Understanding Your Appetite….
It’s Complicated!

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About me (then)....
Now...
Hormones & Appetite….it’s Complicated!

* We have a ton of messages going around the body to communicate what we need.
* Hormones are the messengers!
* When it comes to appetite, there are a couple different hormones that regulate when we’re hungry and when we’re full.
Produced by fat cells to suppress appetite
Decreases food intake
Regulates energy metabolism

You can become leptin resistant, resulting in inflammation.
When this happens, your body doesn’t receive the signal of fullness.

RD Tip: Eat more omega-3 fats and anti-inflammatory antioxidants
Examples:
- fatty fish like salmon, sardines, tuna
- Walnuts
- Flaxseed
- Soybeans
- variety of fruits and veggies
Ghrelin: The Hunger Hormone

- Released from the stomach to tell your brain it’s hungry.
- It generally rises every 4 hours to tell you to eat and then drops after meals.
- Ghrelin will continue to build and build if you do not respond to your hunger cues.
- Keep ghrelin levels in normal range by eating when your body tells you it’s hungry, even if it’s just a small snack to get you to your next meal.
- RD Tip: Don’t ignore your hunger cues!
Dopamine: The Reward Hormone

- Activates reward and pleasure centers in the brain.
- Dopamine levels rise with sugar and high fat foods.
- Chronic exposure of these foods...
  - slows the dopamine pathway
  - Increases reward-seeking behavior (including overeating)
- RD Tip: Prevent this by having a solid breakfast with 20-30g of protein for improved satiety and decreased appetite.
* Lowers blood glucose.
* Stimulates the formation of glycogen and stimulates fat storage.
* This is our body's way of saving energy for later.
* Insulin resistance can result in inflammation and elevated blood sugar.
* RD Tip: Improve insulin resistance by...
  * moving your body regularly
  * avoiding extra large meals and sweetened beverages
  * consuming plenty of high fiber meals and snacks.
All of these hormones are working together in a very complex system in your body.
You can’t just focus on one part without seeing the whole picture.
Energy in vs. Energy out?

What and how much we eat (the energy “in” part) are influenced by a lot of things
- our mood
- our hormones
- food availability.

The energy “out” part is more than just exercise.
- body composition
- metabolism
- activities of daily living.
Why Do We Eat?

- It’s that time
- I’m bored
- I’m lonely
- I’m sad
- I’m in the kitchen
- I’m at a party
- To hang out with friends
- Someone offered it to me
- It was sitting on the counter
- and sometimes... we eat because we’re hungry!

- RD Tip: Keep a journal to keep track of WHY you eat.
  * Appetite, emotional cues, other?
Cravings are a strong desire to choose a particular food.

It’s no big deal if you have a craving for a cookie and you can satisfy that craving with just one.

There could be something else going on if you find that your cravings turn into consuming A LOT of a particular food.

Craving + hungry = essentially consuming an entire meal or more worth of food from the craving.
Unnecessary extra large portions = stuffed, sluggish.

Foods low in nutrients and energy = unsatisfied, not enough energy, fatigued.

RD Tip: Choose foods that leave you satiated, but not stuffed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less Filling Foods</th>
<th>Staying Power Boost: Add these types of foods to perk up your satiety:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salad (unless made with carbs, protein, fat)</td>
<td>Protein: tuna, chicken, garbanzo or kidney beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carbs: crackers or whole grain roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fat: salad dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh fruit (no protein and CAN be low in carbs)</td>
<td>Protein/ Carb/ Fat: cheese and whole grain crackers; half sandwich; yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey breast (no fiber, carbs or fat)</td>
<td>Carb/ Fat: whole grain pita; whole grain bagel; whole grain crackers; avocado</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Intuitive Eating, by Evelyn Tribole
It’s not just the foods you eat, it’s **HOW** you eat that matters.

What is mindful eating?
- Eating when you’re hungry
- Stopping when you’re full.
- Sounds easy right? It’s harder than you think!

