

HEALTHY AT HOME

What is Mindful Eating?



Mindful eating involves more interactions with a meal by tuning into emotions and physical sensations. Eating mindfully is considered a form of meditation because it involves inner dialogue *addressing* those emotions and sensations. Before eating, take a good look at your plate and notice the color variations and shapes. Breathing in and taking a good whiff of the food will surely make your mouth water since both senses (taste and smell) are linked to a full tasting experience. Take the time to pause now and then to notice the unique textures after each bite. These senses can enhance the eating experience by making it more enjoyable. Mindful eating also considers where the food/ingredients came from and how it was prepared.


Feeding your emotions

Since mindful eating boosts awareness, it can uncover positive and negative emotions that may be associated with eating. If you notice that negative emotions lead you to food, here are some healthy alternatives promoting self-care.

Stress	Taking a walk focusing on nature, deep breathing, listening to instrumental music
Boredom	Pick up a craft hobby, read your favorite book
Sadness	Call upon a friend/family member for support, look at pictures associated with positive memories

MINDFULNESS SERIES

USEFUL RESOURCES



Rutgers Cooperative Extension
njaes.rutgers.edu

Get Moving - Get Healthy NJ
gmghnj.rutgers.edu

Get Moving - Get Healthy NJ Workforce
gmghnj.rutgers.edu/workforce

Family & Community Health Sciences Department
njaes.rutgers.edu/fchs





MAKE EVERY BITE A MEDITATION

If you want to put healthier eating habits on the menu, mindfulness may be a simple and effective place to start! It's not about dieting or restrictions - it's about taking a moment to savor it!

Try these easy ways to incorporate mindful eating into your day, so you can Eat Smart at every meal:

- Pause: Check in with yourself about your hunger before you eat - you may actually be thirsty, bored or stressed.
- Appreciate: Take a moment to savor it. How does it smell? Do you really expect it to be more than you need?
- Slow: Slow down so your brain can keep up with your stomach. Put your fork down between bites and focus on the flavor.
- Savor: Enjoy your food. Take a moment to savor the satisfaction of each bite - the taste, texture, everything!
- Stop: Stop when you're full - there's no need to join the clean plate club if it means overeating.

Try one or more of these tactics to help you eat more mindfully. And for more ways to be Healthy for Good, visit eatright.org/HealthyForGood

What can hinder mindful eating?

Mindless eating is the opposite of mindful eating. This usually occurs when an individual pairs eating with other distracting activities that allows their mind to drift off. Multitasking in general while eating is considered mindless eating. Some examples include the following: watching the latest Netflix series, chatting on the phone, or working. These distractions make it difficult to track how much food is being consumed which then leads to overeating. Furthermore, it is important to slow down and savor each bite to increase awareness of satiety. Eating faster delays satiety cues which can result in overeating; bloating and sluggish feelings may be accompanied by this which can put a damper on the rest of the day. Adjusting to mindful eating takes time and practice. Mindful eating is meant to be a thoughtful, relaxing process. It would be unrealistic to practice this for every single meal or snack. Practice mindful eating when it is most convenient for you to prevent it from becoming stress-inducing.



Healthy Recipe

Coconut Date Balls

Author: Yumna Jawad

Ingredients:

- 10-12 Medjool dates
- 2 cups of pecans (*If you have a nut allergy, this can be substituted for finely ground granola*)
- A pinch of sea salt
- ¼ cup of desiccated coconut (or shredded coconut)



Preparation:

1. Pit the Medjool dates (unless they are already seedless) and soak in a bowl of warm water for 10 minutes. Make sure the dates soften.
2. Place the dates and pecans into a food processor and blend on high. The consistency should be thick and dough-like before you transfer it into another bowl.
3. Scoop out 1-2 tablespoons and roll the mixture into a ball. Let the balls sit in the refrigerator for about 5 minutes allowing it to cool.
4. Roll the balls onto the desiccated/shredded coconut to cover each ball evenly. Roll the coconut-covered balls in your hands to make sure it adheres to the surface. This should make about 12-14 bites.

****Disclaimer****

Always consult a qualified medical professional before changing, starting, or stopping any part of your healthcare plan, including nutrition, physical activity, or exercise. Be sure to follow all work-place safety rules, procedures and policies, and check with supervision before conducting any exercises or recommendations contained in this newsletter while at work. Rutgers Cooperative Extension does not assume any liability for injuries or health concerns arising from participation in activities mentioned or outlined in this newsletter.

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More Resources....

choosemyplate.gov

njaes.rutgers.edu/health

getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu

Family & Community Health Sciences
Healthy Recipes

[vimeo.com/getmovinggethealthynj/vid
eos](http://vimeo.com/getmovinggethealthynj/videos)

Explore our healthy recipe videos!

EatingWell.com has lots of healthy
recipes.

[Mayo Clinic Healthy Recipes](#)

[Harvard Health Publishing](#)

[Harvard T.H. Chan - Mindful Eating](#)

[American Heart Association - Mindful
Eating Infographic](#)

www.headspace.com

Helpguide.org

[Mindful vs Mindless Infographic](#)

MINDFUL
VERSUS
MINDLESS

THE HOW MATTERS JUST AS MUCH AS THE WHAT

 Eating from a plate or a bowl, in a comfortable seated position.	 Eating from the bag, while standing over the sink.
Just eating.	Checking email, driving, scrolling social media, watching TV.
Pacing and savoring. Try this: if something is in your mouth, nothing is on your utensil.	Shoveling, rushing, swallowing, and hurrying to make the next bite.
Reflect: how does that food make your body feel?	No connection between food and feelings in your body.

www.equilibrium.com

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