



## GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH COMFORT FOODS

Everyone eats comfort food. For many of us it may be traditional or familiar food that we ate in our childhood home. Sometimes we reach for comfort food when we may not even be hungry. That's because comfort food can make us feel... comforted.

Comfort foods are often "junk food" – quick, easy to eat and typically high in fat or sugar. We often keep eating until we become so full that it hurts. Instead of feeling comforted, we can end up feeling badly about ourselves for eating so much. Then, to manage these feelings, we convince ourselves that we had to eat this food to feel better. It can become an unhealthy cycle. Taking a moment to think about how much comfort food we eat, why we reach for comfort foods and what kind of comfort we seek can help break the cycle. Here are a few tips.

### **Consider keeping a record of why you eat comfort foods**

Are you happy and celebrating? Feeling sad or lonely? Are you tired and need a boost? Perhaps you are bored or feeling angry and hurt? Keep a record of your feelings and what you eat at those times. It helps you learn about yourself.

### **Be aware of portion size and how much you are eating**

It is very easy to eat something without thinking only to realize later you have eaten too much. The website [www.mindlesseating.org](http://www.mindlesseating.org) explains why we eat more than we think and has simple steps to help you become more mindful of what you are eating. Check it out!

### **Change your cravings for unhealthy comfort foods**

First, take a deep breath and drink a glass of water. If you're feeling sad, lonely or bored try an activity to take your mind off your worries - do a household task, go for a walk, or text a friend. When you are feeling tired, try a warm bath or shower and a rest. If you're feeling angry or hurt reach out to those who can support you.

### **Create new healthy comfort food memories.**

Start new comfort traditions by enjoying regular balanced meals with family or friends.

If you have questions about healthy eating, food or nutrition call HealthLinkBC at 811. Registered Dietitians are available Mon-Fri from 9 a.m. to 5p.m. You can leave a message after hours. For more information visit [HealthLinkBC](http://HealthLinkBC).

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