringing more?). As tempting as the great "value" for your money that infinitely-refilling pasta bowl is certainly *not* a bargain for your calorie budget. Order a portion-controlled main dish instead. "Ixnay" on the endless breadsticks, too!
7. "Wrap it up, I'll take it!" You know you're at a nice restaurant when the server takes your plate away and wraps up your leftover food for you at the end of the meal. (And if you're in a *really* nice restaurant, you'll get the eating out equivalent of a balloon animal -- the tin foil swan!) To ensure you don't leave *sans* swan, keep temptation at bay and ask the server to wrap up half of your as soon as it is served.
8. Take control of takeout. You don't have to swear off takeout when you're dieting -- there are many healthy options at ethnic restaurants. Portion control is key though: Take out half of your takeout before dishing up your dinner, put the food in microwave containers and tuck it away in the fridge before you even start eating. (Instant will power *and* instant next-day lunch!)
9. Banish buffets. Portion control can become a foreign concept for even the most determined dieter at an all-you-can-eat buffet. (Who can practice moderation when there are new, clean plates just beckoning to be filled?) The sheer variety of foods available at buffets is also daunting -- studies have shown that when we're given more choices, we tend to eat more without realizing it. Simply avoid buffet restaurants and you won't have to face this temptation.
10. Stick to your normal routine. Do not "SAVE" your calories knowing you are going out to dinner tonight. Use the same meal plan you are accustomed to with snacks in between meals.



Eat Smart When Dining Out: 20 Tips

Navigate the Menu

Suddenly it seems that chain restaurants like Applebee's, T.G.I. Friday's, Olive Garden, and Bennigan's are almost as ubiquitous as the Golden Arches. No surprise. There are nearly 200,000 "table side" restaurants in the United States today, a number that continues to grow.

For many, they offer a reliable, pleasant alternative to cooking — plentiful servings, service with a smile, and relatively good value for the dollar. But like fast-food outlets, these dining establishments can be ticking time bombs when it comes to nutritional health. Government surveys find that the food you typically eat when you're not home is nutritionally worse in every way than the food you eat at home.

The good news is that's changing. For instance, 7 out of 10 adults surveyed by the National Restaurant Association in 2003 said there are more nutritious foods available to them in such restaurants than there were five years ago. Nearly all the chains have added healthier options to their menus — if you know how to look for them. But whether you're dining out at a major national chain or a locally owned family restaurant, following a few of these tips can guarantee you a pleasant dinner (or lunch) out without busting your health goals.

1. Above all else, be assertive. Dining out is no time to be a meek consumer, notes Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D., executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and coauthor of the book *Restaurant Confidential*. "You need to be an assertive consumer by asking for changes on the menu," he says. For instance, if an item is fried, ask for it grilled. If it comes with french fries, ask for a side of veggies instead. Ask for a smaller portion of the meat and a larger portion of the salad; for salad instead of coleslaw; baked potato instead of fried. "Just assume you can have the food prepared the way you want it," says Dr. Jacobson. "Very often, the restaurant will cooperate." Below, you'll find more specific requests.

2. Ask your waiter to "triple the vegetables, please." Often a side of vegetables in a restaurant is really like garnish — a carrot and a forkful of squash. When ordering, ask for three or four times the normal serving of veggies, and offer to pay extra. "I've never been charged," says dietitian Jeff Novick, R.D., director of nutrition at the Pritikin Longevity Center & Spa in Aventura, Florida. "And I've never been disappointed. I get full, not fat."

3. Ask how the food was prepared; don't go by the menu. For instance, cholesterol-free does not mean fat-free; the dish could still be filled with calorie-dense oil. Neither does "lite" necessarily mean light in calories or fat.

4. Order from the "healthy, light, low fat" entrées on the menu. Most chains will even list the calories and nutritional content of such foods. Applebee's, for instance, offers approved Weight Watchers options, Bennigan's has its Health Club entrées (which it will serve in half portions), and Ruby Tuesday lists the nutritional information for its entire menu.

