

# 'Stop Binge-Eating' Solutions: Nighttime Eating

Recently, a reader asked me about a problem with nighttime eating:

*I can follow the steps and stick with the plan until I get home in the evening. I want to clean out the refrigerator. I eat a lot more when I am at home. I try to practice mindful eating and portion control in the evenings, but I am finding it to be quite challenging. I also tend to eat more at home when I am at my computer and doing schoolwork. Any suggestions on what I should do? I do feel better about myself, though, and I like that. I feel that I am making steps towards my goal.*

Here was my response:

It sounds like you are stuck in a pattern where eating is part of your evening routine. Your challenge is to make slight adjustments to your routine so that you won't sabotage your health plan.

What's your eating like during the day? Are you eating a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains in moderation? The reason I ask is because sometimes if your diet is unbalanced or you starve during the day, then you *really* become unbalanced at night—which sets off cravings. So make sure you are eating foods that supply the nutrients your body needs to function at its best.

[Click here for some guidance.](#)

If you do have unhealthy foods that you habitually snack on in the evenings, then keep fruits, vegetables or lean protein easily accessible so that you have something healthy to grab if your body is hungry. Apples, pears, oranges, Greek yogurt

mixed with frozen berries, low sodium V-8 juice and mozzarella cheese sticks are choices that can curb hunger.

If you are eating for reasons other than body hunger, then you need to find out why. Are you bored? Lonely? Just eating because the food is there? Whatever the reason is, you need to identify it because then you can think of ways to meet the need without food.

Here are some ideas on what you can do instead of eating in the evenings if you are not hungry:

- Wait 10 minutes. Breathe deeply to relax and meditate on the following Scripture: “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17). Pray and ask God to fill you with His peace and joy at this moment. Pray for Him to show you the right action to take at this time. It may be hard to do this at first, and this article explains why changing habits can be challenging. But eventually, this behavior can become your new normal with enough practice.
- Brush your teeth after dinner; swish your mouth with minty or intense cinnamon-flavored mouthwash.
- Suck on a hard, sugarless peppermint candy. This is an alternative if you just want a “taste” in your mouth.
- Drink a cup of hot herbal tea with the herb stevia for sweetness. Good choices are peppermint tea (for digestion) or chamomile (if you need to relax). Many grocery stores carry stevia now where sugar is sold.
- Do some simple stretching exercises to relax and unwind. You can get some ideas from YouTube. Alternatively, if you need an energy boost, you can try jumping jacks, squats or kettlebell swings.
- Use aromatherapy, such as scented oils or candles, to help curb food cravings. Best scents are lemon, peppermint or green apple.

- A hot bath using bath salts with the above scents can also help you relax.
- Self-care is a great way to spend the evening. Give yourself a facial, manicure or pedicure.
- Listen to praise music and dance to the Lord.
- Are you tired? Then don't use food as a means to stay up longer. Go on to bed.

Get creative. Again, it make take time to change your evening pattern, but the effort will be worth it!

P.S. Have you ever started a weight loss program with great enthusiasm—only to lose focus and regain the weight you lost?

Not anymore. To help you stay motivated so you can become a weight-loss success story, I recently published my book, *The Weight Loss Scriptures*, a 30-day daily devotional, on .

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