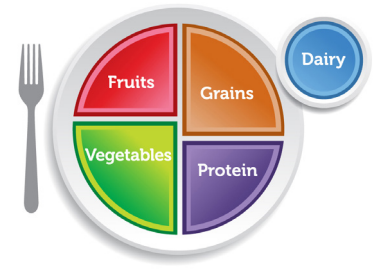




A Pioneering Area Agency on Aging

Emotional Eating



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Everyone handles stress and emotions differently. Sometimes we may turn to food for comfort. Emotional eating is a common occurrence and can sometimes be difficult to manage.

Emotional vs. Physical Hunger

It is important to know the difference between “head hunger” and “stomach hunger” and to identify the potential triggers that may contribute to it. “Head hunger” is emotional hunger while “stomach 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.

is physical hunger (eating to refuel our bodies). Emotional eating tends to come on more suddenly and often times we crave specific foods. Emotional eating often leads to mindless eating, a behavior in which we may not even realize we are doing it.

When you are faced with emotional or mindless eating, it is important to understand why it is occurring. There are many emotions that can cause us to turn to food for comfort. We can be happy and excited. Perhaps we are feeling stressed, sad, lonely or fearful. Maybe we are bored and food is something to help us fill the time. Ask yourself – are you truly hungry or do you feel upset or stressed? Identifying why emotional eating occurs can help problem solve on how to overcome it.

Healthy Snacking

Have healthy meals and snacks on hand for quick and convenient options. Fresh fruit and vegetables can be cut-up ahead of time for an easy on-the-go snack. Whole wheat crackers, popcorn, nuts or cheese sticks are other quick and healthy snack options. Pre-portion snacks ahead of time to help control portion sizes.

Portion Control

Portion control and moderation are key points in controlling cravings. Your body craves what you continually feed it – the more sugar, salt or processed foods it has, the more it will crave them. If having a treat, consider combining it with a healthy food option. For example, combine chocolate with nuts or fresh fruit.

Ways to combat emotional eating:

- Call a friend or family member.
- Brush your teeth.
- Go for a walk.
- Take a warm bath.
- Drink some hot tea.
- Find a favorite activity – read a book, do a puzzle, watch a movie, keep a journal, write a letter or look at photos.
- Drink a glass of water. Water can often help keep us fuller and satisfied longer.
- Chew gum or mints – It will give you the flavor but without all of the extra calories and sugar.



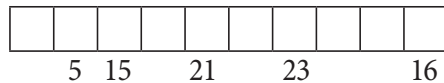
Identifying patterns of emotional eating, incorporating healthy snacking and practicing portion control can help manage emotional eating and keep you in control.



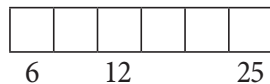
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Healthy Snacking Puzzle

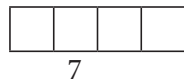
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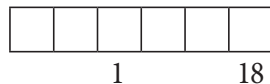
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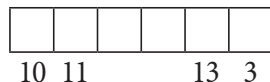
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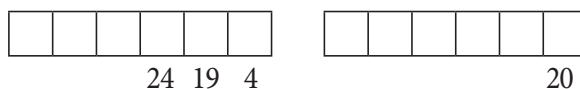
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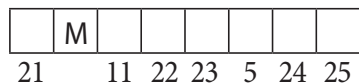
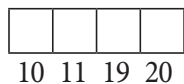
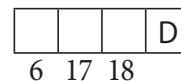
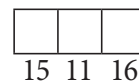
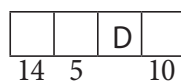
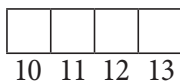
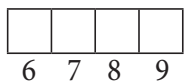
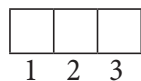
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Chocolate Chip and Peanut Butter Oatmeal Balls

Ingredients:

1 cup dry oats ½ cup mini chocolate chips ¼ cup peanut butter
 ¼ cup honey ½ tsp vanilla, optional Dash of Salt

Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, add all ingredients and stir to combine well. Mixture should be a bit sticky. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. Use a spoon to scoop about a tablespoon into your hand. Roll into a ball.
3. Store the balls uncovered in the fridge for up to a week.

