MODULE 3

EAT

5 EASY DIETARY TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE & LASTING WEIGHT LOSS
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**DISCLAIMER:** The information provided within this ebook is believed to be accurate based on the personal experience of the authors but the reader is responsible for consulting with their own health professional before changing the diet or starting an exercise program. The information provided is not a substitute for proper medical advice. If in doubt, please consult your doctor or licensed medical practitioner.
Welcome to *Eat, Drink & Be Healthy!*

As you will soon discover, this is not your everyday guide to healthy eating. I am not a doctor or a nutritional expert, but rather a normal person, just like you, who came across a collection of simple yet incredibly effective long-term weight loss principles (referred to as ‘tips’ in the rest of this guide) while I was studying Yoga in India.

Principles that, when put to practice, will effortlessly guide you towards healthy, effective & lasting weight loss.

“How do I know these principles really work?” you may ask. In the beginning I asked myself the exact same question, and that’s why, after returning from my trip to India, I cross-checked them with the opinions of countless modern doctors, scientists and nutrition experts. What I found was an overwhelming consensus that these principles are indeed effective, and are in complete accordance with all existing modern medical and nutritional know-how.

Some of the experts who promote the principles in this guide have published their views in books such as:

❖ “I Can Make You Think” - Paul McKenna
❖ “Mindless Eating. Why We Eat More Than We Think” - Dr. Brian Wansink
❖ “Don’t Lose Your Mind. Lose Your Weight” - Rujuta Diwekar
❖ “Water: For Health, for Healing, for Life: You’re Not Sick, You’re Thirsty!” - Dr F. Batmanghelidj M.D
❖ “The Best Life Diet” - Bob Green

The principles you will discover in this guide involve nothing more than simple lifestyle modifications. **You won’t be told what, where, when, or how much to eat.** You won’t be told to eat only one specific type of food. There are no crazy exercise routines or rituals, and no calorie counting. All you will need to do is understand the simple art of balance and moderation, and discover how to listen to the natural rhythm of your body, as it tells you everything you need to know to get slim and healthy, and most importantly **stay** slim and healthy.
Diets and exercise fads can help you lose weight, but can they help you keep the weight off? By forcing you to go to extreme lengths such as starvation, strenuous exercise and unrealistic eating schedules, they are not only potentially dangerous - they also set you up to fail in the long run. And that's where the principles you’re about to learn are different - the changes required are so subtle, so small (yet so effective!) that they’ll soon become second nature with practically zero stress or resistance from your existing lifestyle.

There’s a good chance you’ll already be aware of some of the principles in this guide. Many of them involve simple common sense. The problem here is, some of them are so simple that it’s hard to believe they actually work! But trust me, they do. **Science has proven it, statistics have shown it**, and I have seen it with my own eyes - by following these principles, **within weeks your excess fat will begin to melt away**, you’ll feel healthier than ever, and it’ll all be so easy that you might not even notice it’s happening!

Before you begin, remember that **patience is key**. Unlike an extreme (and unhealthy!) diet fad, you won't see a drastic drop in your weight or cholesterol level, or even a sudden increase in your energy levels. **Positive change will happen slowly but surely** over a matter of weeks, but here’s the good news - when you do achieve the figure, health and energy you’ve always wanted, they’ll stick with you for a lifetime!

To A Slimmer & Healthier You,

![Nika Florek](image)

**Nika Florek**
a.k.a The Slim Yogi
“Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dinner like a pauper.”
~Adelle Davis

Do you remember your Mom telling you that breakfast was the most important meal of the day? Recent scientific research shows that your Mom was right! In fact, eating breakfast has been proven to be the simplest way of maintaining a healthy weight and even losing extra pounds.

We skip breakfast for various reasons: not feeling hungry in the morning, rushing to work or simply to save up some calories for later. Whatever your reason may be, know this: you’re not doing yourself or your health any favors, as medical research has consistently proven that skipping breakfast typically results in weight gain.

Breakfast Skippers Set Themselves Up For Failure

"People skip breakfast thinking they're cutting calories, but by mid-morning and lunch, that person is starved. Breakfast skippers replace calories during the day with mindless nibbling, bingeing at lunch and dinner. They set themselves up for failure."

