Stop Stress Eating Today

Stress eating plays a role in many people's battles with weight management. Fortunately, there are many ways to cope with stress without overeating. Here are a few ideas…

Do something **just for you**.
- Listen to music.
- Take a long bath.
- Get a massage.
- Go out with some friends.
- Buy yourself some flowers.
- Get a haircut.
- Take a new exercise class.

Find **reasonable alternatives** to deal with stress without overeating.
- Purchase books or magazines. Go to the library to read them and avoid eating.
- Join a health club. Make a commitment to exercise 3-5 times each week.
- Take a class and learn a new craft. This will keep your hands busy while you watch TV, surf the web, or talk on the phone.
- Leave the house to avoid excess eating.
- Take a couple of laps around the mall before or after dinner.
- Mow the lawn.
- Weed the garden.
- Clean the house.
- Consider buying a piece of home exercise equipment. Exercise while you watch TV.

Take steps to **manage your stress**.
- Be aware of your stressors.
- Reduce your emotional reaction to stress. Take a deep breath and try to relax.
- Practice how to deal with major stressors in your life.

- Learn what you can change. Decide what is worth fighting for.
- Build up your physical reserves. Take care of yourself by:
  - Cutting back on caffeine consumption during times of stress.
  - Eating healthful meals. Be sure you are meeting your nutritional needs. Visit *www.choosemyplate.gov* if you aren't sure about what you should be eating.
  - Getting enough sleep. If you have difficulty sleeping, see a professional.
  - Having some fun. Take vacations and leave your stresses at home.
  - Learning to say no. It's ok to take care of your own needs.
  - Including friends and family in your life, regardless of how busy you are.
  - Setting realistic goals for yourself.
  - Expecting some bumps in the road. Things will get better over time.