

## The Hunger Scale

The **Hunger Scale** is another tool that you can use to assess your appetite. The 10-point scale reflects different physical stages of hunger and fullness. The idea is to avoid being too hungry or too full. In other words, try to stay in between level 3 and 7.

To use the scale, ask yourself two questions:

1. "Do I feel hungry?" (Before eating)
2. "Should I eat more?" (During or after eating)

	Physically faint	Ravenous	Fairly hungry	Slightly hungry	Neutral	Pleasantly satisfied	Full	Stuffed	Bloated	Nauseous
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Source: <http://www.thedietchannel.com/Learn-to-Recognize-Your-Hunger-Cues.htm>



# HALT!

Before you eat,  
ask yourself if  
you are ...

**H**—HUNGRY?

**A**—ANXIOUS?

**L**—LONELY?

**T**—TIRED?

Certain feelings may  
disguise themselves as  
hunger!

Put Your Mind  
Where Your  
Mouth Is!



*Become more  
aware when  
eating*

**GMHC**

## Understanding Appetite

### **What is appetite?**

Appetite is the body's desire to eat. It is both a response to seeing, smelling or tasting good food and the body's request for fuel, which supplies the body with the energy and nutrients needed to perform daily functions.

### **Is my appetite excessive?**

You should eat when hungry, but not feel uncomfortably full after eating. Feeling stuffed regularly may mean you are over-eating.

Over-eating increases your risk of weight gain, which could increase your risk for diabetes and heart disease.

### **Is my appetite poor?**

Consuming too little food can result in weight loss. Monitor your weight, and if you think it has changed, make sure you eat adequate calories from nutritious foods.

Having a poor appetite for a long period of time can indicate stress, depression and lead to unintentional weight loss.

If you notice that your appetite has changed recently, or if you have unintentionally lost weight, consult your doctor or dietitian.

## The HALT Strategy



You can also manage your appetite by using the HALT strategy. HALT stands for:

### **HUNGRY**

Ask yourself, am I hungry? Hunger occurs when there is a lack of sufficient food in the body or when your body needs energy.

### **ANXIOUS or ANGRY**

Often, when we experience an uncomfortable situation we may turn to food for relaxation or stress release. There is nothing wrong with feeling anger or anxiety; try to express these emotions in a more constructive manner. Take a look at some other activities to do on the right panel.

### **LONELY**

Being lonely may come when we experience feelings of isolation. As we crave attention and community, we may reach out for food to cope. Try calling a friend or participate in wellness activities or groups at GMHC.

### **TIRED**

When we do not get enough sleep, we may ignore feeling tired. Sleep has been shown to regulate body weight and metabolism and inadequate sleep has been associated with weight gain. If you have trouble sleeping talk to your dietitian and doctor for suggestions to improve your sleep habits.

## Engage in Activities!

Before you reach for food (when not physically hungry), try some non-food related activities. These can help combat over-eating.



- Practice deep breathing or meditation.
- Go for a walk or jog.
- Get some fresh air.
- Read a good book, newspaper or magazine.
- Talk to a friend.
- Watch a movie.
- Play with a pet.
- Take a shower or bath.
- Start a new hobby.

References:

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