What happens to your body when you skip breakfast?

When you don’t eat in the morning your body thinks that you are starving. Because your body doesn’t know when it can expect the next food supply, it sends out an automatic signal to your cells to store up most of the energy you get from food as fat, instead of allowing you to burn it. Prolonged fasting can increase your body’s insulin response, which increases fat storage and causes weight gain.

Eating Early Jump-Starts Your Metabolism

"When you don't eat breakfast, you're actually fasting for 15 to 20 hours, so you're not producing the enzymes needed to metabolize fat to lose weight. Eating early in the day keeps us from "starvation eating" later on. But it also jump-starts your metabolism."

~ Elisabetta Politi, RD, MPH, nutrition manager for the Duke Diet & Fitness Center at Duke University Medical School.

If you skip breakfast your metabolic rate slows down, your blood sugar drops and your cholesterol might go up. As a result your energy level goes down and you’ll feel extra hungry around lunch time. This increases your chances of impulsive snacking, eating extra portions or overeating later during the day.

A recent study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology concludes that skipping meals and eating less frequently may result in packing on extra pounds.

People who skipped breakfast were more than four times more likely to be obese than those who ate breakfast daily.
Breakfast...

- **Kick-starts your metabolism** early in the morning so that you burn the maximum number of calories to fuel your activities.
- Gets you on track towards a **healthier diet** — one that is more nutritious and lower in fat.
- **Improves concentration** throughout the day! You’ll be more alert and assertive.
- Gives you **more energy**, increasing your capacity for physical activity.
- Refuels your body and **replenishes the glycogen stores that supply blood sugar** (glucose).
- **Reduces your hunger** due to increased leptin output. Leptin is a hormone that suppresses appetite. When you eat a significant meal early in the day your body produces more leptin which ensures that **you’ll take in fewer calories throughout the day**.

**Breakfast Eaters Consume Less Empty Calories**

"Those who eat breakfast on a regular basis are more likely to have a structured eating plan throughout the day and consequently are less likely to snack between meals and consume empty calories,"

~ John Kirwan, a professor of medicine at Case Western Reserve University's Schwartz Center for Nutrition and Metabolism

Researchers from the National Weight Control Registry, a database of more than 3,000 people who have lost at least 60 pounds and kept it off for an average of 6 years, found that eating breakfast every day was a weight control strategy for 78% of the people in the registry.
An ongoing research shows that breakfast eaters tend to eat fewer calories, less saturated fat and cholesterol and have better overall nutritional status than breakfast skippers.

Another study found that the more often adolescents eat breakfast, the less likely they are to be overweight.

With these proven facts the conclusion is simple: You should always eat breakfast. This is the first and easiest step you can take towards losing weight and becoming more healthy.

**Action Steps**

- Overcome the reasons not to have breakfast and make it your **new habit**.
- If you don’t want to wake up earlier to prepare your breakfast, then prepare it the night before.
- You don't have to eat immediately after getting out of bed, but you should **try to eat your first meal within an hour to an hour and a half after waking for best weight loss results**.
- **Start small** - you don't have to eat a huge meal at this time of the day. A healthy and balanced breakfast of approximately 300 calories is all you need to start your metabolic engine. In the beginning you can start with a glass of pure, unsweetened fruit juice, water with lemon, a banana, yoghurt or a slice of toast.
- **Try different dishes at breakfast** - you can find plenty of great breakfast recipes on the internet, here’s just a few links to help you get started:
  - [http://www.mrbreakfast.com](http://www.mrbreakfast.com)
If there is one thing our body can’t live without, it would be WATER. Our bodies are made up of roughly 75% water, which is involved in almost every process the human body goes through. Water facilitates blood flow and cellular reproduction, without which water cells could not grow and the entire organism dies. It helps to absorb all the essential nutrients and keeps our energy level up. We need water in our bodies more than we need food, which is why we can survive for much longer without food than without water.

A recent study by Dr. Brenda Davy shows that water is not only responsible for keeping us alive but also plays a key role in weight loss. In the experiment conducted by Davy, people who drank two glasses of water 20 to 30 minutes before every meal lost weight more quickly initially and lost significantly more weight than those who didn't.

