

WATCH WHAT YOU EAT. TASTE WHAT YOU EAT. ENJOY WHAT YOU EAT.

We've all been there. It's 5:00 pm and you've only got time for a fast-food burger on the way to swim practice. With so much vying for our attention, it just seems easier to eat on the fly. Problem is, when we don't pay attention to when and what we eat, we end up eating far too much of all the wrong things. **The solution? Mindful eating: Paying close attention to how you feel before, during and after a meal or snack.**

Before you eat

Think about your hunger. Is your stomach growling? Are you craving something sweet? Or maybe you're just used to drinking soda while you watch TV.

Take the time to understand why you're hungry and only eat when you feel physical hunger. If it is time to eat something, think carefully about what you're going to eat and why. It's a good idea to choose foods that will keep you feeling full.

While you eat

If you are hungry – especially if you're really hungry – it's important to eat slowly and pay attention to portion size.

It takes 15–20 minutes to feel satisfied,* so instead of wolfing down your meal, take the time to enjoy it.

- › Savor all of the different flavors.
- › Notice how your food looks and smells. Take in the whole experience.
- › Enjoy the conversation. Make meals more about the people you're with and not the food you're eating.
- › Highlight your meal with candles and light music instead of having TV as a distraction.

After you eat

Pay attention to your body. Be sure to stop eating when you feel perfectly satisfied. Not still hungry. Not too full.

Empty stomach

1

Eat sooner – this leads to overeating

Light snack

Just right

5

Stop eating

Too full

Stuffed

10

*U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "Hunger and Fullness." https://www.move.va.gov/docs/NewHandouts/Nutrition/N04_HungerAndFullness.pdf (accessed June 5, 2017)

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