

# FOOD ADDICTION

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## Overview

Food is an essential aspect of the human's well-being and survival. Food is not only for sustaining the lives of every individual but also adds gratification through the vast choices of food in terms of taste, smell, texture, aesthetic feels, etc. However, this causes many people to become addicted to food and become as serious as taking drugs like a substance abuser.



**Food addiction**, also called eating addiction, is one of the recent behavioral pathologies. It is a very complex condition characterized by compulsive overeating of a person despite its negative consequences. This usually involves a loss of control over food consumption. It is a severe condition for many experts and individuals, especially in today's generation, where mukbang is a trend.

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## Physiology of Food Addiction

The human brain has a role in food addiction. Whenever a person eats, the brain releases **dopamine**, a type of neurotransmitter that is associated with the feeling of pleasure and reward. Individuals having food addiction can lead to food cravings that turn into compulsive eating or binge eating. Other factors that can also influence the development of food addiction in an individual include genetic factors and environmental influences.

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## Signs and Symptoms

Numerous signs and symptoms can describe food addiction. The following are possible symptoms associated with addiction to eating food:

1. Loss of control and inability to stop eating after a meal, not feeling hungry or full.
  2. Craving the wrong combination of foods, often unhealthy foods.
  3. Weight gain
  4. Digestive problems/disorders
  5. Insomnia or oversleeping
  6. Worrying about cutting unnecessary foods at the pushcart.
  7. Low self-esteem
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## How Food Addiction Affects You

Food addiction can have a significant impact on a person's physical and mental health. It can lead to:

1. **Weight gain** - Excessive food consumption, especially calorie intake, contributes to weight gain and other health problems.
  2. **Issues in mental health** - It can also be associated with depression, anxiety, stress, and low confidence.
  3. **Problems around people**: Strained connections, decreased productivity, and inability to talk to others.
  4. **Financial problems** - Overspending on food and not putting budgeting in mind.
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## At Risk People

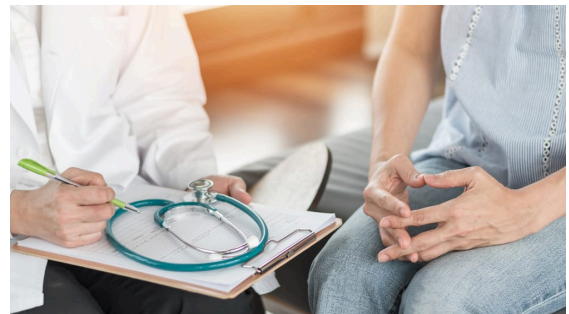
Anyone is possible to acquire food addiction, but some individuals are at higher risk, including:

1. People with mental health problems
2. People with a history of using illegal substances
3. People who have experienced trauma or abuse

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## When to See a Doctor

Seeking professional medical help is essential for those individuals who are struggling with handling eating behaviors as early as possible as long as symptoms are confirmed. A healthcare provider can assess the situation and recommend appropriate treatments and practices for food addiction.



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## Treatment

Treatment for food addiction involves a combination of the following approaches:

- **Cognitive behavioral therapy** helps identify and change the negative patterns and behaviors related to food.
- **Nutritional counseling** is where a professional nutritionist provides guidance on healthy eating habits and planning meals appropriately for an individual.
- **Having a solid support system** to provide support and encouragement in fighting the disorder.
- **Medication** is the last possible treatment to address the condition.

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