

IDENTIFYING YOUR SENSORY NEEDS

The first step in creating a sensory diet is to identify what *your* sensory system needs to work at its best. Just as people have different food preferences, people also have different sensory preferences. The checklists below include activities with different types of sensory inputs – kind of like a menu for your senses! As you go through the checklists, check off which activities are **calming/organizing** (↑) and which are **bothersome/irritating** (↓). Be sure to *describe* the way you complete the activities with details like how often (i.e. once a day), how long (i.e. 30 minutes), how much (i.e. big bowl of cereal), and/or with what rhythm (i.e. fast or slow) they are completed. If your favorite activities are not listed, feel free to add them in the empty rows!

MORNING

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Describe</i>	↑	↓
Eat crunchy cereal or granola (i.e. Kashi GOLEAN Crunch)			
Use a vibrating toothbrush and/or vibrating hairbrush			
Go for a run or brisk walk			
Do push-ups or lift weights			
Listen to music			
Take a cold/warm/hot shower			
Watch TV or play an electronic game			
Drink coffee, tea, smoothie, etc.			

MID-DAY (AT SCHOOL OR AT WORK)

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Describe</i>	↑	↓
Sit or bounce on a yoga ball			
Do chair or wall push-ups			
Eat crunchy snack (i.e. chips, carrots, popcorn, pretzels, apple, etc.)			
Eat chewy snack (i.e. dried fruit, power bar, gum, licorice, beef jerky, etc.)			
Listen to music			
Squeeze a stress ball			
Climb or run up/downstairs			
Lay backwards over a yoga ball			
Spend time in a quiet “hideout” space			
Wrap self tightly in soft sweater/blanket			
Look out the window			
Spin around (in desk chair or standing)			
Apply lotion with firm strokes			
Alternate your work position – stand, kneel, sit on one leg, sit criss-cross, etc.			
Use a weighted lap pad or neck wrap			
Go for a short walk			
Wear headphones or ear-buds			
Suck on hard candy or mints			
Drink coffee, tea, smoothie, carbonated beverage, etc.			

LATE AFTERNOON

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Describe</i>	↑	↓
Yard work (mow the lawn, rake leaves, shovel snow, etc.)			
Listen to music			
Watch TV, play an electronic game, or surf internet on computer			
Lift weights			
Go for a run or brisk walk			
Craft projects (i.e. scrap book, knit)			
Cook or bake			
Read a book or magazine			
Lay underneath a stack of pillows or heavy blankets			
Rock in a rocking chair			
Jump rope			
Swing (playground swing, hammock)			
Jump (on mattress or trampoline)			
Spin around (in desk chair or standing)			
Swim			
Exercise class (i.e. spinning, yoga, etc.)			
Eat a snack			
Drink coffee, tea, smoothie, carbonated beverage, etc.			

EVENING

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Describe</i>	↑	↓
Take a warm bath with bubbles, scented oils or candles			
Drink hot cocoa or de-caffeinated tea			
Read underneath heavy blanket(s)			
Wrap self tightly in warm blanket (heat cotton blankets in the dryer)			
Listen to music			
Rock in rocking chair			
Apply lotion with firm, deep pressure strokes			
Drink thick milkshake or smoothie through a straw			
Listen to sound or white noise machine			
Suck on a cold popsicle			
Watch a fireplace or fish tank			
Housework (i.e. wash dishes, fold laundry, scrub countertops, etc.)			
Lay on stomach propped on elbows while reading, playing a game, or watching TV			
Lay down with cool, damp cloth over eyes			

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