



# Are you craving comfort foods?

Reinvent your favorites: Healthier options to consider



Alicia Buterbaugh is a registered dietitian and diabetes educator with Kettering Health

**"We seek out comfort foods** for different reasons, including stress, illness, hormonal fluctuations, and even nostalgia," says Alicia Buterbaugh.

Because some comfort foods are high in sugar and fat, using them to routinely deal with emotions can affect your health. "If you are regularly using comfort foods to cope with stress, anxiety, or sadness, you are increasing your risk of weight gain and developing chronic diseases—and you are avoiding dealing with the emotions you're experiencing," says Alicia. "Before

reaching for those chips or cookies, try addressing your feelings by talking to a friend, going for a walk, or journaling."

Holiday seasons or celebrations can also make us seek comfort foods because we have memories attached to certain foods.

"If you are seeking comfort food because of a holiday or celebration, you can choose healthier versions of the foods you crave, or eat smaller portions of the items you know may be less nutritious," Alicia says.

## EAT SMART

Get healthy and tasty recipe ideas at [ketteringhealth.org/recipes](https://ketteringhealth.org/recipes)

Listening to your body and eating in response to hunger cues instead of emotions can lead to overall improved health.

"As a dietitian, I don't promote thinking of foods as good or bad," says Alicia. "Some you eat in smaller amounts or less often, but they are not bad. Awareness of what you are eating, why you are eating, and moderating portions is important. All foods, including comfort foods, can fit!"

### CRAVING THAT?

### CONSIDER THIS

Soup



Instead of cream-based soups, consider broth-based soups containing whole grains, vegetables, and lean meats.



Ice cream



Buy small ice cream cups or order a single scoop in a cup to mindfully manage portion size.  
Low-fat frozen yogurt or fruit-based frozen treats are other options when craving something cold and sweet.



Pizza



Consider thin crust over thick, and include plenty of vegetables as toppings. If you are used to having meat on your pizza, try thin crust with veggies and chicken.