5. Beware of the low-carb options. Restaurant chains have jumped on the low-carb bandwagon, offering numerous low-carb options on their menu. But low-carb doesn't mean low-cal. For instance, at Ruby Tuesday the Low-Carb New Orleans Seafood packs 710 calories and 42 grams of fat — ouch! A much better bet — the Low Carb Veggie Platter — leaves you with just 297 calories and 16 grams of fat.

Smart Salads



- 6. Ask the waiter to box half your entrée** before it ever gets to the table. Or split an entrée with your dining partner. A CSPI survey found that restaurants often serve two to three times more than food labels list as a serving.
- 7. Try double appetizers.** If there is a nice selection of seafood- and vegetable-based appetizers, consider skipping the entrée and having two appetizers for your meal. Often, that is more than enough food to fill you up.
- 8. Order a salad before ordering anything else on the menu.** Scientists at Pennsylvania State University found that volunteers who ate a big veggie salad before the main course ate fewer calories overall than those who didn't have a first-course salad, notes Novick.
- 9. But remember: Salads shouldn't be fatty.** This is a vegetable course — keep it tasty but healthy. That means avoiding anything in a creamy sauce (coleslaw, pasta salads, and potato salads), and skipping the bacon bits and fried noodles. Instead, load up on the raw vegetables, treat yourself to a few well-drained marinated vegetables (artichoke hearts, red peppers, or mushrooms), and for a change, add in some fruit or nuts. Indeed, fruits such as mango, kiwi, cantaloupe, and pear are often the secret ingredient in four-star salads.
- 10. Watch the add-ons to vegetable salads.** Even salads that are mostly raw vegetables are a problem if they're loaded with cheese and meats. Take the typical Caesar salad in most restaurants (the one topped with chicken or shrimp as well as plenty of cheese and mayo in the dressing). Add in the fried croutons and the calories add up to a whopping 560, with 36 grams of fat, 6 of them saturated. Italian antipasto salads also are a health challenge, with all their salami, spicy ham, and cheese. Get the salad, but ask for vegetables only.
- 11. Do the fork dip.** The best way to combine salad dressing with salad? Get your dressing on the side, in a small bowl. Dip your empty fork into the dressing, then skewer a forkful of salad. You'll be surprised at how this tastes just right, and how little dressing you'll use. Plus, your lettuce won't wilt and drown in a sea of oil.
- 12. Check the menu before you leave home.** Most chains post their menus on their Web sites. For instance, Ruby Tuesday's Smart Eating menu tells you the restaurant only uses canola oil and even provides nutritional information on its salad bar. You can decide before you ever hit the hostess stand what you're going to order. Conversely, if you don't see anything that's healthy, pick another restaurant.

Watch the Extras

- 13. Read between the lines.** Any menu description that uses the words creamy, breaded, crisp, sauced, or stuffed is likely loaded with hidden fats — much of it saturated or even trans fats. Other “beware of” words include: buttery, sautéed, pan-fried, au gratin, Thermidor, Newburg, Parmesan, cheese sauce, scalloped, and au lait, à la mode, or *au fromage* (with milk, ice cream, or cheese).
- 14. Ask the waiter to skip the bread basket.** If you must have something to munch on while you wait for your order, ask for a plate of raw vegetables or some breadsticks.
- 15. Skip the fancy drinks.** If you must order an alcoholic drink, forget the margaritas, piña coladas, and other exotic mixed drinks. They include sugary additions that only add calories. Opt instead for a glass of wine, a light beer, a vodka and tonic or a simple martini (without the chocolate liquor, sour green apple schnapps, or triple sec).



16. Try a sweet potato, baked with a little (tablespoon) butter and cinnamon in place of a white potato.

The sweet potato offers both potassium and fiber to keep you satisfied.

