

Understanding factors that can affect your weight

Name _____

Date _____

On your journey to your best weight, you will learn that some factors cannot be controlled when it comes to weight loss, like genetics or hormones levels. There are, however, others we can control, called **modifiable factors**.

Factors that may be impacting your weight:



Lack of sleep



Stress



Mood



Eating patterns



Inactivity

Weight-promoting
medications

Modifiable factors can affect your ability to manage your appetite.

The factors that you face are unique to your journey—however, **stress** and **lack of sleep** are two common modifiable factors that many people encounter in today's busy world.

Lack of sleep

When it comes to managing your weight, lack of sleep can lead to more than just depleted energy levels, or a desire for caffeine. It can also affect your ability to regulate your appetite.

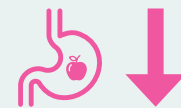
Reduced sleep can **increase wanting** and **decrease restraint** by:



Increasing stress hormones



Increasing hunger hormones



Decreasing fullness hormones

Below are several strategies that can be used to help support a good bedtime routine.

Check off one or more that you might like to try.

- Turn off electronics (i.e., TV and/or phone) one hour before bed
- Keep your room as dark as possible
- Keep your room between 15–21°C
- Take a bath before bed
- Meditate before bed
- Be physically active throughout the day (avoiding vigorous activity one hour before bed)
- Wake up and go to bed around the same time every day
- Limit/avoid caffeine in the late afternoon
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Limit/avoid naps during the day

Stress

Stress is a common experience that can have a significant impact on overall health and well-being, including appetite, and ultimately your weight management journey.

Some studies have found that stress can increase your desire to eat high-calorie, high-fat, high-sugar, high-salt foods, making it more difficult to make healthier food choices.

To get a sense of your stress level and how that may be affecting your weight journey, fill in the table below with your answers.

Throughout the course of a week, how many times do you find yourself feeling stressed?	
How do you cope with stress (e.g., snacking, going for a walk, meditation)?	

Effectively managing your stress can support your best weight journey. Below are some examples of how you can manage your stress. Circle one or more of the strategies that you might like to try.



Practice deep breathing



Meditate



Be active daily



Get 7-8 hours of sleep each night



Connect with others (family or friends)



Seek support from healthcare provider



Practice relaxation techniques (like yoga, tai chi, or massage)

Bring the completed worksheet to your next meeting with your doctor to discuss how you can make positive changes regarding these modifiable factors. You're not alone—your doctor and healthcare team are here to help!

References: • Wharton S, et al. Obesity in adults: a clinical practice guideline. *CMAJ*. 2020;192:E891. • Obesity Canada. Sleep and obesity: What's the link? Available at: <https://obesitycanada.ca/snp/sleep-and-obesity-whats-the-link/> • Yau YH, Potenza MN. Stress and eating behaviors. *Minerva Endocrinol*. 2013;38(3):267.



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