



Recognize a different type of hunger

Learn about the signs of constant, hard-to-control hunger in your child

Hunger is a natural and important feeling, but not all hunger is the same. Constant, hard-to-control hunger that does not go away is called **hyperphagia** (pronounced hi-per-FAY-juh).

Hyperphagia and sustained weight gain can be unique symptoms of acquired hypothalamic obesity (HO), a specific medical condition that can occur after part of the brain is injured. Not everyone with acquired HO experiences hyperphagia, but those who do often describe it as feeling different from anything they have ever felt.

Hunger before acquired HO

- Feeling hungry between meals
- Having cravings and increased appetite from time to time
- Eating past fullness at big occasions like Thanksgiving

VS

Hunger with acquired HO

- Feeling hungry all the time
- Having continual thoughts about food
- Eating throughout any given day because you never feel full
- Eating to feel less hungry, but never achieving a feeling of fullness

Experiences with hyperphagia can vary. Hyperphagia can range from mild to severe, and children may handle hyperphagia differently from adults. With time, individuals may learn to cope with behaviors and emotions brought on by hyperphagia, but the feeling of hard-to-control hunger does not go away.



If you've noticed weight gain or increased hunger after your child's brain tumor or brain injury, don't wait to discuss these changes with their doctor. The sooner acquired HO is identified, the sooner you and your child's doctor can take steps to manage it.



Could your child have hyperphagia?

Before reviewing some of the signs of hyperphagia, please answer the questions below.

Does your child:	Yes	No
Have a history of a brain tumor or brain injury?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, has there been a noticeable change in your child's hunger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Now, use this checklist to help identify the signs of hyperphagia in your child.

Does your child:	Yes	No
Get upset about not getting food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Throw severe tantrums when food is withheld?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel depressed or other intense emotions when food is not available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask for more food even after eating a full meal because they are still very hungry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sneak, steal, or hide food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wake up asking or searching for food during the night?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stay awake at night because of hunger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consume food that someone else has discarded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seem preoccupied with food or talk about food a lot?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulty concentrating at school due to hunger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have trouble participating in recreational activities because of hunger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find that hunger impacts their relationships with family or friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Not all children with acquired HO will have all these symptoms of hyperphagia.

Even if you answered no to some of these questions, bring your answers to your child's next appointment. Ask their doctor about these changes and behaviors and what may be the cause, including whether they could be signs of acquired HO.

To learn more about acquired HO and prepare for a conversation with your child's doctor, visit HO.DifferentObesity.com or scan the QR code to the right.

