Are you Being Mindful? // 5 Tips for Mindful Eating
5 TIPS FOR MINDFUL EATING

LIVE WELL UTAH
Today’s post is from our sister blog, Eat Well Utah, all about how to eat mindfully and make better, healthier food choices. Bonus: there’s a recipe at the end for baked chicken tenders that parents and kids alike will enjoy.

Are you trying to eat healthier? One of the best ways to stay on track is by eating mindfully. It is not uncommon to get caught up in the everyday stresses of life and forget to stop and live in the moment. Mindful eating is simply being aware of what you are putting in your mouth and paying attention to how it affects your body, feelings, and mind.

This is a helpful practice for anyone who is focused on healthy eating or weight loss. It makes you stop and think about not only what is going in your mouth, but why you are putting it there. Are you really hungry? Are you eating out of boredom? Is it stress eating? Mindful eating pulls you off autopilot and helps you be more attentive and aware of your food and drink choices.

Everyday distractions can make it difficult to stick to a mindful eating plan so it is important to set yourself up for success. Nutrition 411 offers great tips on developing and sticking to your plan. Here are some of my favorites:

1. Use a smaller plate.

Have you ever heard the term you eat with your eyes? If you are hungry, you want to fill your plate with enough food to satisfy your hunger. This can lead to overeating as you are tempted to quickly gobble up everything on your plate, missing your internal cues signaling that you are satisfied. To prevent overeating, try using a smaller plate. This will give you the ability to still fill up your plate, but the portion
of food on your plate will be contained.

2. **You eat what you see.**

If you are feeling a bit hungry and you see a jar of candy on the countertop, it is likely that you will grab a piece of candy as a quick fix. If you see a bowl of fresh fruit sitting on the counter top, it is likely you will reach for a nice, juicy apple. Keeping healthy foods where you can see them, and tucking not-so-healthy foods away, helps you make better choices more often. It is much easier to eat mindfully when unhealthy foods are out of sight and out of mind.

3. **Serve from the stove.**

Rather than bringing all the food to the table, keep it over by the stove or on the counter top. The simple fact that you will have to get up to serve yourself another helping is likely to stop you from overindulging. Bring fruits and veggies to the table instead. If you are still hungry, you are more likely to refill your plate with what is right in front of you.

4. **Remove distractions.**

People tend to eat more when they are not paying attention to each bite that goes into their mouths. When televisions, cell phones, and computers are holding your attention, you are more likely to miss your hunger cues. You will overeat instead of stopping when you are satisfied.

5. **Eat throughout the day.**

You might feel the urge to skimp on meals early in the day so you can indulge in a larger meal in the evening. Eating smaller meals more frequently helps keep your energy level
more consistent and will help you avoid overeating when you feel like you are starving.

For more great tips on mindful eating click here and here.

What step will you take this week toward mindful eating? Maybe you’ll start by making homemade chicken tenders instead of opting for the fast food version.

I was a bit skeptical when I first read through this recipe. I thought for sure my kids would give it two thumbs down. I was pleasantly surprised when they asked for seconds. I hope your family is just as pleased. Enjoy!

Click on the recipe card for a printable version.

This article was written by Candi Merritt, Certified Nutrition Education with Utah State University Extension. View original article on Eat Well Utah.