

## **MINDFUL EATING**

The main problem is not that- We Eat When We Are Hungry. The main problem is that- We Don't Stop When We Are Not...

Mindful eating is eating with Intention and Attention. Eating is a natural, healthy, and pleasurable activity for satisfying hunger. However, in our food-abundant, diet-obsessed culture, eating is often mindless and a guilt-inducing activity.

Gobbling down the food quickly without realizing what just went in, does no good to our body. In fact, eating too fast could nearly double the risk of being overweight or obese.

Once you start eating, it takes about 20 minutes for the satiety center in the brain to get stimulated.

When this center is stimulated, it sends a signal to your body telling that you are full and you need to STOP eating.

Fast eating overrides the mechanism of stimulating the satiety center in the brain.

Thus, if you eat too quickly or eat within 20 minutes, the satiety center is not yet stimulated and you just go on eating (at times, more than what your body requires).

Thus, you tend to overfill your stomach by overeating, paving way to become overweight and obese and other related disorders. When you eat slowly, you will consume the right amount of food that your body requires, and this will do away with consuming extra calories that make you fat.

Rather than thinking about food in terms of number of calories and nutrients, it would be more beneficial if you eat mindfully. Eating slowly, chewing the food thoroughly, and savoring every bite of it are some important aspects of Mindful Eating which contribute to your health in several ways.

### **BENEFITS OF MINDFUL EATING:**

- **DIGESTION:** Digestion starts in your mouth. Chewing well promotes the release of salivary enzymes in the mouth which turns on the digestion process, thus making the further digestion smoother and simpler. By the time your well-chewed food reaches your stomach, it's partly digested, enabling the complete digestion to happen quickly in your stomach and eliminating chances for any food to be stored away as fat. Hence it is said that slower you eat, the faster and more efficiently you metabolize the food.
- **PORTION CONTROL LEADING TO WEIGHT CONTROL:** When you eat slowly, you will find that you eat much less than you would usually eat if you ate fast. You will find

that you fill up sooner. All problems of flatulence, acidity, heartburn, indigestion will disappear for good. When we eat slowly, we become aware of when our stomach gets full and we also know how much to serve ourselves and when to stop. Thus making your portion size smaller too. Sensible eating therefore works miraculously for the weight-watchers.

- ***TASTE AND ENJOY YOUR FOOD:*** Eating sensibly also involves relishing the food thoroughly by feeling the flavour on your palate. Sensible eating lets you experience the textures and the aroma of the food overall, making it a wonderful experience focused more on the impression and less on the health effects of eating.

### **HOW TO MASTER THIS MINDFUL EATING:**

1. ***STOP MULTITASKING:*** It's really difficult to focus on eating if you're multitasking. Set aside time for eating without other entertainment. Ensure that you are away from the television, mobile phones and other devices so that the focus is completely drawn towards eating. You can have some soft music playing in the background to make the eating experience more delightful.

2. ***EAT AT THE TABLE:*** Get into the habit of eating on a proper chair and table. No more snacking on the run!

3. ***CHEW PROPERLY:*** Make sure you chew your food enough so that it is well broken down before you swallow. Eat slowly for good 20 minutes.

4. ***USE CUTLERY AND PUT IT DOWN BETWEEN MOUTHFUL:*** It's much easier to take smaller portions when using a spoon and fork. Take a bite, put your spoon and fork down, chew the food slowly and nicely and then swallow.

We just need to follow these two golden rules and we will never have to diet again- **EAT SLOW AND STOP WHEN FULL.**

You can enjoy all of your favourite foods. Junk and fast-food too! But we need to ensure we eat slowly and stop when full.