In another study Davy and her team found that people who drank water before meals ate an average of 75 fewer calories at that meal. This may not seem like much, but if you ate 75 fewer calories at lunch and dinner for the next year, you could lose about 14½ pounds! Now this makes a big difference, given the small and simple change in habits like increasing the intake of water.

❖ The higher the consumption of water, the lower the amount of fat deposited. A low consumption of water allows more fat to be deposited instead of being metabolized into energy. Fat forms the cell walls and when your body is not
provided with enough water, the fat will automatically be deposited in cell membrane to protect cells against dehydration.

❖ **Water helps to flush toxins out of our system;** The more toxins in our body the less capable it is to lose weight.

❖ **Drinking water suppresses your appetite and keeps you from snacking on unhealthy sugary foods.** Very often we confuse hunger with thirst, but by drinking more water we can eliminate eating when we are not really hungry. Drinking water before meals also makes us eat less, as our stomach is already filled with water.

❖ Keeping yourself hydrated will keep your kidneys operating at a good clip, and your **liver will be allowed to do its job of metabolizing stored fat for energy.** In the case of dehydration, the blood becomes thick and saturated, not being able to flow properly.

Water plays a key role in the metabolic breakdown of proteins and carbohydrates, which is why you simply can’t lose weight and stay slim without the proper hydration of your body.

**Dehydration will totally kill your chances of burning fat,** because the body interprets this as a state of shock. It shifts its focus on getting water and stops doing other things, like burning body fat for energy.

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**Dehydration Will Make You Fat**

“When the body is dehydrated, the lipids and cholesterol in the cell wall tighten up the wall and more cholesterol is deposited to prevent water from escaping from the cell”

~Dr F. Batmanghelidj M.D
author of “Water: For Health, for Healing, for Life: You're Not Sick, You're Thirsty!”
How Do You Get Dehydrated?

Through regular daily activities alone, the average person loses about 3-4 liters (about 10-15 cups) of fluid a day in sweat, urine, exhaled air and bowel movement. We lose approximately 1-2 liters of water just from breathing. The evaporation of sweat from the skin accounts for 90% of our cooling ability. What is lost must be replaced by the water/ fluid we drink and the food we eat.

How Do You Know If You Are Dehydrated?

If you are thirsty, it means your cells are already dehydrated. A dry mouth should be regarded as the last outward sign of dehydration. That’s because thirst does not develop until body fluids are depleted well below levels required for optimal functioning.

Monitor your urine to make sure you are not dehydrated:

❖ A hydrated body produces clear, colorless urine.
❖ A somewhat dehydrated body produces yellow urine.
❖ A severely dehydrated body produces orange or dark-colored urine.

The effects of even mild dehydration include decreased coordination, fatigue, dry skin, decreased urine output, stress, headache, back pain, allergies, asthma and high blood pressure.

People Spend Most Of Their Life Dehydrated

“The body is 75% water, so it makes sense that this essential fluid must be continually replenished. We can go for a month without food, but we can live only two or three days without water…Considering the proven impact of water on human health, it amazes me that people remain so unaware and uneducated about this subject. They spend most of their lives dehydrated, needlessly suffering from low energy, cravings and symptoms, not realizing they could feel much better by merely drinking more water.”

~ Joshua Rosenthal “Integrative Nutrition”
❖ **DRINK** - pure, natural water. It’s the best choice if you want a slim and healthy body.

❖ **AVOID** - sodas, soft drinks, tea, coffee - a glass of most other drinks have 100-200 calories, plenty of sugar, artificial flavors and they don't make you feel any fuller. Drinking something other than water does nothing for you except quench your thirst and add calories to your count for the day. Diuretics contained in these caffeinated beverages flush water out of your body. Don’t count on them to replenish fluid loss.

❖ **COLD WATER** typically tastes better than hot water, and every time you drink an ounce of ice cold water, your body must burn about a calorie in the process of warming the water to your current body temperature. You can use this to your advantage to **burn even more calories** each day.

