

The Hunger Scale

10. In pain! Thanksgiving Dinner, full — take a nap
9. Overly stuffed
8. “I ate too much – I’m stuffed” Very uncomfortable – stomach hurts
7. Uncomfortable – sleepy, sluggish, change to sweats
6. In slight discomfort – you feel the food
5. Satisfied, comfortable, not hungry
4. Not hungry, but not satisfied
3. I’m hungry, stomach growling
2. Losing concentration, grumpy – seriously hungry – empty stomach – you must eat NOW!
1. Headache, shaky – too hungry to care what or how much you eat – you will overeat
0. So hungry that you’re not hungry

Hunger Scale Guidelines

1. Breakfast is a must have--Have breakfast within one hour of waking up. If you exercise in the morning and do not want to eat before you exercise, have a small snack before exercising (4 oz. juice, orange, crackers) and then eat your breakfast within an hour of finishing exercise.
2. Don't skip meals or snacks! Your body should naturally feel hunger (3) every 3-5 hours after you eat breakfast. You may have to eat every five hours initially not feeling hunger but your hunger signal should return. Let yourself know it is normal to feel hunger, and that you will be fed when you feel true hunger. Set an alarm to remind yourself to eat at least every five hours if you forget.
3. Make sure you are well hydrated (8-12 cups of zero calorie, zero caffeine beverages daily). Your ability to feel real hunger is better if you are well hydrated.
4. If you want to eat or feel hunger other than in your stomach area, you are eating for an emotional reason (boredom, stress, joy, sadness). Work to figure out why you want to eat and find an alternative way to satisfy your emotion.