

THE BARIX™ SUPPORT GROUP GUIDE

For Education and Support of All Barix Clinics Patients

END EMOTIONAL EATING



Emotional eating is simply eating in response to emotions rather than hunger. Emotions may be negative such as, anger, frustration, feeling overwhelmed, stress, fatigue, boredom, sadness, or depression. Emotional eating may also come from the emotions of joy, happiness, celebration, comfort, or excitement, and may be conscious or unconscious. Emotional eating is often unplanned and uncontrolled. Some people eat to feel good or take their mind off their problems, because they are bored or lonely, or to feel safe and secure, to reward themselves, to avoid hunger, or to express joy.

People who have undergone bariatric surgery after facing years of hardship fighting obesity, made the following statements:

“When I ate, I ate to fill a void.”

“I was feeding my emotions as opposed to my stomach.”

“I found solace in food.”

“You don't just lose your weight; you lose your security blanket.”

The previous statements relate to that individual's attempt to find a sense of

fulfillment with food. An important part of the recovery process after weight loss surgery has to do with learning new ways to “nourish” oneself without using food.

It is natural to turn to food when there is stress, anxiety, or depression. Some people have recognized over the years that eating in these situations does makes you feel better. Brain chemistry changes when eating “comfort” foods. Over time, comforting ourselves with food becomes a habit and can be difficult to overcome. However, eating in response to emotions does not change the situation or solve the problem. It just causes weight gain. We all need strategies to deal with emotions and nourish ourselves without the use of food. The following is an example of how food may work as a mood regulator:

You have a fight with a coworker and you are feeling really angry. Next, you have a conscious or unconscious food thought and you find yourself dishing up a bowl of ice cream. As you eat the ice cream, you are no longer focused on your anger. After a while, the anger returns and it is often accompanied by guilt from overeating. This can become a self-defeating cycle until healthier coping strategies are developed.

HEALTHY STRATEGIES TO PREVENT OVEREATING

- Identifying triggers that lead to emotional eating is a first step. Ask yourself to rate your hunger level before you eat any unplanned food or drink with a “1” being extremely hungry and a “10” being very full. If your hunger level is on the upper half of the scale, think about what else may be triggering you to eat.
- To break the cycle, distract yourself from eating for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Engage in an activity that is not conducive to eating such as taking a shower, talking on the phone, running an errand, or taking a walk. Usually the urge for emotional eating will subside after these lengths of time.

USE YOUR MOMENTS OF TEMPTATION



Use your moments of temptation to learn what needs to change in your life. Think about ways to change the situation or solve the problem without using food. You will need to learn new skills to resolve your emotional distress.

- Reward yourself or celebrate by buying yourself a non-food treat, taking a bubble bath, or getting a massage.

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- Get up and move. Exercise also changes brain chemistry that can improve your mood, decrease your stress, and help you to deal with emotions in a non-food manner.
- Talk to the person who made you angry, upset, or frustrated. or if you are unable to do that, talk to a friend about the situation.
- Put a label on your feelings. Is it anger, disappointment, fear, sadness, happiness, or joy?
- Make constructive plans to change negative situations in your life. If you eat a 1/2 gallon of ice cream, the situation has not changed, but your waistline has.
- Learn stress reduction techniques.
- Work towards meeting your needs without the use of food. For example, if you are feeling lonely, call a friend.
- Strengthen friendships.
- Develop better spiritual health.
- Use positive and assertive words to help you, such as:
 - “I can find other ways to deal with my sadness (regret, fear, frustration).”
 - “I do not need to numb myself from the everyday stressors of life.”
 - “I can find a other ways to fill this void in my life without the use of food.”

PLAN HEALTHY MEALS

In addition to identifying triggers and learning new skills to resolve emotional distress, have a meal plan established. Plan six small healthy meals and snacks throughout the day. Take time to enjoy your food. Think of these snacks and meals as “mini celebrations” throughout the day. Eat with other people or by candlelight and soft music. Use fine china. Eat foods that you enjoy and that nourish your body.

STRESS AND WEIGHT GAIN

A certain amount of stress in our lives is healthy. It provides the pressure or motivation that allows us to get things done and to move forward. There is an increasing awareness of the relationship between chronic stress and weight gain. Prolonged levels of high stress can lead to an increase in appetite and stress-induced weight gain. This excess weight is often found around the midsection. People often experience cravings for carbohydrate foods. Eating in response to these cravings can quickly become a habit. Break the behavior chain of high stress eating by incorporating these following lifestyle habits :

- **Regular exercise** – the positive changes that occur in brain chemistry with exercise can help counter the negative effects of chronic stress.
- **Eat six small meals** – this habit helps maintain even blood sugar levels and controls appetite.
- **Keep up on your sleep** – stress hormones can rise when you become sleep-deprived.
- **Relax** – find time to do activities that you find relaxing. Relaxation techniques or meditation can decrease stress hormones.
- **Avoid added sugar** to keep blood sugar levels even and appetites in check.
- **Avoid caffeine and cigarettes** – stress hormones can increase with the use of caffeine and cigarettes.

- **Assess your lifestyle** to determine if there are areas in which you can control or limit stress.
- **Assess your reaction** to stressful situations. Stress isn’t an event or situation; it comes from your reaction to that event or situation.