❖ **LEMON WATER** has positive effects in helping **cleanse your liver and stomach**. It’s best to drink lemon water in the morning to cleanse your digestive system of toxins. Start a day with a warm glass of water with lemon - it will wake up your digestive fire from sleep.

❖ **MAKE YOUR WATER TASTE BETTER** - the flat taste of water sometimes puts us off it. You can make your water delicious by adding fresh mint leaves, a bit of honey, lemon or any fruit of your choice. My personal favorites are strawberries and watermelon.

❖ **JUICES** are a great alternative for water, provided they are fresh and made from “light fruits” (avoid fruits rich in sugar like mango, grapes, bananas). Also avoid ready made juices, as they often contain a lot of sugar and extra calories.

❖ **WHEN TO DRINK WATER:**

1) First thing in the **morning** after waking up, when you are most full of toxins and dehydrated. You’ll flush your stomach and get it running.

2) **Before meals**, never directly after meals. Drinking water after meals dilutes digestive juices in your stomach and it takes longer for your body to digest the food. Wait at least 30 min after the meal to drink.

3) During the day, **in between meals**.
❖ **HOW MUCH WATER YOU SHOULD DRINK:** A good rule of thumb is to drink half your body weight in ounces per day. If you weigh 200 pounds, you should drink 100 ounces of water (3.13 quarts, 2.98 liters or about 10-12 cups of water a day). If you weigh closer to 100 pounds you will need only about 50 ounces of water or about four 12-ounce glasses daily. People who are physically active or live in hot climates may need to drink more.

❖ **CAN WE DRINK TOO MUCH WATER?** During intense exercise the kidneys cannot excrete excess water. The extra water moves into the cells, including brain cells. The result can be fatal. For that reason, athletes should estimate how much they should drink by weighing themselves before and after long training runs to see how much they lose, and thus how much water and salt they should replace. The important thing to remember is to balance your water intake with your sodium intake. Take 1/4 teaspoon of salt per 4 - 5 glasses of water (which works out to a quart). Be sure to get sea salt. The best is Celtic sea salt or Himalayan sea salt, both of which are readily available at any health food store.

❖ **HUNGRY OR THIRSTY?** It is very difficult for the body to differentiate hunger from thirst. If you don't drink enough water throughout the day, you may mistake thirst for hunger and eat more than you really need, which can also impair weight loss. Staying well hydrated is extremely important, especially if you are trying to lose weight.

❖ **WATER DRINKING HABIT** - Keep a water bottle by your side at all the times. Use either bottled water or tap water, and carry it with you everywhere, to the gym, in your car, to your office. Add water to your daily routine, don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
“If hunger is not the problem, then eating is not the solution.”
~Anonymous

“I’m always hungry”, “I’m never hungry” - does this sound familiar to you? If yes, you are like thousands of other people who simply don’t know how to listen to their body signals. You determine ‘being hungry’ based on emotions, on what you think your body wants, not on what your body really needs. You simply don’t understand what real hunger is and this leads you to constant overeating and putting on weight.

Luckily, the solution to this problem is simple. You just have to learn how to read your body signals properly to be able to better recognize the real hunger and keep the extra pounds off.

Stress Stops You From Listening To Your Body

“How did food and eating get so complicated and confusing? As babies, we knew exactly when we needed nourishment and how to get fed. We were in tune with our bodies and reacted to the signals it sent us.

Today, with all the distractions and stress, it can be challenging to listen to the daily feedback our body provides us: cues to eat, cues to stop eating, cues to rest. The good news is that we all have the innate ability to eat in response to internal cues.”

~ Julie Taborsky, M.S. R.D
THE HUNGER SCALE

The single most effective tool that you can use to learn more about your eating patterns and to easily assess when to start eating and when to stop is a “Hunger Scale”. The hunger scale starts with 1, which is physically faint, weak and light-headed, to 10, which is stuffed to the point of feeling nauseous.

Take a look at the full Hunger Scale below and think for a moment, how hungry are you right now?

