

EVERYBODY has Value!

It is important to appreciate and respect all that your body does for you, rather than tying your worth and value to your physical appearance.

The concept of body neutrality is neither loving nor hating your body, but rather honoring and accepting it.

Shifting Your Mindset

Use these strategies to build a better relationship with your body and food.

Try not to:

Assign a moral value to food by calling it “good” or “bad”
Make statements about what you “should” or “should not” eat

Try to:

Remember all foods are morally the same, but nutritionally different. Consider the benefits various foods can provide to you and how they make you feel

How to Help a Friend

If you have a friend struggling with their relationship with food, validate how your friend is feeling. Ask permission casually before you approach the topic:

“Are these thoughts about food taking up a lot of head space right now?”

“It seems like what you’re going through is really tough. Would you like a hand finding some resources?”

Honor your Hunger and Respect your Fullness

Listen to your body’s cues for hunger and fullness by identifying if you feel:

Try to separate eating from other activities by minimizing distractions like TV, your phone, and school work. This allows you to better listen to your body’s hunger and fullness cues.

Really Hungry = headache, irritability, feeling faint, weakness
Gently Hungry = twinge or pang in stomach, energy drop, lack of concentration, thoughts of food
Comfortably Full = feeling of satisfaction, peacefulness, food starts to taste less good
Really Full = stuffed, stomach discomfort, sleepiness

Tip:
Show yourself compassion!
Recognize that it takes practice and time to make lasting change.

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HOO KNEW?

87% of UVA undergraduates intervened when concerned about a friend’s mental health.

*From the February 2023 Spring Health Survey with responses from 1229 UVA undergraduates. Collected by Student Health and Wellness.

RESOURCES

UVA Medical Services

Our registered dietitians take a weight-neutral, health-forward approach centered on enjoyment, connection, social justice, and food as medicine. For nutrition counseling with a registered dietitian, schedule through HealthyHoos patient portal.

Teaching Kitchen

Hoo’s Cooking offers nutrition education and culinary classes to build skills and knowledge in food preparation, budgeting, and nutrition.

Maxine Platzer Lynn Women’s Center

The Body Project offers group-based sessions to develop healthy body image and self-esteem. For body positive education, advocacy, and support services, including eating disorder screenings, call (434) 982-2252 and follow @UVABodyPositive on Instagram.

Podcasts

Try listening to a podcast to learn how to make peace with food and learn body acceptance. We suggest:

- 🌸 The Food Heaven Podcast
- 🌸 Body Kindness with Rebecca Scritchfield
- 🌸 Food Psych Podcast with Christy Harrison

