

YOUR HEALTH

'HOW YOU EAT' or 'WHAT YOU EAT'?

Most of us are rightfully concerned about which foods we choose to eat, but the average Canadian doesn't think much about how we eat. How often has it happened that you grab a quick lunch, then 5 minutes later you realize a huge portion of food has been cleaned from your plate, and you don't even remember eating it?!

It is very common today for people to eat quickly, mindlessly and without paying attention to portion size. **When we eat quickly, the digestive tract doesn't have time to send the message of being full or satiated to the brain. Normally, it takes 20 minutes from the time we start eating until the brain actually realizes that we're satisfied and no longer hungry.** It isn't until the brain gets this message that we're able to realize we're full and stop eating, even if there's still food on our plate. So if you inhale ½ a plate of food, then still feel hungry and proceed to inhale the rest of it, it's not that you're actually still hungry and need that

extra ½ plate, it's just that you haven't given your brain enough time to register the message that you're full.

The solution to correcting habits of hurried and mindless eating is to **begin eating "consciously."** **Conscious eating simply means to focus on each bite of your food, making sure to chew it well and take the time to taste all the delicious flavours before swallowing.**

Conscious eating is important for portion control as well as proper digestion. By focusing on your food you ensures that your digestive juices are flowing and that your body is breaking down and absorbing the nutrients in your food. If you eat while you're depressed, anxious, angry, upset or distracted, your body will not digest your food well, which can lead to bloating and discomfort.

And lastly, the best thing about conscious eating is that you get to thoroughly enjoy and savour your food!

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