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WEAK &amp; LIGHT-HEADED</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VERY UNCOMFORTABLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>UNCOMFORTABLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SLIGHTLY UNCOMFORTABLE</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>COMFORTABLE</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>PERFECTLY COMFORTABLE</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>FULL</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>UNCOMFORTABLY FULL</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>VERY UNCOMFORTABLY FULL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>STUFFED</td>
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stomach acid is churning, physically faint
irritable & unable to concentrate, ravenous
stomach is rumbling, fairy hungry
beginning to feel signs of hunger
more/less satisfied, could eat a little more
you feel satisfied
a little bit uncomfortable
you feel stuffed
bloated, you need to loosen your clothes
so full that you feel nauseous

[From Bob Greene’s “The Best Life Diet”]

You should form a habit of asking yourself before you eat: How hungry am I on a scale of 1 to 10?

The rule of the thumb is that you should be eating when you are at 3 or 4 on the hunger scale. Don’t wait until you get to stage 1 or 2. If you fast too long you won’t be able to control yourself when food finally becomes available. If you are trying to lose weight you should stop eating at stage 5, when you are satisfied but not yet full.

And remember, LESS IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN TOO MUCH!
HUNGER or APPETITE?

One of the biggest mistakes that sets people up for failure in their weight loss efforts is to confuse appetite with physical hunger. We fall into this trap because we don’t listen to our bodies properly and instead of feeding our real hunger, we feed our emotions. We have to realize that there is a big difference between being hungry, and having an appetite.

Sometimes you crave food just because you want the taste, but you don’t really feel hungry. We tend to eat for many reasons besides hunger. We eat with friends at social events. We eat because it is meal time. We eat because we are nervous, stressed or upset. We eat because food is available, while the only time when we should be eating is when we feel really hungry.

Hunger is the "voice of nature" telling us that food is required. There is no other true guide as to when to eat. The time of day, the habitual meal time, the appetite, stress etc. are not the guides we should be listening to.

Appetite Is A Craving for Food

“Hunger is the insistent demand for food that arises out of physiological need for nourishment. Appetite is a craving for food which may be the result of several different outside factors operating through the mind and senses. Anything that will arouse an appetite will encourage one to eat, whether or not there exists an actual need for food.”

~ Herbert M. Shelton, “The Hygienic System: Orthotrophy”

So what’s the difference between hunger and appetite?

According to Paul McKenna, the author of the bestselling book “I can make you thin”, there are 2 clear pointers to help you distinguish real hunger from emotional hunger:
1) Emotional hunger is sudden and urgent; physical hunger is gradual and patient - Emotional hunger (appetite) comes suddenly as a result of how we feel in the current moment. Maybe you just had a fight with a good friend, or you are stressed at work - and to cover up these negative emotions you instantly reach for food to cheer yourself up. The physical hunger is gradual. You may notice a gentle griping in your tummy, or even a deep rumbling - this is the only time you should be eating.

2) Emotional hunger cannot be satisfied with food; physical hunger can - When you are eating and never feeling satisfied it's because you don’t need food - you need to change your feelings. If you are unhappy for any reason, it means that you are hungry for positive feelings, and no amount of food can satisfy your cravings. Michael Neill says it best - “There aren’t enough cookies in the world to make you feel whole and loved”.

Emotional Eating is The No#1 Cause Of Obesity

“I’m convinced that after diets, emotional eating is the number-one cause of obesity in the world. If you eat based on emotional hunger, your body will never feel satisfied by food. This is why many people think that they never feel full - they never get the signal to stop eating because they were never hungry for food in the first place”

~ Paul McKenna, Ph. D. author “I Can Make You Thin”

The first step to controlling your weight is learning how to control emotions and change the feelings. Whenever you feel stressed, anxious, angry, sad, happy or bored and you want to fill this emotional hole with food, just think for a moment and ask yourself: Am I truly hungry or do I just want to change the way I feel? Do I really need to eat this food? I guarantee that 99% of the time the answer will be: NO.

The action steps below will teach you how to better understand your body’s signals, eat only when truly hungry and stop eating when the hunger is satisfied.
Learn to read your Hunger Scale - every time before you eat ask yourself: **How hungry am I on a scale of 1 to 10?** Eat only when you are at stage 3 or 4.

When in doubt - drink WATER - don’t confuse thirst with hunger. Most of the time when you think you are hungry drink a glass of water - you are most likely just thirsty. If you still feel hungry 30 minutes after drinking - it’s a signal you can eat.