17. Order fish. Just make sure it's not fried. When the CSPI evaluated food served at seafood chains and independent restaurants, researchers found low-fat and low-sodium options abounded. Plus, you can order seafood so many different ways — steamed, baked, broiled, sautéed, blackened, or grilled. Nix any sauces, or ask for them on the side.

18. Drink water throughout the meal. It will slow you down, help you enjoy the food more, and let the message get to your brain that you're full — before your plate is empty.

19. Always dress up to go out. Even if it's just a regular family restaurant. If you view eating out as an event or a treat, rather than a way to get an everyday dinner, you won't eat out as often. And that's good from both a health and a cost standpoint.

20. Skip the dessert. You can always have some sorbet or even a small piece of chocolate at home. That is much better health-wise than the Triple Chocolate Meltdown or a mountain of ice cream topped by a second mountain of whipped cream.



Emotional Eating: Feeding Your Feelings

Eating to feed a feeling, and not a growling stomach, is emotional eating.

When you're happy, your food of choice could be steak or pizza, when you're sad it could be ice cream or cookies, and when you're bored it could be potato chips. Food does more than fill our stomachs -- it also satisfies feelings, and when you quench those feelings with comfort food when your stomach isn't growling, that's [emotional eating](#).

"Emotional eating is eating for reasons other than [hunger](#)," says Jane Jakubczak, a registered dietitian at the University of Maryland. "Instead of the physical symptom of hunger initiating the eating, an emotion triggers the eating."

What are the telltale signs of emotional eating, what foods are the most likely culprits when it comes to emotional eating, and how it can be overcome?

How to Tell the Difference

There are several differences between emotional hunger and physical hunger, according to the University of Texas Counseling and Mental Health Center web site:

1. Emotional hunger comes on suddenly; physical hunger occurs gradually.
2. When you are eating to fill a void that isn't related to an empty stomach, you crave a specific food, such as pizza or ice cream, and only that food will meet your need. When you eat because you are actually hungry, you're open to options.
3. Emotional hunger feels like it needs to be satisfied instantly with the food you crave; physical hunger can wait.
4. Even when you are full, if you're eating to satisfy an emotional need, you're more likely to keep eating. When you're eating because you're hungry, you're more likely to stop when you're full.
5. Emotional eating can leave behind feelings of guilt; eating when you are physically hungry does not.

Comfort Foods

When emotional hunger rumbles, one of its distinguishing characteristics is that you're focused on a particular food, which is likely a comfort food.

"Comfort food, foods a person eats to obtain or maintain a feeling," says Brian Wansink, PhD, director of the Food and Brand Lab at the University of Illinois. "Comfort foods are often wrongly associated with negative moods, and indeed, people often consume them when they're down or depressed, but interestingly enough, comfort foods are also consumed to maintain good moods."

Ice cream is first on the comfort food list. After ice cream, comfort foods break down by sex: For women it's chocolate and cookies; for men it's pizza, steak, and casserole, explains Wansink.



And what you reach for when eating to satisfy an emotion depends on the emotion. According to an article by Wansink, published in the July 2000 *American Demographics*, "The type of comfort foods a person is drawn toward varies depending on their mood. People in happy moods tend to prefer foods such as pizza or steak (32%). Sad people reached for ice cream and cookies 39% of the time, and 36% of bored people opened up a bag of potato chips."

Overfeeding Emotions

"We all eat for emotional reasons sometimes," says Jakubczak, who has talked to college students at the University of Maryland about emotional eating.

When eating becomes the only or main strategy a person uses to manage emotions, explains Jakubczak, then problems arise -- especially if the foods a person is choosing to eat to satisfy emotions aren't exactly healthy.

"If you eat when you are not hungry, chances are your body does not need the calories," says Jakubczak. "If this happens too often, the extra calories get stored as fat, and too much fat storage can cause one to be overweight (or obese), which will present with some health risks."

