

# Are you an emotional eater?

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(HealthDay)—Is emotional eating your downfall? One way to find out is with the EADES or "Eating and Appraisal Due to Emotions and Stress" questionnaire developed by Amy Ozier of Northern Illinois University.

First published in 2007, it has been used and refined by many other researchers over the years, not just in the United States, but around the world.

The questions aren't complicated. They ask how well you cope with stress and other problems, whether you use food as a way to self-soothe in times of distress or even as a reward in times of happiness, and how much control you feel you have over your eating, all with the goal of pinpointing eating behaviors that typically lead to weight gain.

### **Emotions That Can Prompt Eating**

- Stress
- Sadness
- Fatigue
- Feeling down on yourself
- Anger
- Not feeling that you're in control of your own life

Some other risk factors for emotional eating are not having a support network of family and friends, and feeling incapable of handling problems on your own.

Strongly agreeing with statements such as you overeat when stressed, you keep eating even after you feel full, and you reach for food when you're tired, angry or sad, are signs that your eating habits are related to more than true hunger. Keeping a food journal that includes how you feel every time you eat something will enable you to look over your eating pattern and see to what extent you're influenced by emotions.

If you ascertain that emotions lead you right to the fridge, any weight loss strategy will need to go deeper than cutting calories. If you're unable

to change eating patterns on your own, working with a dietitian or a behavioral therapist can help. Together you can identify what triggers your emotional eating and develop non-food ideas for managing stress.

**More information:** The Center for Nutrition Studies has more on [how to overcome emotional eating](#).

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