Distract your emotions - when you are feeling stressed, sad or upset don’t try to change your mood for the better by eating. Instead find another comforting activity that will help you to wind down and relieve the stress. Call a friend and talk, listen to your favorite music, dance, go for a walk, ride your bike, write in your diary, take a deep breath or take a long bubble bath.

Kill the cravings - watch less TV - it is a proven fact that watching TV makes you want to eat more. It’s because of all those mouth-watering commercials with close ups of perfectly prepared food. Don’t watch these, and you’ll crave less.

Eat everything, in moderation - don’t make a “sin-food” list to avoid. The more you avoid certain food the more you will crave it. So have that pizza or ice cream you’ve been craving. When you are no longer hungry, save the rest for later. You will satisfy your craving and won’t feel a strong need to snack later. If you do not deny yourself your favorite food, you are less likely to crave them.

Draw a big question mark and stick it on your fridge - every time before you open the fridge you’ll be reminded to ask yourself a question: **Am I really hungry or do I just want to change the way I feel?**

Remember that no food can make you fat as long as you eat it only when you are hungry and you don’t overeat. **Moderation is key.**

For more advice and techniques to help you avoid emotional eating, get Paul McKenna’s book - “I Can Make You Thin” at [http://www.paulmckenna.com](http://www.paulmckenna.com)
“I believe that hurried eating has ruined more digestive systems than foie gras.”
~ Peter Mayle

One of the biggest challenges I experienced while living with Yogis in India was to eat slowly, mindfully and to maintain silence during all meals. After all in our culture meals are social events where the conversation is just as important as the food itself. Our meals are rarely a contemplative experience.

Yogis have a slightly different approach to eating. They believe that by eating slowly and in silence you can concentrate better on the energy hidden in food, your mind is fully connected with this energy and helps the body to better absorb and distribute all the vitamins, minerals and nutrients. The speed with which we eat also affects the amount and type of food we eat.

Recent scientific studies prove the Yogis’ theory right.

When Dr Kathleen Melanson at the University of Rhode Island asked a group of college-age women to eat a meal of pasta with sauce and cheese, she found that:

❖ fast eaters consumed 646 calories in 9 minutes
❖ on another occasion, when these women were asked to eat the same meal slowly, they consumed 579 calories in 27 minutes.

That may not seem like a big difference, but 67 calories at breakfast, lunch and dinner adds up to 201 calories a day, or 1,407 calories a week.
By eating slower, we consume fewer calories; in fact, enough to lose 8-10 kg a year without doing or eating anything different.

The reason is that it takes about 20 minutes for our stomach to send the signal to our brain saying that it’s full. When we eat fast, by the time our brain tells us to stop, we are not only satisfied, we are stuffed. If we eat slowly, we have time to realize we are full, and stop on time.

In another study, volunteers ate about a cup of ice cream at different speeds. Researchers took blood samples before and after eating the ice cream. They found the people who took 30 minutes to finish the ice cream had higher concentrations of gut hormones and reported feeling more full than people who ate the ice cream in 5 minutes.

“You Enjoy The Meal More When Eating Slowly

“Not only did the women take in fewer calories when they ate more slowly, they had a greater feeling of satiety at meal completion and 60 minutes afterwards. The women also judged themselves as having enjoyed the meal more when they ate slowly than when they ate quickly, which strongly suggests benefits to eating more slowly.”

~ Kathleen Melanson PhD, RD, LD, an assistant professor of Nutrition Science at the University of Rhode Island

“Eating a meal quickly, as compared to slowly, blocks the release of hormones in the gut that induce feelings of being full. The decreased release of these hormones, can often lead to overeating.”

~ Alexander Kokkinos, MD, PhD, from Laiko General Hospital in Athens, Greece.
Mindful Eating Exercise - Discover Your Senses

Seeing only engages one of our senses. But food is a powerful sensual experience that engages all your senses. No wonder you are seduced by the sight, smell, taste, and touch of it! (Plus, you can even hear the sound of food as you chew it.)

The Center For Mindful Eating recommends practicing the following exercise to be mindful of all your senses in just 5 steps:

1) Use your sight to look at your food’s color and shape with full concentration.

