

AM I REALLY HUNGRY?

Physical Hunger: This sensation is controlled by the hypothalamus. Regulation of food intake is in response to changing blood levels of certain nutrients (glucose and perhaps amino acids) or hormones; the hypothalamus regulates feelings of hunger and satiety¹.

Mental Hunger: Choosing to eat based on the urge to eat rather than physical hunger.

Is it physical or mental?

	Physical	Mental
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of food/low energy • Going longer than 4 hours without eating • Stimulation of the sensory nerves of the stomach by the contraction and churning movement of the empty stomach². 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sight or smell of food • Emotions-boredom, stress, sadness, etc • Certain activities such as watching TV • Time of day • Amount of food left on the plate
Signs/Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rumbling stomach • Irritability • Decreased concentration • Fatigue • Slight headache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consuming extra calories, especially in the form of “off plan foods” (chips, cookies, etc) • Mindless eating-not being aware and present in your surroundings • Habitual eating(“I always have a snack when I get home from work) • Other signs and symptoms may be individually based
What to do, if it is NOT meal time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split the L&G meal into 2 smaller meals- eating 7 meals in the day instead of 6 (although still getting in just the 1 full lean & green portions) • Add 1-2 oz. of additional protein to your meal plan. • Drink lots of water, throughout the day. • Move your L&G meal to earlier in the day if normally eaten in the evening. • Sip on broth, bouillon, hot tea or hot water in between meals • Consider changing your meal plan to the 4 & 2 plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can retrain our brains and we can break our behavior chains with small changes. • Drink a glass of water • Get out of the kitchen! • Take a walk • Try a new hobby or interest to get your mind off of eating • Journal your emotions to help discover if your emotions are connected to times of eating or types of foods

References:

1. Marieb, Elaine N., and Katja Hoehn. *Human Anatomy & Physiology*. 7th ed. San Francisco: Pearson Education, 2007. Print.
2. "hunger." *Merriam-Webster's Medical Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster, Inc. 12 Oct. 2009. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/hunger>>.