

Mindful eating during the holidays



Mindfulness is being focused, present and engaged in whatever you're doing right now. Mindful eating is being aware of what, when and why you eat. It can help you learn about and control your eating habits.

Mindful eating helps you stay healthy

Rather than “inhaling” your meals, mindfulness encourages you to really taste your food and notice how you feel while you're eating. It helps you enjoy each bite and listen to body signals that tell you when you're satisfied. You tune in to your body and the experience of eating.

There are many benefits to mindful eating. For example, it can help you:¹

- Lower stress by slowing you down.
- Pay attention to times you use food for reasons other than hunger — like self-soothing or boredom.
- Enjoy your meals and snacks more by noticing and appreciating them.
- Learn about your eating habits by helping you focus on how each type of food makes you feel while eating and afterwards.
- Feel full sooner, eat less and digest better.
- Eat in a healthier, more balanced way.

Mindful eating during the holiday season

Holiday gatherings include lots of people and food. It can be easy to graze away on snacks and goodies. You might eat while chatting with other guests. Or you might eat out of anxiety if parties make you nervous. You might not even realize what or how much you're eating.

That's where mindfulness comes in. Here are a few tricks to help you eat mindfully during the holidays:

1. Don't go to parties feeling ravenous. Have a healthy snack right before leaving home.
2. Check in with yourself during a party to gauge whether you're eating because you're hungry or just to be social.
3. If you feel full, switch to drinking water or eating veggies.

Celebrate without unhealthy eating and extra calories. Being mindful can help you make good decisions and enjoy this special time of year.

¹Mindful eating. Accessed October 2021.

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