

Putting the brakes on 'emotional eating'

February 22 2018, by Julie Davis, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Many of us make choices about whether to eat healthy or not-so-healthy foods based on whether we're in a good or not-so-good mood.

When a bad [mood](#) strikes, we often tend to reach for [junk food](#). And that can be a recipe for disaster when you're trying to lose weight.

Here's how to keep your emotions from ruining your diet resolve.

First, it helps to think about the future rather than just that moment. Refocus on the long-term health benefits of [good nutrition](#), and remind yourself how much more important they are than any short-lived comfort from [food](#).

Next, look for ways to brighten your mood that don't involve eating at all. If you're blue, call a diet buddy who knows how to motivate you. Or turn on a favorite movie. If you're nervous or angry, release your emotions by working out to your favorite music mix or taking a short run.

Healthy lifestyle habits help insulate you from bad moods and the emotional eating that often follows. Boost your mood on a daily basis with regular exercise and with a few minutes of relaxation, like taking a warm bath, meditating, or reading a book.

Using a food journal can help you look for causes of a [bad mood](#), like stress, and show patterns you can then take steps to change. For example, if giving a presentation at work always has you reaching for a candy bar, be prepared with a healthier snack, like a small container of nuts and dried fruits.

These positive steps will improve your outlook and, in turn, help you make good food choices and stick to your diet.

More information: Cornell University's Food & Brand Lab has information to help you better understand how your mood can drive [food choices](#), and how to overcome emotional eating.

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Citation: Putting the brakes on 'emotional eating' (2018, February 22) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-02-emotional.html>

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