

What is mindful meal planning for diabetes?



In simple language “mindful eating” is paying attention to what you put in your mouth.

A common myth in diabetes is that you must give up all your favorite foods and eat tasteless food.

That is not true!

This is where mindful eating comes into play.

Eating mindfully means:

1. Changing your mindless eating habits such as grabbing anything you can get your hands on and not thinking the effect it will have on diabetes.
2. Eating with savoring the food.
3. Eating with no distractions around you such as electronic devices, the TV or even reading a book.
4. Paying attention to when you feel full and learning how to recognize hunger cues or the feeling of fullness. This takes time, but if you pay attention it can be done. Slow down the process of eating without distraction,
5. Turning off your autopilot system and focus on the present moment.
6. Listening to physical hunger cues and eating only until you're full.
7. Distinguishing between real hunger and non-hunger triggers.
8. Engaging your senses by noticing the various colors, smells, sounds, textures and tastes of the variety of foods in front of you.
9. Learning to cope with guilt and anxiety about food.
10. Eating to maintain overall health and well-being i.e. eat to live and not live to eat.
11. Noticing the effects food has on your feelings and figure.
12. Using all five senses, fully enjoy, taste and appreciating your food.

How do you get started?

1. It all starts with grocery shopping: allow enough time for making the right food selection. Go with a list and grocery shop every week if you can.
2. Be aware of the foods you pick up. Food accessibility can be a hindrance to mindful eating. When certain foods are easily available, the distractions are right there so avoid having them in the house as much as you can.
3. Have a collection of diabetes friendly recipes.
4. Ensure you prepare at least 3-5 diabetes friendly meals/week
5. Eat more slowly and don't rush your meals.
6. Chew thoroughly.
7. Eliminate distractions by turning off the TV and putting down your phone.
8. Eat in silence.
9. Focus on how the food makes you feel.
10. Stop eating when you're full.
11. Ask yourself why you're eating. Are you actually hungry? Is it healthy?
12. Try to set your fork or spoon between bites
13. Take 3 deep breaths before beginning to eat and think about the process it took to get that meal together.