According to an interview with Jakubczak on the University of Maryland web site, 75% of overeating is caused by emotions, so dealing with emotions appropriately is important.

Recognizing Emotional Eating

"The first thing one needs to do to overcome emotional eating is to recognize it," says Jakubczak. "Keeping a food record and ranking your hunger from 1-10 each time you put something in your mouth will bring to light 'if' and 'when' you are eating for reasons other than hunger."

Next, you need to learn techniques that help manage emotions besides eating, explains Jakubczak.

"Oftentimes when a child is sad, we cheer them up with a sweet treat," says Jakubczak. "This behavior gets reinforced year after year until we are practicing the same behavior as adults. We never learned how to deal with the sad feeling because we always pushed it away with a sweet treat. Learning how to deal with feelings without food is a new skill many of us need to learn."

Managing Emotional Eating

Here are a few tips to help you deal with emotional eating:

- Recognize emotional eating and learn what triggers this behavior in you.
- Make a list of things to do when you get the urge to eat and you're not hungry, and carry it with you. When you feel overwhelmed, you can put off that desire by doing another enjoyable activity.
- Try taking a walk, calling a friend, playing cards, cleaning your room, doing laundry, or something productive to take your mind off the craving -- even taking a nap will work.
- When you do get the urge to eat when you're not hungry, find a comfort food that's healthy instead of junk food. "Comfort foods don't need to be unhealthy," says Wansink.



- For some, leaving comfort foods behind when they're dieting can be emotionally difficult. Wansink states, "The key is moderation, not elimination." He suggests dividing comfort foods into smaller portions. For instance, if you have a large bag of chips, divide it into smaller containers or baggies and the temptation to eat more than one serving can be avoided.
- When it comes to comfort foods that aren't always healthy, like fattening desserts, Wansink also offers this piece of information: "Your memory of a food peaks after about four bites, so if you only have those bites, a week later you'll recall it as just a good experience than if you polished off the whole thing." So have a few bites of cheesecake or your favorite dessert then stop eating it and you'll get equal the pleasure with lower cost.

Lastly, remember that emotional eating is something that most people do when they're bored, happy, or sad. It might be a pint of ice cream, a bag of chips or a steak, but whatever the food choice, learning how to control it and using moderation is the key.



Weight-loss help: Gain control of emotional eating

Find out how emotional eating can sabotage your weight-loss efforts and get tips to regain control of your eating habits.

[By Mayo Clinic staff](#)

Sometimes the strongest cravings for food happen when you're at your weakest point emotionally. You may turn to food for comfort — consciously or unconsciously — when you're facing a difficult problem, stress or just looking to keep yourself occupied.

But emotional eating can sabotage your weight-loss efforts. Emotional eating often leads to eating too much, especially too much of high-calorie, sweet, fatty or salty foods. But the good news is that if you're prone to emotional eating, you can take steps to regain control of your eating habits and get back on track with your weight-loss goals.

The connection between mood, food and weight loss

Emotional eating is eating as a way to suppress or soothe negative emotions, such as stress, anger, fear, boredom, sadness and loneliness. Both major life events and the hassles of daily life can trigger negative emotions that lead to emotional eating and disrupt your weight-loss efforts. These triggers may include:

- Unemployment
- Financial pressure
- Health problems
- Relationship conflicts
- Work stress
- Bad weather
- Fatigue

Although some people actually eat less in the face of strong emotions, if you're in emotional distress you may turn to impulsive or binge eating — you may rapidly eat whatever's convenient, without even enjoying it. In fact, your emotions may become so tied to your eating habits that you automatically reach for a sweet treat whenever you're angry or stressed without stopping to think about what you're doing.

Food also serves as a distraction. If you're worried about an upcoming event or stewing over a conflict, for instance, you may focus on eating comfort food instead of dealing with the painful situation.

