What kind of eater are you?

Understanding your relationship with food can help you develop healthier habits. Take our quiz to find out your eating style

1 AFTER I FINISH WORK, MOST DAYS OF THE WEEK I WILL?

- ❑ A Go for comforting foods that let me de-stress from a busy day
- ❑ B Meet up with friends or my partner, and enjoy a dinner at a restaurant or drinks and nibbles
- ❑ C Strive to go for the healthy option, even though it's not my first choice
- ❑ D Tend to eat as soon as I'm at home out of habit

2 WHEN COLLEAGUES BRING ALONG COOKIES TO WORK I?

- ❑ A Am thankful for a pick-me-up that distracts me from a boring task or manic day
- ❑ B Take one because they're offered to me and everyone is having some
- ❑ C Try my best not to indulge in one
- ❑ D Find myself grabbing one as I pass by

3 WHEN I EAT SOMETHING UNHEALTHY?

- ❑ A It's to treat myself when I'm feeling low or tired
- ❑ B It's usually when others around me have it, too
- ❑ C I feel guilty and get upset at myself
- ❑ D I usually have it while scrolling on social media or replying to emails

4 WHEN I DON'T LISTEN TO MY HUNGER AND FULLNESS CUES, THIS IS MOST LIKELY BECAUSE?

- ❑ A I'm stressed, anxious or bored and eating calms me down
- ❑ B I'm with a group of people and everyone is eating, so I'll nibble as well even though I'm not hungry
- ❑ C I'm hungry but don't want to eat because I overindulged the day before
- ❑ D I'm distracted and don't even realise I'm eating and no longer hungry

5 I MOSTLY USE FOOD TO?

- ❑ A Help me deal with my emotions
- ❑ B Connect with others
- ❑ C Manage my calorie intake. If I was good the previous day or I worked out in the morning, I'm allowed something I really fancy. Otherwise I stick to healthy food
- ❑ D Fuel – I don't spend much time thinking about food

6 I'M MOTIVATED TO EAT HEALTHILY?

- ❑ A When I'm feeling my best and don't feel stressed or worried
- ❑ B When others around me eat healthy too
- ❑ C To lose weight
- ❑ D I don't really know

7 I VIEW EATING FOOD AS?

- ❑ A Comfort
- ❑ B A means to socialise
- ❑ C Good and bad (unprocessed versus processed)
- ❑ D A way to take a break out of my day and catch up with social media or my favourite show on the telly

Eat WELL

MOSTLY (A)

YOU'RE AN EMOTIONAL EATER

For most of us food is a source of comfort from birth. We tend to eat when we're stressed, anxious or bored, or reward ourselves with our favourite foods when we feel we've achieved something or when we're happy. This is normal and nothing to worry about unless food is the only or primary response we have to our emotions.

Do this instead: Try finding other ways to seek comfort, consolation or reward. When you've had a rough day, call a friend. When you feel stressed, have a bath and give yourself a hand massage. When you feel anxious, give a loved-one a hug. This releases more of the feel-good hormone, dopamine, which is far better for you than overindulging in sugary treats.

MOSTLY (B)

YOU'RE A SOCIAL SNACKER

Eating is a big part of our culture and enjoying a good meal with friends, family and loved ones can be hugely enjoyable. However, this is different to ignoring your own appetite and eating because you feel the need to fit in or because others may disapprove if you don't join them. This can happen for instance, when your colleague brings in cookies and you don't really want to have one, but you take one in order not to be rude. Or, when you're out for dinner and everyone is having wine so you have wine too, despite the fact that you actually just feel like having water.

Do this instead: Listen to your gut feeling and do what you want to do, rather than what others want you to do. Don't be defensive or make a big deal out of it – just politely say that you don't fancy that cookie at the moment. At the end of the day, everyone will understand.

MOSTLY (C)

YOU'RE ON A RESTRICTIVE REGIME

You classify foods as good and bad and don't allow yourself to have any of the latter. While being aware of what you eat is a good thing, being restrictive can lead to a poor relationship with food. Restriction almost always leads to feelings of deprivation, which cause us to fixate or obsess on a particular food, and we often end up bingeing on those foods that we don't let ourselves have when we want them.

Do this instead: When you allow yourself to have the foods you want, they typically lose their appeal as they are no longer placed on a pedestal. Let yourself have some of your favourite foods when you crave them, and they will stop feeling like the forbidden fruit that we cannot have.

MOSTLY (D)

YOU'RE A MINDLESS MUNCHER

Like most of us, you pay very little attention to your food when eating. You mostly eat while you're catching up on emails, scrolling through social media, or watching the telly. Rather than listening to your hunger and fullness cues, you tend to eat out of habit or convenience.

Do this instead: Not paying attention to your food has been shown to result in increased desire for sugar, salt and fat, so try to eat without distraction, paying closer attention to the smell, taste and texture of your food. Eating more mindfully and slowly will enable fullness signals to reach your brain.