

All of us occasionally eat when we're not hungry, but it is useful to identify and learn to manage non-hunger eating. Before you eat, decide whether you truly are hungry. Are you eating food because your body needs food, or for some other reason? It's always fine to eat when you're hungry. Eating when you're not hungry will happen too, so be prepared.

■ ***Learn to manage the food/mood connection***

We often resort to food to cope because it's comfortable and familiar. If you eat for reasons other than hunger, you won't feel satisfied. Label your feelings and respond to them with something other than food. If you're bored, create a list of things to do rather than eat. Make your list now, so that you're armed and ready when you need it. Some possibilities for the list are reading a magazine or doing a crossword puzzle.

■ ***Become aware of the non-hunger cues that motivate you to eat***

When the non-hunger cues hit, give yourself an arbitrary amount of time-say five minutes -to determine if you really want to eat. Then determine a realistic portion of food, such as a coffee mug of pretzels or a plate of cookies. Sit down and face the food. When you've finished, move to a new chair, room or engage in another activity.

■ ***Make eating a pure experience***

When you eat, try and separate what you are doing from what you are eating. Leave your bedroom, get away from the desk and don't drive and eat. Focus on what you are eating. Inattentive eating translates into overeating.

■ ***Have a support network***

Many college students feel lonely and sad when they leave home. When the going gets tough, know that you can call a friend, call home, email your buddy, write your feelings in a journal, take a walk or just scream and shout. Always remember that you can ask for help from your Residence Hall Advisor or the school health service.