

Substituting Other Pleasures for Food: Behavior Modification

We want this program to be a very pleasurable experience for you. Remember that food is only one of an infinite number of pleasures. Learn to substitute other pleasures for food. Your appetite center is only stimulated for about 20 minutes at a time. This is an important phenomenon of appetite that you can take advantage of.

When you train yourself to substitute other pleasures for food for 20 minutes, and often just for two minutes, you overcome many unnecessary psychological cues for eating.

When an overweight person gets an urge to eat, this is usually not a physiological need (hunger), but a psychological need (appetite). Sometimes one's appetite is stimulated simply by seeing, smelling, hearing, or even thinking about food. Other times one's appetite is stimulated by frustration, anger, boredom, hostility, tension, worry, indecision, inferiority, rebellion, guilt, need for attention, etc., or by infantile or oral fixations.

THESE ARE NOT REASONS TO EAT!

All that the mind is telling us is that we have a need for pleasure or gratification. There are at least a thousand pleasures other than food. Learn to indulge in these pleasures instead of gorging yourself with food. You will be amazed how soon, instead of automatically eating whenever you need some pleasure, you will experience a thought process somewhat similar to the following: "I feel I would like to eat, but I do not need food – it will only make me feel heavier and guilty. What I really need is pleasure. Let me get this pleasure from a source other than food for at least 10-20 minutes and then I will no longer desire food."

Please fill in your own list of 15 pleasurable things that you can do at work or at school, and 15 pleasurable things to do at home, other than eating. Each time your appetite plays havoc with you, take out the appropriate list. Sometimes just reading through one's list of pleasures can alter a desire for food. At other times one may need to spend 20 minutes with a substitute pleasure and after that, you should no longer have any desire for food.

Remember that drinking water should be your number one pleasure. In choosing other pleasures, try to choose ones that are readily available so that they can be used the instant an eating problem situation becomes evident. It should preferably be incompatible with the act of eating (if possible). Try to match your need for pleasure with the cue that leads you to need pleasure.

Example: Substitute the need for eating out of fatigue by taking a short nap.

It is important to avoid cues that stimulate one's appetite center.

Example: Avoid having candy and junk food in your home. Avoid walking past a bakery or other tempting food outlets. Try to minimize the tension in your life. It also helps to make food less visible in the house. Store foods in opaque containers in the kitchen and refrigerator. Remove all serving dishes from the table at meals.

Please fill in your list of pleasures now and USE it often, until it becomes second nature to substitute other pleasures for food.

At Home

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
13.	_____
14.	_____
15.	_____

At Work

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
13.	_____
14.	_____
15.	_____

SLEEP PAGE

Avoid caffeine (also found in tea, soft drinks, many headache remedies, and energy drinks). Stop all caffeine after noon; if sleep problems persist, stop all caffeine. Remember to taper caffeine slowly, since sudden withdrawal may cause severe headaches.

Limit or eliminate alcoholic beverages. Alcohol may help you fall asleep but is associated with awakening later during the night or early morning hours.

Try to be physically active. Avoid moderate or intense physical activity within several hours of bedtime.

Avoid stimulating activities before bedtime. These may include TV, work-related activities, games, etc.

Use the bed only for sleeping and sexual activity. Avoid activities such as TV or computers.

Make sure you have a comfortable mattress.

Reduce time in bed. Don't reduce the amount of sleep but reduce wakefulness while in bed. This will increase our drive to sleep and will lead to a deeper, quicker, more solid sleep.

Get up at the same time every day. Even if you slept poorly, this would help set your biological clock.

Don't go to bed if you're not sleepy. If you keep a consistent sleep-awake schedule, your body will adapt.

Don't stay in bed if you can't sleep.

Avoid over-the-counter sleep aids that contain diphenhydramine, since these may cause a "hangover" the following day and are associated with weight gain.

Melatonin may help with sleep, especially sleep disturbances associated with travel (jet lag). The dosage is between 0.5-5 mg. Avoid if pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you have liver disease or retinitis pigmentosa. Melatonin may affect blood sugar, or cause headaches or depression. Take melatonin for a few weeks since it may reset the biological clock. Melatonin may cause drowsiness the following day and may interact with drugs that may cause sedation, such as anti-depressants, other sleep aids, pain medications, etc.

Valerian is a natural product that may help sleep. The dosage has not been established. Valerian may be found in over-the-counter supplements or herbal tea (e.g., Sleepy Time Extra by Celestial Seasons).

If you continue to have sleep problems, consult your doctor. Try to avoid prescription sleeping pills for long-term use, since these may be addictive and contribute to nocturnal breathing disorders. Ask if your prescription may cause weight gain (a potential side effect of doxepin, paroxetine, and suvorexant (Belsomra)).

Sleep disturbances may also be due to sleep disorders and may require a sleep study or adjustment to the CPAP with weight loss effects on current users of a CPAP.

THE EPWORTH SLEEPINESS SCALE

How likely are you to doze off or fall asleep in the following situations, in contrast to feeling just tired? This refers to your usual way of life in recent times. Even if you have not done some of these things recently, try to work out how they would have affected you. Use the following scale to choose the most appropriate number for each situation.

0 = no chance of dozing
1 = slight chance of dozing
2 = moderate chance of dozing
3 = high chance of dozing

SITUATION	CHANCE OF DOZING
Sitting and reading	
Watching TV	
Sitting inactive in a public place (e.g., a theater or a meeting)	
As a passenger in a car for an hour without a break`	
Lying down to rest in the afternoon when circumstances permit	
Sitting and talking to someone	
Sitting quietly after a lunch without alcohol	
In a car, while stopped for a few minutes in traffic	