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*A Moment With Dr. Moore,
our PhD Psychologist/
Eating Behaviorist*

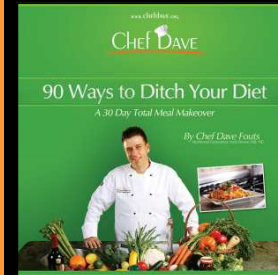
Managing Stress Eating

You've been successfully following your diet and lifestyle plan. You're making healthier choices and even walking on a regular basis. Then, it hits you - stress. Bills are due, there's a big deadline at work, your relationship is suffering, and you feel overwhelmed. When you're under stress, you may find it harder to keep up healthy-eating habits. This makes sense given all of the emotional energy it takes just to cope with daily stressors. You may feel hopeless about the future, fatigued, or just plain unmotivated to put out the energy it takes to plan a healthy meal, go to the grocery store, or get yourself to the gym. Financial concerns may even make these tasks seem more daunting than before!

To fill the overwhelming emotional need for comfort and relaxation you may turn to food to soothe your frazzled nerves. You may even find that eating serves as a pretty good distracter. Just for that moment, you are fully engrossed in scanning the cupboard and finishing off that bag of chips, rather than focusing on the real life stressor that is in front of you. Clearly, this type of eating is not in response to physical hunger. Regardless of whether or not you're hungry or you just finished a satisfying meal, you may turn to high calorie or forbidden foods during times of stress. You may even tell yourself you "deserve it" given all you've been through today.

To combat weight problems during stress, it's important to learn new techniques for managing stress. Instead of ignoring these cravings, fulfill this emotional need - or it will just come back. When you feel less stressed and more in control of your life, you may find it easier to stick to healthy-eating and exercise habits.

For the remainder of this article please continue to page 2



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1. **LOW CARB** - only 3g of carbs per serving
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Doctor's Orders by Kent C. Sasse, M.D., MPH, FACS, Medical Director of iMetabolic

Fight back when the day gets crazy. Some days just don't fall into line, no matter how well you plan. The day turns crazy. The kids need something. A crisis happens at work. Unexpected events cancel your well-planned lunch and dinner regimen. What can you do to avoid the binge that can happen if you go too long without feeding the beast?

Keep some low-carb snacks available. Some of the protein bars don't hold up well in the car in the summer heat, but others do. Experiment and try stashing a box of the kind that are not covered in chocolate somewhere in your car. Then think of some other snacks that work for you: beef jerky, cheese sticks and other low-carb snacks, and keep them available for when the day falls apart, you're out running errands and there is no way to have an organized meal.

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Shop in our online store:

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Visit our Bariatric surgical partner WBI:

www.westernbariatricinstitute.com

Learn about preventing Childhood Obesity:

www.obesitypreventionfoundation.org

Try these stress management techniques to combat stress-related weight gain:

- Recognize the warning signs of stress, such as anxiety, irritability and muscle tension.
- Before eating, ask yourself why you're eating — are you truly hungry or do you feel stressed or anxious?
- Consider the consequences of comfort eating. Does it really help? Does it satisfy you? Are you left with the additional stress of guilt when you are done? Don't you have enough stress on your plate already?
- Consider the benefits of engaging in an alternative behavior that is incompatible with eating? Will this choice bring you closer to your goals?
- If you're tempted to eat when you're not hungry, find a distraction.
- Don't skip meals, especially breakfast.
- Identify comfort foods and keep them out of your house or office.
- Keep a record of your behavior and eating habits so that you can look for patterns and connections — and then overcome them.
- Learn problem-solving skills so that you can anticipate challenges and cope with setbacks. For example, during the holidays, limit yourself to a few activities that you'd really like to do. Manage family stress by staying engaged in positive conversations and staying away from stressful topics.
- Practice relaxation skills, such as yoga, massage or meditation. Practice these skills both on a daily basis, for prevention, and in times of high stress.
- Practice counting your blessings. Start a gratitude journal to keep you focused on all of the things you are thankful for everyday.
- Engage in regular physical activity or exercise for stress management. Notice how you may begin to see things more clearly after a long walk.
- Get adequate sleep. Limit caffeine after 3:00 PM and sleep in a comfortable dark room. Don't read or watch TV in bed. Wind down with a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Get encouragement from supportive friends and family. Reaching out for help, "venting" to good friends, and seeking advice from good problem-solvers can help meet both instrumental and emotional needs.