Whatever emotions drive you to overeat, the end result is often the same. The emotions return, and you may also now bear the additional burden of guilt about setting back your weight-loss or health goals. This can also lead to an unhealthy cycle — your emotions trigger you to overeat, you beat yourself up for getting off your weight-loss track, you feel badly, and you overeat again.



Tips to get your weight-loss efforts back on track

Although negative emotions can trigger emotional eating, you can take steps to control cravings and renew your effort at weight loss. To help stop emotional eating, try these tips:

- **Tame your stress.** If stress contributes to your emotional eating, try a stress management technique, such as yoga, meditation or relaxation.
- **Have a hunger reality check.** Is your hunger physical or emotional? If you ate just a few hours ago and don't have a rumbling stomach, you're probably not really hungry. Give the craving a little time to pass.
- **Keep a food diary.** Write down what you eat, how much you eat, when you eat, how you're feeling when you eat and how hungry you are. Over time, you may see patterns emerge that reveal the connection between mood and food.
- **Get support.** You're more likely to give in to emotional eating if you lack a good support network. Lean on family and friends or consider joining a support group.
- **Fight boredom.** Instead of snacking when you're not truly hungry, distract yourself. Take a walk, watch a movie, play with your cat, listen to music, read, surf the Internet or call a friend.
- **Take away temptation.** Don't keep supplies of comfort foods in your home if they're hard for you to resist. And if you feel angry or blue, postpone your trip to the grocery store until you're sure that you have your emotions in check.
- **Don't deprive yourself.** When you're trying to achieve a weight-loss goal, you may limit your calories too much, eat the same foods frequently and banish all the treats you enjoy. This may just serve to increase your food cravings, especially in response to emotions. Enjoy an occasional treat and get plenty of a variety of healthy foods to help curb cravings.
- **Snack healthy.** If you feel the urge to eat between meals, choose a low-fat, low-calorie snack, such as, vegetables with fat-free dip, or a healthy protein choice. Or try low-fat, lower calorie versions of your favorite foods to see if they satisfy your craving.
- **Get enough sleep.** If you're constantly tired, you might snack to try to give yourself an energy boost. Take a nap or go to bed earlier instead.
- **Seek therapy.** If you've tried self-help options but you still can't get control of your emotional eating, consider therapy with a professional mental health provider. Therapy can help you understand the motivations behind your emotional eating and help you learn new coping skills. Therapy can also help you discover whether you may have an eating disorder, which is sometimes connected to emotional eating.

If you have an episode of emotional eating, forgive yourself and start fresh the next day. Try to learn from the experience and make a plan for how you can prevent it in the future. Focus on the positive changes you're making in your eating habits and give yourself credit for making changes that'll lead to better health.



Name: _____ Day: _____ Date: _____

FOOD & MOOD JOURNAL

1. Use as many sheets as you need per day, and include amounts of foods eaten, supplements, medications, and note **time** of day.
2. Record the feelings you have before and after the meals, such as drowsy, irritable, energized. Be simply curious without self-judgment.

Time	Feelings/Energy Before Meal	Food / Drink / Supplements	Location	Feelings/ Energy After
9:00am	Awake and hungry, worried about work week	2 eggs scrambled in 1 T of Olive Oil, 1 Multi-vitamin 1 piece of white toast with 1 T of butter, 1 cup of decaf coffee	Dining room table, at home	Bloated and full, gassy, guilty



How to Evaluate Your "Mood" Journal

Complete this self-assessment after keeping your Food and Mood journal for at least one week.
Look for patterns and trends that will help you design a personalized attack.

1. What times of the day and night did you most frequently eat? What patterns do you see?

2. What patterns do you see in your food and beverage intake? How did snacks, skipping a meal, or unplanned eating affect your caloric intake? How did portion sizes affect your intake? Does caffeine or sugar affect your food intake?

