



Mindfulness, Moderation, and Healthy Mouthfuls

Enjoying a balanced diet of whole foods—fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meat, dairy, good fats such as those found in olive oil, avocados and nuts—and eating them in moderation can help you stay healthier longer.

But did you know that *how* you eat also plays a role in nourishing your body and mind? When you're mindful and paying attention to what you're eating, you'll be less likely to overeat and more likely to choose healthier foods.

The following are tips (and a few tricks) that'll help you eat the right amount of food—in a healthy way.

- 1. Slow down.** The best part of every bite is savoring the taste in your mouth. See how long you can savor each bite before taking another, rather than chewing just enough to gulp it down.
Find time to enjoy your meals. A routine of eating on the run, gobbling down food at your desk, or opting for convenient, but less-healthy options places stress on your body and brain and can lead to a host of illnesses. Opt instead to nurture yourself with healthy foods and the time to enjoy them.
- 2. Enjoy your meals with family and friends.** Take the time to enjoy the pleasures of the table with your family, catch up on your daily lives and share healthy foods together. And what better way to connect with friends than breaking bread together?
- 3. Make healthy choices easy.** Research by Brian Wansink, author of *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think*, shows that people who keep pre-cut vegetables readily available on their refrigerator shelves eat 230% more vegetables than if their veggies are whole and in the crisper.
- 4. Use smaller plates and bowls.** Instead of a 12-inch dinner plate, use one that's 10 inches or even 8. You'll feel fuller with less food especially if you're in the habit of eating until your plate is empty. Whatever size plate you use, remember this “handy” guide to portion sizes. Start with a serving of vegetables about the size of your open hand. Add fish, meat or beans about the size of your palm, then finish off your plate with a scoop of whole grains about the size of your fist.
- 5. Use tall glasses.** If two glasses both hold the same amount of liquid, our brains will always estimate that there's more in the tall, narrow glass than in the short, wide one. If you're drinking beverages with calories you may be satisfied with less from a tall glass. (Or, just drink water and it won't matter!)
- 6. Put away the leftovers before eating.** Serve in the kitchen, and immediately put any extra food in the fridge. You won't be tempted by leftovers if they're out of sight – and already cold – instead of sitting on the kitchen counter or the dining table.
- 7. Turn off the TV.** Studies show that food is more satisfying when you pay attention to what you're eating. If you're watching TV, your body literally may not notice that you've eaten, leaving you feeling hungry.

