

GET STRESS EATING UNDER CONTROL

Studies show that women have a greater tendency to eat when feeling stressed than men. In fact, toiling for long hours at the office makes us more likely to eat high-fat and high-sugar snacks than our male coworkers, according to a recent British study. Here, RLHL nutrition expert Lisa Young, R.D., author of *The Portion Teller*, shares her strategies for common stress-eating scenarios so you'll be prepared when the moment strikes.

MORNING MADNESS

Getting the kids up, dressed, fed, and out the door in time for the school bus can leave any woman feeling battle-fatigued. So when hunger strikes on the way to work, grabbing a fast-food sausage, egg, and cheese biscuit can seem like the perfect pick-me-up.

BE PREPARED: Enjoy a healthy breakfast *before* that greasy biscuit presents itself. You'll guard against cravings for carbs and fat that result from waiting too long to eat. Pour yourself a bowl of cereal with the kids', or eat a cereal bar while they brush their teeth. Or

take breakfast to go: Fruit, yogurt, breakfast cookies, bottled smoothies, and whole-wheat toast with peanut butter all travel well. Another strategy is to allow yourself the fast-food breakfast sandwich once a week or so regardless of your mood—that way it won't seem like such a powerful reward when you're feeling stressed.



Julie Graves, 40

Pharmaceutical sales rep; married with two children, ages 11 and 8, Indianapolis

"One crazy day, I walked into the gym frazzled and a trainer told me to take two deep breaths, inhaling for two counts and exhaling for six counts. Ever since, I've done this in moments of stress."

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT, WEIGHT:	5'4", 178 lbs	178.5 lbs
BODY FAT:	34%	36.1% <small>down from 181 last month!</small>
WAIST:	33"	34 1/4"
HIPS:	44"	44 1/4"
BUST:	38 3/4"	39 1/2"

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S PAID OFF FOR HER: "With my mother sick in the hospital—she recently passed away—the list of everything I was supposed to be doing to get healthy and lose weight seemed overwhelming. Instead of giving up, I reverted to the two strategies that were the most simple to me: No matter what, I walked 30 minutes a day and avoided white starches, and I lost two-and-a-half pounds of the stress weight I'd gained."

THE HURDLE SHE STILL FACES: **taking care of herself while grieving.** "It's been hard to deal with my mom not being around. Now that I'm not busy caring for her, I have more time, but I'm not in the mood to watch what I eat, or exercise."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT: **There's no question that losing a loved one can have a big impact on you, says RLHL psychology expert Dan Baker, Ph.D., but you can choose how it will affect you.** It's okay to take a night off from the treadmill to watch your favorite sitcom when you need to laugh. But this is a momentary comfort; opting for healthy habits, such as sharing memories with loved ones, journaling, and exercising, can actually help you through grieving rather than just numb the pain.

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when you argue with a friend or family member. ● 10% of you cite relationship troubles as the cause of your stress. ● 10% say that you're

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MIDAFTERNOON ANGST

Lunch is over, dinner's hours away, your in-box is twice as full as it was this morning, and now your boss is breathing down your neck. Hmm, wonder if there are any Doritos left in the vending machine?

BE PREPARED: Before eating anything, take a short walk (outside if possible) to see if you can shake off the stress. Ten to 15 minutes away from your desk won't kill you, and waiting to eat may allow the cravings to pass. Also, ask yourself, **Am I really hungry? Put a sticky note with this question on your computer.** To help prevent the 4 p.m. munchies in the first place, include fiber and protein in your lunch: They stabilize blood sugar and prevent the crashes that bring on hunger. Finally, keep an emergency stash of healthy snacks in your desk drawer, such as whole-grain crackers and peanut butter, soy crisps, or small bags of almonds, and you won't have to resort to the unhealthy picks in the vending machine.

am i really hungry?

PREDINNER DURESS

There's nothing in your fridge, so you hit the grocery store to get dinner on your way home from work. The checkout line is at a standstill, and as hunger and frustration mount, you grab a candy bar from the rack. (You pay for an empty wrapper.)

BE PREPARED: Number one rule: Never go to the supermarket hungry! Stash a box of raisins or a banana in your purse and eat it on the way. Also, **try listening to your iPod while trolling the aisles. It will provide a distraction from hunger and other stressed-out shoppers,** plus music is a great de-stressor. If you're still irked by the long checkout lines, grab a magazine (REDBOOK!) to take your mind off the candy bars.

BEDTIME TENSION

The kids have been in bed for more than an hour, but Junior refuses to stay there. After tucking him in for the third time, you grab a spoon and seek a little ice cream solace. Forget the bowl—you'll be doing tuck-in number four any second anyway.

BE PREPARED: Promise yourself not to eat directly out of cartons or while standing (next to the open freezer door, for instance). This will help squash mindless eating. If nighttime visits to the freezer are a recurring problem, either save up for the calorie splurge over the course of the day, or **buy single-serving pops or treats that mean opening a new wrapper every time you want a nibble.** Jennifer stores a few mini Peppermint Patties in the freezer; the mint gets rid of her cravings.



Adrienne Schiffer, 34

Stay-at-home mom; married with two children, ages 7 and 4, Powell, OH

"If I'm overwhelmed with too much to do, I ask my husband, Tim, for help. He's great about pitching in, and it's a huge relief to know I can count on him. I also turn to my mother when I'm feeling stressed. She's a great listener."

	STARTING STATS	CURRENT STATS
HEIGHT, WEIGHT:	5'3", 244 lbs	195 lbs
BODY FAT:	42.6%	30.6%
WAIST:	47"	38¾"
HIPS:	57"	46¼"
BUST:	47¼"	41"

THE SMALL CHANGE THAT'S PAID OFF FOR HER: "I recommitted to walking on the two days that I don't typically work out at the gym. Those walks burn an extra 500 or more calories a week!"

THE HURDLE SHE STILL FACES: giving her workout 100 percent. "I'm going to the gym regularly, but I find that I have to talk myself into doing the full workout I planned."

HOW TO JUMP OVER IT: Adrienne's hurdle screams that she's bored and unchallenged with her workouts, says RLHL fitness guru Jillian Michaels, author of *Winning by Losing*. **The easiest way to mix things up is by trying new exercise classes, like belly dancing (which Adrienne enjoyed last month), boxing, cycling, or boot camp.** Group exercise classes are fun, social, and usually it's too embarrassing to walk out in the middle of them, so you won't quit early!

stressed over your (or a family member's) health problems. ● 9.3% say stress on the job makes you tense. ● 7.4% of you find little things like ▶