3. How did you feel before eating and during the first hour after eating? Do you see any patterns?

4. What moods and feelings are associated with eating? Do you eat more or less when you are calm, relaxed, agitated, stressed, tired, or angry?

5. What was your most frequent reason for eating? What patterns do you notice between foods eaten and feelings before and after you ate?

6. Where did you eat most frequently? What connections do you see between the locations and your food intake?

7. Who did you eat with? Did you tend to eat more or less with certain people?

8. What activities were most strongly linked with eating?

9. Describe the consequences linked with your eating. Do you see any patterns?



Understanding Your Cravings

Basically, there are two kinds of hunger: *physical* (which is triggered by the body's need for nourishment) and *psychological* (which is stimulated by the body's need for emotional comfort). Cravings are often the body's way of responding to a psychological need to satisfy hunger. Whenever you are emotionally stressed, your brain responds by sending out a signal which causes you to want to eat something sweet or starchy. When the food is digested there is a release of serotonin, a "feel good" chemical. The results are almost immediate: your emotional state begins to subside giving temporary relief. You CAN learn to conquer these cravings and substitute healthy foods. Here's how to start making better choices.

	What You Crave:	Why You Crave:	What You SHOULD Eat
S T R E S S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * brownies * burritos * candy * doughnuts * french fries * garlic bread * muffins * potato chips * sugary cereals 	<p>Cortisol, the "stress hormone" triggers insulin release in your system. Insulin causes cravings for refined carbs found in sweet & sugary foods. Such foods are a quick fix, but soon you'll be nervous & hungry again. Eat complex carbs instead to calm you & stabilize insulin levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * bran muffin with apple butter * brown rice * dark-green leafy vegetables * fresh fruit * graham crackers * three bean salad * whole wheat pasta
B O R E D O M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * cheese and crackers * chili * Doritos & cheese curls * flavored pretzels * nachos * spicy fries * tortilla chips & guacamole * chips & dips * salty nuts * trail mix 	<p>Boredom triggers cravings for foods containing fast-acting carbs to "rev up" your system. Unfortunately, these foods stimulate salivary glands offering a quick, but poor, substitute for brain stimulation. Their "fix" for boredom is only temporary & fattening. Instead, try combining carbs with protein.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * baked potato topped with fat-free sour cream or yogurt * light popcorn with parmesan cheese * whole wheat bagel with fat-free cream cheese * whole wheat toast with 1 tsp. peanut butter & 1 tsp. jelly * whole wheat tortilla filled with shredded carrots, zucchini, low-fat cheese, and salsa
F A T I G U E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * buttered popcorn * coffee or colas * fast food * fried fish or chicken * frozen foods * hamburgers * ice cream * sandwiches with mayo 	<p>Galantlin is a chemical released by the brain when you get tired. It triggers a desire for fatty foods. By the end of the day your brain may be screaming for a greasy hamburger, but don't give in. What you really need are high-protein treats, blood sugar stabilizers and foods rich in minerals to boost energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * broiled fish * lentil bean soup * oat bran muffins * oatmeal * pine nuts * raw carrots or celery with 1 tsp. peanut butter * steamed legumes * sunflower seeds * tofu burgers * whole grain cereals with skim milk
T H E B L U E S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * bonbons * candy bars * cheesecake * chocolate * chocolate-chip cookies * hot fudge sundaes * milkshakes * pizza 	<p>Chocolate causes the brain to release endorphins, feel-good chemicals which cause a numbing effect. Simple carbs found in most sweets cause the release of serotonin, which calms & boosts mood. These are desirable results, but they soon disappear. Better choices are foods which strengthen the nervous system and ease depression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * broiled fish or grilled chicken * mashed acorn squash * multi-grain bagels * pea soup * sugar-free applesauce * tomatoes * whole grain breads * whole grain pancakes & fruit



Emotional Eating: Steps for Overcoming Food Cravings

Emotional eating is the process of consuming foods (often high calorie, fatty foods) as a way to cope with personal stress and duress.

