

Why You Feel Hungry

Have you ever wondered why you feel hungry? It's your stomach reminding you that it is time to eat. When your stomach is empty, it begins to contract, which means it squeezes together. It does about three contractions per minute. If you don't eat, the contractions start happening more often. This is the way your stomach sends the message to your brain, "Hey! I need food. Hurry up!"

The part of your brain that gives you that empty feeling is called the *appetstat*. It is also the *appetstat* that tells you to stop eating when you are full. Scientists do not yet understand exactly how the *appetstat* works. Some think it may work like an air conditioner in your house. What they do know is that when your blood is low on a fuel called glucose, the *appetstat* yells, "Time to eat!" When the glucose in your blood rises, the *appetstat* says, "Stop eating now; you're full."

And here's surprising news: how you feel while you eat affects the food in your stomach! If you are feeling happy, the food gets digested quickly. Digestion turns food into fuel that your body can use. However, if you are feeling angry or sad, the food may just sit in your stomach and can even make you feel sick. Obviously, it is better to be a happy eater than an angry or sad eater!



Literal Questions

- 1 What happens when your stomach contracts? _____
- 2 How many contractions does your stomach do per minute? _____
- 3 Where is the *appetstat*? _____
- 4 What appliance is the *appetstat* compared to? _____
- 5 Is it better to be a happy eater or a sad and angry eater? _____

Focus: Cause and Effect Relationships

A cause is the reason for something happening. The effect is the result of this action taking place. When you read, notice cause-and-effect relationships. This will help you to understand how and why things occur.

- 6 What causes your stomach to contract? Circle your answer.
 - a Feeling unhappy
 - b Your stomach being empty
 - c Your glucose levels rising
- 7 What is the effect of your body being low on glucose?
 - a The *appetstat* yells 'Time to eat!'
 - b The *appetstat* yells 'Time to stop eating!'
- 8 Write the missing cause or effect below.
 - a Cause: _____
Effect: Your brain gets a message that you are hungry.
 - b Cause: The glucose in your blood rises
Effect: _____
 - c Cause: _____
Effect: Food gets digested quickly.

Inference Questions

- 9 The purpose of this text is to explain describe persuade
- 10 What might happen to a person whose *appetstat* does not work properly?

- 11 What do the words 'appetite' and 'appetstat' have in common?
Note: Think of meaning, spelling etc.

