

THE SIX TYPES OF HUNGER

Lisa Davis, MS, RDN, LD | April 13, 2022



Nutrition Tips

Hunger is not the same as appetite. Hunger is a physical feeling – a growling stomach or a lack of energy. Appetite is social, environmental, emotional, and mental -- think of memories, stress, hormones, and lack of sleep.

Both hunger and appetite can be impacted by your serotonin levels - a hormone that can curb cravings and reduce appetite. Serotonin is mostly produced in the gut and can influence gut immunity. When serotonin is low, it is common for people to “self-medicate” with sweets and carb-rich foods. When the microbiome is disrupted by sugar and stress, it lowers serotonin levels and makes cravings stronger. If you categorize foods as "good" or "bad," you attach stress and anxiety to them, which leads to even more food cravings.

Hunger is more than an ache in your stomach. There are many types of hunger, including eye, nose, mouth, mind, heart, and the most common -- stomach. You can feel hunger in all parts of your body, and it's important to feed each form of hunger uniquely. However, it's important to not over-indulge in feeding your stomach hunger. Try only eating until you're 2/3 full. If you're worried about additional cravings, drink water to stay hydrated and fill the remaining third.

TYPES OF HUNGER



EYE HUNGER

GETTING ALLURED BY FOOD THAT'S IN FRONT OF YOU



NOSE HUNGER

FEELING HUNGRY AFTER SMELLING FOOD



MIND HUNGER

CRAVING SPECIFIC FOODS OR NUTRIENTS



MOUTH HUNGER

CRAVING A PARTICULAR FLAVOR OR TEXTURE



HEART HUNGER

MINDLESS EATING & COMFORT FOODS



STOMACH HUNGER

STOMACH GROWLING AND LIGHT-HEADEDNESS

Give yourself a break because cravings are usually a sign of imbalance, not weakness. Next time you experience a craving, check-in with yourself to determine whether it's a hunger craving, or something that can be resolved through feeding your mind.



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"I enjoy being an RDN because the field of nutrition is so dynamic and incredibly diverse. I love that I can participate in helping people reach their health goals."

Lisa has been a Registered Dietitian with HCSG since 2021. Originally from Colorado Springs, CO, she now resides in southern Idaho. Influenced by both mountainous states, Lisa enjoys long hikes with her dog, cycling, traveling, and spending time with her family.