Effective ways of curbing the habit of emotional eating involve finding new, healthier, methods of coping with—or altering—one's emotional state. At Thrive Counseling, we have discovered that the following basic strategies are helpful to our clients.

- 1) **Alternative Enjoyable Activities.** We turn to emotional eating because it improves our emotional state. Make a list of other activities that you enjoy—and review that list when you feel a craving coming on. For some of our clients, alternative activities have included: calling a friend, walking the dog, or downloading a song from iTunes.

- 2) **Drink Water.** Many of us live in a constant state of dehydration. When we're dehydrated we can mistake thirst for hunger. Staying well hydrated can reduce cravings and provide you more energy throughout the day.

- 3) **Substitute some lower calorie foods.** If you're going to snack, try incorporating fruits and vegetables into your menu. We usually don't feel too guilty at the end of the day if we've eaten too many carrots and apples.

- 4) **Get the junk food out of the house.** In the same way that an alcoholic shouldn't have beer in the house, if you are prone to emotional eating, keeping junk food at a distance is a simple way of preventing a lapse when your willpower is low.

- 5) **Let the Craving Pass.** –Most cravings last 20 minutes or less. If you are longing for something sweet, tell yourself you're going to wait just 20 minutes before you indulge. The craving will pass on its own.

- 6) **Exercise.** Tried and true, rigorous exercise both reduces stress and temporarily reduces appetite.



Week 8 Objectives

Exercise:

Any physical activity above and beyond what you are doing on a daily basis now can prove to be extremely beneficial. While there are many varieties of exercise out there, you have to find activities that fit you and the new lifestyle you are trying to establish. Start slow especially if your current activity and movement has been sedentary. Always consult your physician for suggested physical activities or limitations with any health issues you may have. ANY activity above and beyond what you are (or are not) doing now is great! JUST MOVE!

Dining Out:

When beginning a new eating lifestyle, ANY dining out experiences can bring guilt and stress. Initially, it may be best to AVOID any dining out. Ok-let's keep this REAL! Who are we kidding; dining out at least one meal a week is pretty much inevitable. Everyone has busy lifestyles between kids, work, etc. However, going into a dining out experience INFORMED will make all the difference. KNOW before you GO! Knowing and sticking to a healthy choice plan will have you feeling empowered. Choosing a restaurant that you can look up nutritional facts and make the best possible choices to keep on track will put a smile on your face while keeping excess weight off your hips.

Many tips are included in your handouts and in lecture. READ THEM! You may not lose any weight if you are dining out more frequently than one meal a week, but you can maintain weight already lost by making good choices. The key is to not deprive yourself of the social aspect of meeting friends and family for a meal out. But rather, making that experience MORE about the gathering than the food.

Emotional Eating:

Pay attention this week to the difference between emotional hunger and physical hunger. Is it "time" for a meal or snack? Or, are you simply bored? Recognizing the "WHY" in eating will help you on your journey to managing your weight as well as your emotions. Here is where an emotional food journal can come in handy. This journal is for you and you alone. It's an exercise that can help break the cycle of feeding sad, happy, angry and frustrated emotions with sweet treats.

Start with the second tip under managing emotional eating in your handouts. In the same tip, the key is moderation, not elimination. Keeping this "mood journal" will help you to recognize when, why, and what types of foods you crave and for what reason. Once you have made this recognition you can begin to find other alternatives that give you the same pleasurable feeling in a healthy way. Our emotions are a driving force to much of the way we eat. Isn't it about time YOU take the wheel?

We hope this is one of your best weeks so far. By recognizing your emotions and the foods associated with them, you can be more in control. Remember, moderation not deprivation. And, always give yourself credit for all of the positive changes you have made thus far. All too often we focus on the negative far more than the positive. Changes occur slowly and with consistency and positivity you WILL make changes that will last your LIFETIME!

-K & G