MAINTAINING LONG-TERM WEIGHT LOSS

You may need to seek out professional help to deal with unresolved issues or events that have happened in your life that are preventing you from maintaining long-term weight loss. Excess weight may be a protective coat, sheltering you from the vulnerabilities of this world. Seek help so that you can move beyond what is holding you back from the healthy life that you deserve.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:

The Solution Program offers online, group, and phone coaching to help you break free from emotional eating. More information can be found on their website: www.thepathway.org.



Impossibly Easy Cheeseburger Pie

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 lb extra lean ground beef | 1 cup Reduced Fat Bisquick® |
| 1 cup chopped onion | 1 cup skim milk |
| 1/2 tsp salt | 1/2 cup liquid egg substitute |
| 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese | |

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease 9” pie plate. Cook ground beef and onion in skillet until beef is brown; drain. Stir in salt. Spread in pie plate; sprinkle with cheese. Stir remaining ingredients in separate bowl until well mixed. Pour into pie plate. Bake for 25 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Makes 6 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 310 calories; 26 grams protein; 18 grams fat; 9 grams carbohydrate; 243 mg sodium; 205 mg calcium. **NOTE:** to reduce fat, use extra lean ground turkey in place of the ground beef.

EMOTIONAL EATING TRIGGER LOG

Record the situations when you desired to eat food that was not on your meal plan, the food desired, hunger level (“1” being famished and “10” being very full), the strategy used to distract yourself from eating, and the effectiveness of that strategy.

Situation/Emotional Trigger	Food Desired	Hunger Level	Strategy for Distraction	Effectiveness

NAME THAT FEELING:

-
- | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Bored | Hurt | Curious | Pessimistic | Mad |
| Excited | Scared | Regretful | Lonely | Proud |
| Shy | Sad | Confident | Sheepish | Strong |
| Loved | Mischievous | Cold | Smug | Frustrated |
| Silly | Determined | Enraged | Satisfied | Anxious |
| Cute | Bashful | Stubborn | Guilty | |
| Glad | Disappointed | Confused | Miserable | |
| Lucky | Afraid | Optimistic | Lost | |
| Secure | Envious | Playful | Worried | |

HEALTHFUL TIDBITS



Have you gotten back into the habit of sipping on diet pop again? If you need motivation to lay off the bubbly stuff for good, here it is from the American Dental Association:

Diet pop contains acid. The acid in soft drinks, whether they contain sugar or not, is the primary cause of weakening tooth enamel. Each sip of diet pop causes a 20-minute acid attack to the enamel of your teeth. The acid attack starts over again with every sip. After these ongoing acid attacks weaken your tooth enamel, bacteria in your mouth cause cavities where the enamel is

damaged. If you have a receding gum line, acid does more damage below the gum line than above it. This is a particular concern for adults. So grab that water bottle—there's even more reason to feel good about quenching your thirst with nature's finest.

ACID CONTENT of Sugar Free Soft Drinks



DRINK	ACID
Pure Water	7.00 (Neutral)
Diet Barq's Root Beer®	4.55
Diet 7 Up®	3.67
Diet Dr. Pepper®	3.41
Diet Coke®	3.39
Diet Mountain Dew®	3.22
Diet Pepsi®	3.05
Battery Acid	1.00

WHAT'S NEW

There are lots of new products on the grocery store shelves for you to enjoy. Look for Kraft® new low carb BBQ sauce. Atkins Endulge Chocolate Covered Coconut Bar® tastes like a Mounds bar with the bonus of 4 grams of protein and no added sugars. Sugar free Rice Krispie Treats® are now possible with sugar free marshmallows. For convenience sake, Atkins® has two new ready to drink shake flavors; orange cream and vanilla caramel cream. Each has 20 grams of protein. Drink them very cold as one of your six small meals.



To receive a free **RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY GUIDE**, CALL 800-282-0066 or send us an email at rc@barixclinics.com with your name and contact information.

Our reconstructive surgery program is currently performed at our centers in Michigan and Illinois—and we are planning to expand our program at Scottsdale, AZ; Langhorne, PA; Wylie, TX; and Columbus, OH facilities in the next few months.

Easy Chicken Pot Pie



- 1-2/3 cup frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
- 1 cup cooked chicken breast, chopped into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 can (10-3/4 oz) Campbell's® 98% fat free cream of chicken soup

- 1 cup Reduced Fat Bisquick®
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1/4 cup liquid egg substitute

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Mix vegetables, chicken and soup in an ungreased 9" pie plate. Mix remaining ingredients in separate bowl until blended. Then pour into pie plate over chicken mixture. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Makes six servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 198 calories; 18 grams protein; 4 grams fat; 21 grams carbohydrate; 571 mg sodium; 57 mg calcium.

Please send comments, ideas, recipes, and "It Worked For Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at dhart@foresthealth.com.

OTHERS CARE. PLEASE SHARE.

Please tell us about the lives that have changed because you shared your weight-loss story. Submit your story on the "Share Your Success" section of the Patient website. What you have to say may be printed in this publication or on our website and can serve as inspiration to all.

REFER a Friend: Call 800-282-0066 or REQUEST a FREE INFORMATION GUIDE for a FRIEND: www.barixinfo.com/sgg

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