

## Savor the Flavor of Eating Right

March is National Nutrition Month. The theme for 2016 is “Savor the Flavor of Eating Right”, which encourages us to take time to enjoy our food and appreciate the pleasures, great flavors and social experiences food can add to our lives. It’s all about eating mindfully.

So what is mindful eating anyhow? Mindful eating is paying attention to the experience of eating. How, when, why and where we eat are just as important as what we eat.

**How** we eat means slowing down and paying attention to what you are eating. Take small bites and appreciate the texture and flavor of the food. Eating should take a minimum of 20 minutes. That’s the amount of time it takes for the stomach to signal to the brain it’s full.

**When** we eat depends on how hungry we feel, not what the clock says. This is something that takes lots of practice and can be challenging.

**Why** we eat is to nourish our body and provide us with energy. Sometimes anger, anxiety, sadness, even boredom can all get in the way of our true internal hunger cues and make us eat even if we are not hungry.

**Where** we eat should be sitting at a table. Families who sit down and eat meals together have less stress, overall better health, and the kids even higher grades in school. Try enjoying each meal without distractions. Don’t eat in front of the TV or computer and resist the urge to take phone calls during the meal, unless it is an emergency.

For more about mindful eating check out these resources.

### **Books/Websites:**

- [“Intuitive Eating”](#) by Evelyn Tribole, MS, RD and Elyse Resch, MS, RD. They also have an online [intuitive eating community](#)
- [Mindless Eating](http://mindlesseating.org/)-<http://mindlesseating.org/>
- [“Eat Q”](#) by Susan Albers, PsyD. Her website [Eating Mindfully](#) is also a great resource.

Nan Jensen RDN, LDN  
UF/IFAS Extension Pinellas County