

Nourish Your Body with Mindful Eating

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GEORGINA NURSE PRACTITIONER LED CLINIC

Mindfulness and mindful eating have been popular terms on the rise in recent years. For anyone looking to improve eating habits for better health, this approach has been shown to help prevent and manage chronic disease in a positive way. Learn more about how you can start eating mindfully!

What is Mindful Eating?

To understand mindful eating, let's start with looking at the concept of mindfulness in general. *Mindfulness is paying attending to the present moment, with intention and without judgment.* This may sound easy, but in our world that celebrates high efficiency, our minds are often caught up with worries and tasks that need to get done. This brings us away from the very life we are living in the moment. With mindfulness, we build awareness and this can help us make better choices in our everyday lives.

Mindful eating is applying the above to our eating experiences. It's eating while paying attention to the present moment - by removing distractions, engaging your senses, tuning in to your body, and being aware of any thoughts and emotions that may be affecting your eating experience. It's also eating with kindness and gentle curiosity, without any judgment. Judgment is when we criticize our eating which leads to negative emotions that can affect our eating choices. By cultivating kindness, we remain in a more peaceful state of mind allowing us to listen more closely to our body.

In summary, mindful eating can help you respond more closely to your body's needs, improve your relationship and satisfaction with food, and help with preventing and managing chronic disease.

Mindful Activity: Honour Your Hunger and Fullness

Recognizing hunger and fullness levels is one way to tune in to the body and build mindfulness when eating. Use the following scale to check-in on how you are feeling before, during and after eating:



Reflect on how you feel when you are at different points on this scale. For example, how does your body feel when you are hungry vs when you are full? What are the physical sensations you get in your stomach, and in your overall energy level? How might you eat differently when you feel ravenous vs hungry? Exploring these questions can give valuable information to guide you to eat in a way that feels good for your body.



Cauliflower-Stuffed Tomatoes

6 SERVINGS

Ingredients:

2 cups Cauliflower florets
2 tbsp Milk
1/2 cup Shredded old Cheddar cheese
Pinch Ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp Salt
1/4 tsp Pepper
3 Tomatoes, medium, halved crosswise
2 tbsp Butter
2 tsp Dijon mustard
1 cup Fresh bread crumbs
2 tbsp Chopped fresh basil or parsley

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Steam cauliflower for about 10 minutes until very tender, OR microwave on high for 3 to 3 1/2 minutes. Place in processor along with milk, blend until puréed. Stir in cheese, nutmeg, salt and pepper.
3. Scoop out tomato halves and discard pulp. Place tomatoes, cut side down on paper towel and drain. Arrange tomatoes cut side up in a small baking dish. Fill with cauliflower mixture.
4. In a small skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Mix in mustard. Add bread crumbs and toss to coat well. Stir in basil. Top stuffed tomatoes with crumb mixture, pressing down gently. Bake until heated through and golden, about 30 minutes.

Sources:

(1) Hamilton Family Health Team, 2020. Mindful Eating: Emotional Eating and Food Craving Management Group.

(2) Foodland Ontario, Cauliflower Stuffed Tomatoes. Recipe and image retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/recipes/cauliflower-stuffed-tomatoes>