

# HUNGER-FULLNESS SCALE

Use this hunger scale to understand if you're feeling physiological hunger or a desire to eat. Stick to the green numbers. Eat at a 4 and stop eating when you get to a 7.

**1 PAINFULLY HUNGRY.** Faint and irritable. You're so hungry you will eat anything.

**2 VERY HUNGRY.** Feeling cranky and tired. You can't ignore your hunger

**3 HUNGRY.** Stomach growling and hunger pangs. Healthy choices become more difficult.

**4 SLIGHTLY EMPTY STOMACH.** First signals of hunger. Time to make good choices!!

**5 NEUTRAL.** Neither hungry nor full.

**6 ALMOST FULL.** Satisfied but could easily have more bites.

**7 TOTALLY SATISFIED.** Hunger is gone and can wait 3 to 4 hours to eat again.

**8 VERY FULL.** Probably ate a few bites beyond fullness.

**9 STUFFED.** Feeling stuffed and uncomfortable.

**10 PAINFULLY FULL.** Overstuffed & feeling nauseous.

# UNDERSTAND YOUR HUNGER - STEP BY STEP



**1.**

Whenever you feel like eating, look at the hunger scale and try to understand where you are. Try to stick to the green numbers (4-7) all day - between, before, during and after meals.

**2.**

Eat when you reach a 4, at this point you are still able of making good and healthy food choices. Prepare a complete meal with protein, fat, starchy carbs, non-starchy carbs, fiber, vitamin and minerals.

**3.**

Enjoy your meal without distractions. Feel your body gradually going from a state of hunger to a state of complete satisfaction - top eating when you get to a 7.

## AVOID

- Going below 4 on the hunger scale - here your body will ask for a quick energy fix and make you crave foods packed with sugar, fat and calories. At this point, it will be harder to make good choices.
- Going beyond 7 on the hunger scale - you'll eat beyond your needs and might end up feeling sluggish, having trouble concentrating and gastrointestinal discomfort.

## IF...

you find yourself thinking about or looking for food when you don't feel hungry (from 5 to 10), there might be other reasons for that desire to eat. It's important to tackle these reasons, so you can create strategies to deal with them, without relying on food. **Some common reasons for cravings are:**

### REASON

### SOLUTIONS / OTHER COPING MECHANISMS

stress	exercising, meditation, talking with friends or family members, taking a walk, taking a shower, organize your schedule, put your worries in a piece of paper
diets and restrictions	ditching the diet mentality, make healthy swaps (ex. chips for popcorns)
poor diet	a bad diet poor in essential nutrients can trigger cravings - make sure your diet gives you enough protein, fiber, good fats, carbs, vitamins and minerals
dehydration	drink your water - herbal tea, fruit infusions, foods rich in water (soup, fresh fruits...)
boredom	occupy your time with distracting, productive and meaningful activities
tiredness / lack of sleep	sleep deprivation increases cravings so make sure you always sleep 6-8h per night