

EMOTIONAL EATING

‘Stressed is DESSERTS spelled backwards’!

Emotional eating is something that you all must have experienced in some or the other phase of our life.

Some of you eat even when not hungry, when you are happy or, some when they are sad. Many people eat when they are bored, angry, hurt, nervous or depressed.

If we define emotional eating, it can be simply stated as *‘eating when not hungry, to satisfy or fill a void’*.

Emotional eating that leads to weight gain, obesity and a whole load of medical complications.

To make it worse, when you eat out of emotion, your choices of food are surely not going to be fruits and salads, but junk food, food rich in sugar which produce happy feelings, which raise your blood sugar levels quickly, giving you an energy rush.

For emotional eaters, food is the best friend to boost spirits, calm stress and alleviate boredom.

Emotional eating often leads to eating too much, especially high-calorie, sweet, salty and fatty foods.

The connection between stress and eating likely has roots in brain chemistry.

When faced with persistent stress, health problems, difficult relationships or too much work, many people turn to high fat, high calorie foods for comfort.

A hunger hormone called “Ghrelin” is released in your body when you are much stressed too much.

Ghrelin makes you excessively hungry and you gorge on food.

This acts like a natural antidepressant mechanism.

Suggestions To Understand And Overcome Emotional Eating:

- ***Learn to recognize true hunger:*** A craving for chips or cookies soon after a meal is more likely to be emotional hunger, not real hunger.
- ***Look elsewhere for comfort:*** Instead of grabbing a candy bar, take a walk, call a friend, listen to music, read or treat yourself to a movie or a spa.
- ***Manage stress in a healthy way:*** The goal is to lower stress with healthy strategies, including regular exercise, adequate rest and support from friends and family.
- ***Practice mindful eating:*** Mindfulness is a way of paying focused attention without judgment. Applied to eating, this technique can help increase awareness of the sensations, feelings and thoughts connected with food and eating.

- ***Toss out the unhealthy foods:*** Avoid stocking the cupboard or refrigerator with high-calorie comfort foods. Consider more healthful comfort foods: a bowl of tomato/clear soup or a cup of warm milk.
- ***Eat a balanced diet and healthy snacks:*** Between meals, opt for low fat, low calorie snacks such as fresh fruit and unbuttered popcorn.