

# “I Feel Fat”



**Ask any woman (it applies more to women than men) if she’s ever felt fat and you’re bound to hear a resounding “sure” or “who hasn’t?” Now, if you stop and think about it, does that really make sense? Is “fat” a feeling? We can feel sad or happy or tired or nervous, but can we feel “fat”? Women of all shapes and sizes report, at times, that they “feel fat,” not just people that are struggling with weight management issues. So, what is this feeling, then?**

Sometimes, premenstrually, a woman may retain some fluid, which can account for a slight weight gain. Then, not being used to this extra weight, she may say she feels heavy. This is then often reinforced by clothes fitting snugly and nothing seeming to fit right. However, the weight gain is temporary and usually returns to normal within a few days.



More often than not, though, we say we feel fat as a label for when things just aren’t going the way we might expect in our lives. For example, a relationship ends unexpectedly, there are problematic family issues, or school isn’t going well, just to name a few things.

When we feel overwhelmed with what to do, or see no resolution to the issues that directly affect us, we begin to focus on ourselves, labeling the problem to be with “us” and “our weight” – when it really has nothing to do with weight at all!! In fact, how you look and what you weigh probably had nothing to do with the outcome so we shouldn’t focus on it. Let’s face it, losing those five or ten pounds isn’t going to make the boyfriend come back, it’s not going to improve your grades nor will it change the family issues.



## DiETING as a Means of Control

What dieting or trying to lose weight does do is to let us believe that we can take control of some aspect of our lives. Once we believe that, we feel in control and that makes us feel better. However, starting a diet or trying to lose weight when you don’t need to, or for the wrong reasons, often starts us down a path – one of disordered eating and body image issues.

## Determine What is Really Going On

The next time you “feel fat,” take time and ask yourself what’s really going on.

- ✓ ***What emotions are you feeling and why?***
- ✓ ***Are they appropriate for what may have just happened or for what is going on in your life, or are you allowing your emotions to distort things?***

Take a realistic look at what you can change about the situation. Is it in your control to change the outcome – if not, then don’t spend too much time dwelling on it. Focus on what you can change – and not on changing others. Remember, the next time you feel fat, and you’re not premenstrual, don’t be too quick to start a diet – instead focus your efforts on what you can change about your situation.