

## Beat Overeating Triggers

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Emotions can drive you to overeat. So, too, can other triggers. Learn how to spot them, and you'll learn how to beat them.

- **Dim lighting:** The dimmer the lighting, the higher the likelihood of overindulgence, says a study from the University of California at Irvine. Why? "Brighter lighting forces you to be more aware of what you're eating," says Joe Kasof, Ph.D., lead study author. **Beat it by:** Sitting outdoors or near windows, using brighter bulbs in your lamps, adding lighting to eating areas, or moving to a brighter room.
- **Distractions:** In another study, when women who normally watched what they ate listened to a taped detective story, they consumed more calories. Researchers suspect the story interfered with the women's focus on keeping calories in check. **Beat it by:** Clearing all distractions; let the enjoyment of the meal provide your focus.
- **Low energy:** "When your energy's low, you may look for food to pick you up," says Robert E. Thayer, Ph.D., professor of psychology at California State University at Long Beach. Unfortunately, most people reach for calorie-laden treats instead of an apple or banana. **Beat it by:** Identifying your low-energy times of day and substituting other activities for eating. Take a 10-minute walk or a water-cooler chat break. --Karen Asp

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