

- Eating customs

How to control emotional eating

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“Emotional eating is a response to a feeling rather than that of true hunger,” says UK-based nutritionist Holly Zoccolan.

“Most people are unable to differentiate between physical hunger and emotional hunger and therefore have weight issues.”

Zoccolan recommends starting a food diary. “Write down when you are starting to crave sugary foods or reaching for snacks when you aren’t actually hungry,” she says.

“Ask yourself, ‘How am I feeling?’ Write down the answer to this question. Take a moment and deal with the emotion at hand.”

Make sure you have healthy snacks around and avoid keeping trigger foods in the house if you can’t control your eating once you open a particular treat.

If you feel the urge to binge, try distracting yourself — cravings usually pass within 20 minutes.

“If you find yourself bored, why not treat yourself to a relaxing long hot bath, a face mask, a lit candle or some relaxing music instead of a food treat,” Zoccolan adds