

Are you playing those mind games?

Because – news flash – you'll never win the battle of the bulge if you are!

When faced with a slice of cake does your mind come up with wonderfully creative excuses like, 'Today is Wednesday and diets only work when you start them on Monday'? Those mind games are steering you away from your goals. Here's how to change the script and ditch the diet excuses permanently.

COP OUT 'I deserve a treat'

COME CLEAN Using food as a reward is like wearing a g-string leotard to the gym – never a good idea. 'Food rewards come from childhood experiences, like when your parents gave you a treat for being good and when people grow up that link between food and reward grows with them,' says Dimitra Arthur, psychologist for weight-loss program Appetite Right. There are better ways to reward yourself. Sit down and list the things you do rarely but that are special to you. Maybe it's new gym gear, theatre tickets or an afternoon in the park. 'Next time you hear yourself saying, "I deserve this", think instead "I deserve a better reward",' says Dimitra. After all, isn't a fabulous beach holiday worth more than a greasy spring roll?

COP OUT 'But I'm starving!'

COME CLEAN If you're really hungry, do you need more food than if you're just a bit hungry? Generally, the answer is no – you just think you do. 'When you're starving, you tend to overeat because you ignore the feeling of being full,' says Dimitra. 'Start eating at a moderate level of hunger – as

soon as you feel the first murmur in your stomach or feel lethargic, attend to those signals straight away.' Choose foods that will keep you full for at least two hours. That means avoiding high-GI snacks like biscuits and going for nutrient-rich, low-KJ salads, lean meats or low-fat dairy.

COP OUT 'I'll eat healthily tomorrow'

COME CLEAN As someone wise once said, why put off until tomorrow what you can do today? 'Any time is a good time to start to eat healthily,' says Dimitra. So even if you've just eaten eight Tim Tams for breakfast, don't write the day off. You can still make healthy food choices or take a walk around the block. Then you're not piling on the pressure to starve the following day.

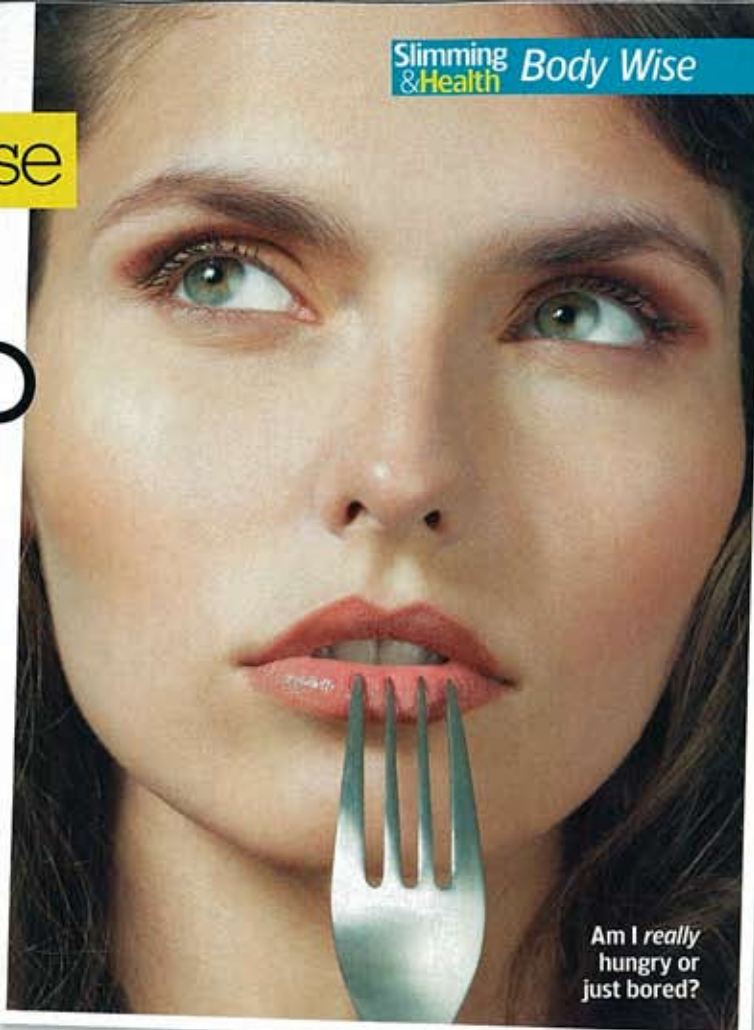
COP OUT 'I'm not full yet'

COME CLEAN 'A lot of people tune into their mouths rather than their stomachs,' says Dimitra. 'If they're bored or not concentrating on what they're eating, they're not listening to their fullness signals.' Use a scale to rate your hunger – with one being ravenous and seven being pants-poppingly

full – and stop around five. 'Eat until you're full, not according to the serving size,' adds Dimitra. Stop halfway through dinner and check in with your stomach to see how full it's feeling. Be honest with yourself – leftovers make an easy lunch the next day.

COP OUT 'Who cares?'

COME CLEAN It's easy to make excuses like "Sally's eating it" but it's not about Sally. You're the one who'll feel guilty after scoffing a whole pizza. Try to keep your goal in sight, whether it's fitting into your pre-pregnancy jeans or lowering your cholesterol. That way, you take the responsibility back. And don't make any foods off limits. 'As soon as people say, "I shouldn't eat chips" they're setting themselves up for failure because it makes you desire it more,' says Dimitra. If you have overindulged, enjoy what you've eaten, don't beat yourself up – it's OK, there's always a next time.



Am I really hungry or just bored?

DO THE MATHS:

Slice of cake \$3



x



365 days

=



\$1,095 or a weekend break with your hubby in the Whitsundays