How do you eat mindfully?
- Pay attention and listen to your body’s cues for hunger and fullness
  - Ex. eat without distractions.
RD Tip: Mindful eating journal exercise

- Keep a journal and rank your hunger levels at various points during the day.
- Use a scale of 1 to 10.
- Our goals would be to recognize when hunger is at a “3”, and choose to eat until our fullness is about a “6” or “7”.

Hunger & Fullness Scale

- Empty
- Very Hungry
- Neutral
- Lightly Hungry
- Lightly Full
- Satisfied
- Full
- Stuffed
- Sick
10 Tips To Manage Appetite and Craving

1. Eat on a schedule
2. Eat a high protein breakfast
3. Eat a variety at meals and snacks
4. Eat omega-3 fats
5. Choose Foods that Help You Feel Satisfied for Longer
6. Plan meals with fruits and veggies
7. Find pleasure in other activities
8. Get adequate sleep
9. Commit to regular exercise
10. Create a support network

Source: Today’s Dietitian & www.cancerdietitian.com
1. Eat on a Schedule

- Benefits of eating every 3-4 hours...
  - Prevents wide fluctuations in appetite hormones.
  - Don’t get overly hungry.
  - Reduces the likely hood of overeating.
    - Especially in the evening, which is when 90% of people overeat.
2. Eat a High Protein Breakfast

* Why?
  * Your ghrelin levels will start to rise in the morning
  * Eating breakfast helps stabilize hunger for the entire day.
  * Reduces ghrelin levels best
  * Generally increases leptin activity
  * Increases dopamine
  * Reduces post meal cravings
What does 20-30 g of Protein look Like?

- Oatmeal made with 1 c. oats, 1 egg, 1 c. milk, 3 T Flaxseeds + fruit
- Pancakes made with ½ sweet potato, 1 banana, 3 eggs, 3 T chia seeds, walnuts, top with dollop of Greek yogurt
- Greek yogurt + walnuts + granola + fruit
- Egg burrito made with 3 eggs, cheese, veggies
- Smoothie made with 1 c. soy milk, 6 oz Greek yogurt, 1 T nut butter and fruit
3. Eat a Variety

* Try to eat a combination of protein, fat and carbohydrates at meals and snacks—they are all important for stimulating fullness hormones.
4. Eat Omega-3 Fats

* Benefits
  * Can increase the number of dopamine receptors and dopamine levels.
  * Anti-inflammatory
  * Helps improve insulin and leptin sensitivity.

* Examples: Omega-3 fats are found in fatty fish such as salmon, tuna and sardines and flaxseed, walnuts and soybeans.
5. Choose Foods that Help You Feel Satisfied for Longer

- Protein foods: chicken, beef, fish, eggs, Greek yogurt

- Carbohydrate foods that have resistant starch: lentils, oats, sweet potatoes, beans
Antioxidants & Anti-inflammatory
- helps improve Leptin and Insulin resistance.

Nutrient rich, not energy dense
- will help fill and nourish your body with the nutrients it needs without having an overwhelming amount of calories.

**Note:** Some people need to focus on more energy dense foods (aka high calorie foods) - especially those needing to restore body weight or have a hard time meeting their energy needs.
7. Find Pleasure in Other Activities

- Listen to music, go for a walk, do yoga, color or draw, meditate.
- This helps increase dopamine levels in a non-food way
8. Get Enough Sleep

- At least 7-8 hours.
- If you do not get enough sleep, your ghrelin levels will spike the next day and will also negatively impact leptin and insulin levels.
9. Commit to Regular Exercise

- Moving your body can help regulate fullness hormones and reduce leptin resistance.
10. Create a support network

* Changing behavior is a lot of work.
* Having a support network of friends, family and professionals (counselor, therapist, dietitian) can help you reach your goals for well being.
Find me at HEO

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Questions?

* **Sources:**