

# Your Brain vs. Your Appetite

The hypothalamus is the portion of your brain that controls hunger.

Eating triggers an increase in serotonin and dopamine, hormones that involve your brain's pleasure center, temporarily boosting your mood.

Stress triggers the hormone cortisol, which can create hunger cues.

When you eat, your stomach expands. This signal notifies the hypothalamus that it's time to stop eating.

Stomach grumbling? Blame ghrelin, a hormone secreted by the stomach, which is the only hormone that increases hunger.

The hormone leptin, which originates from fat tissue, tells you when you are satiated after eating.

Other hormones, known as gastrointestinal peptides, originate from the GI system and control other aspects of fullness.

#### Sources:

Mircea T. Iacob, MD, Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group, Clinical Neurophysiology and  
Audra Wilson, MS, RD, CSOWM, LDN, CSCS, Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery Program at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital.