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Take a “Brake” from Eating Too Quickly!

Are you a fast eater? I mean, so fast you can barely taste anything?

I am guilty of this. It’s not that I do not look forward to eating or enjoying good food. I just have a bad habit of zooming through what is on my plate in record-breaking time. It is a stark contrast to my college roommate, who seemed to chew every mouthful 100 times, or a friend I have who takes small bites and enjoys every moment of her meal.

As it turns out, the ‘*Who is done dinner first*’ race is *not* one you want to win. The prize is not advantageous; in fact, it is quite the opposite.

Let’s Explore More

Research shows that those who eat quickly:

- Have an increased chance of choking.
- Consume considerably more calories than necessary.
 - When we eat, and the lining of our stomach stretches, our gut releases fullness hormones. These hormones tell your brain that you are full and to stop eating, and this process takes about 20 minutes. However, if you eat really fast, your brain does not have the time it needs to receive these signals, causing you to overeat.
- Are twice as likely to be obese than slow eaters.
- Have an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance, and metabolic syndrome.

- Often do not chew their food enough to truly break it down in preparation for the next stage of digestion. This may lead to indigestion and upset stomach, as well as potentially less absorption of important nutrients.
- Do not receive the full enjoyment of their meal.

Check out this video: [What Happens To Your Body When You Eat Too Quickly?](#) | Herbalife Nutrition

Put Your Fork In Slow-Mo

Here are 10 tips to help us slow down, enjoy our meals, and eat in a healthier way!

- 1) **Take 20 minutes to finish your meal** and let the hormones signal to your brain that you are full.
- 2) **Remove all distractions** that interfere with your ability to enjoy your food and notice when you are full. Eating in front of a TV, computer, smartphone, or other device may cause you to eat fast and mindlessly. It can also make you lose track of how much you have eaten.
- 3) **Portion out food** you might munch on continuously, such as snack food. Put a small amount in a separate bowl.
- 4) **Actually chew** (imagine that!) Chewing is an important part of digestion that helps break up foods for easier absorption. It may help to count how many times you chew each bite. Aim to chew each mouthful of food 20–30 times.
- 5) **Put your fork down between each mouthful.** This helps you slow down and enjoy each bite more.
- 6) **Don't get too hungry.** Avoid becoming extremely hungry between meals, as this often results in us eating too fast and making poor food decisions.
- 7) **Sip on water.** Drinking water throughout your meal, even between bites, will help you feel full and slow you down.
- 8) **Eat foods rich in fibre.** High-fibre foods like fruits and vegetables are filling and take longer to chew.
- 9) **Take small bites.** Smaller bites can help you slow down your pace and make your meal last longer.
- 10) **Eat mindfully.** Mindful eating is a powerful tool. The fundamental principle behind it is to pay attention to the food you're eating.

[Check out this podcast on 5 Ways to Eat More Mindfully](#)

[Or this article on Mindful Eating](#)

Put a 'Brake' on Eating Quickly

By eating slowly, you may also improve your health and quality of life in many ways, by:

- increasing your enjoyment of food
- improving your digestion
- maintaining a healthy weight
- helping to better absorb nutrients
- making you feel calmer and more in control
- reducing your levels of stress and feeling more relaxed

Sources:

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/be-mindful-of-your-eating-habits/take-time-to-eat/>

<https://www.cleaneatingmag.com/clean-diet/food-health-news/5-health-risks-of-eating-too-fast/>

<https://www.longstreetclinic.com/why-eating-too-fast-is-bad/>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Morandini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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If you would like to contribute or have ideas about what you would like to see in the ReFresh series, we would love to hear from you: contact rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca.