

What to Do After a Binge

Many people have experienced eating to the point of discomfort during a stressful time in their life. When difficult emotions arise, we often turn to food, sometimes resulting in bingeing episodes. Your dietitian and therapist can help you determine what caused these episodes and how to prevent them in the future.

Here are some tips on what to do right after a binge:

What classifies as a binge episode?

Binge episodes are characterized by including at least three of the following:

- Eating more rapidly than normal
- Eating until feeling uncomfortably full
- Eating large amounts of food when not feeling physically hungry
- Eating alone due to feeling embarrassed eating around others
- Feeling disgusted, depressed or very guilty after eating.

Steps to take following a binge:

1. **Forgive yourself.** Human beings are not perfect. Strive for progress not perfection. Can you give yourself compassion in this moment?
2. **Reflect.** Take this moment to be curious not judgmental. What happened today that could have triggered this binge episode? Did you eat enough throughout the day? Did you fight with a spouse or coworker? Journal about your experience.
3. **Avoid the scale.** A lot of times, the scale can bring about negative feelings and trigger more eating disorder behaviors. Ask yourself in this moment – will getting on the scale help or just make things worse?
4. **Get back to routine.** Continue nourishing your body. Restriction will only make bingeing urges worse. Go back to your regular eating pattern as soon as you can.
5. **Reach out for help.** If you find yourself dealing with frequent binges, reach out to a therapist or your registered dietitian to help!