2) Smell your food’s aroma—both cooked and uncooked. Can you tell when something is fresh or spoiled?

3) Taste your food by letting it linger in your mouth for a long time, chewing it and extracting all the flavor it has to give you. Do you like (or dislike) it?

4) Experience details of your food’s texture and sound as you chew.

5) Hear your food as you crunch, munch, and pop it in your mouth.

Eat Slowly - Read Your Body’s Signals

"Mindfulness makes people aware of how much and how quickly they usually eat. We have to eat a little slower to catch that body signal that we’ve had enough; we tend to have lost that ability to find that signal, but we can dial in the skill to wait for it"

~ Brian Shelley, wellness director for First Choice Community Healthcare in Albuquerque, N.M.

In another recent study published in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, scientists found that people who ate mindfully, meaning they were aware of why they ate and stopped eating when they felt full, weighed less than those who ate mindlessly, meaning they ate when they weren’t hungry or in response to anxiety or depression.
Mindful Eating and Yoga

The researchers took the notion one step further and found a strong association between Yoga and mindful eating.

Yoga Supports Mindful Eating

"Yoga teaches you how to be calm and observant during physical discomfort, which translates to other situations, such as not eating more even when the food is delicious."

~ Alan Kristal, Yogi & professor at the University of Washington School of Public Health

Kristal, a Yoga enthusiast for the past 15 years, says that Yoga cultivates mindfulness in a number of ways, such as being able to hold a challenging physical pose by observing the discomfort in a non-judgmental way, with an accepting, calm mind and focus on the breath. This ability to be calm and observant during physical discomfort teaches how to maintain calm in other challenging situations, such as not eating more even when the food tastes good and not eating when you're not hungry.

The Benefits of Eating Slowly & Mindfully

❖ You get the chance to appreciate the appearance, smell, taste and texture of food - and as a result, you enjoy the meal more.
❖ Your food gets chewed well and digested better.
❖ It leads to better health and promotes weight loss.
❖ It lowers stress levels, decreases anxiety, and alters unwanted behaviors, like drinking too much and overeating.
Action Steps

❖ Set the table and sit down to eat.
❖ Take a few deep breaths before you start eating.
❖ Try to spend at least 20 minutes at the table.
❖ Take smaller bites
❖ Chew slowly - each bite 32 times - once for each tooth! Digestion of food begins with the chewing, as you chew for a longer period the amylase in your saliva begins breaking down the food so that the nutrients in it are absorbed more easily into your system. Digestion is easier and more nutrients are derived from the food you eat.
❖ Put down the utensils every time you take a bite. Don't pick them up again until you've chewed and swallowed. If you are using your hands to eat, rest them down on the table after every bite.
❖ When you eat, just eat - don't read a newspaper or magazine, surf the internet or watch TV. Don't eat in the car. Never eat on your feet. Eliminate all your eating distractions.
❖ Try to maintain silence while eating at least 1 meal a day - concentrate on your food and the energy and nutrients it is giving you - savor those aromas, relish the meal’s presentation, and don't just dig in like you've got to finish it off in a hurry.
❖ For more insights on slow and mindful eating visit The Center for Mindful Eating at http://www.tcme.org
“Enough is as good as a feast.”
~George Chapman

One of the most important things we have to learn in order to lose weight is how to stop eating before we reach our overeating threshold. The general design of the human body is to eat when we are hungry and stop when we are satisfied, but many of us fail to recognize this thin border between eating enough and too much. We eat until we think we are full - or even worse, until we finish whatever food we put on our plate. Overeating is a number one cause of our problems with food, and to fix this we need to implement a very simple rule: **stop eating when you are full.**

**Why do we overeat?**

**Most of us don’t overeat because we’re hungry.** We overeat because of family and friends, packages and plates, names and numbers, labels and lights, colors and candles, shapes and smells, distractions and distances, cupboards and containers.

Dr. Brian Wansink, a world expert in nutrition and eating behavior, conducted several studies that show that the **average person makes around 250 decisions about food every day** – breakfast or no breakfast? Pop-tart or bagel? Part of it or all of it? Kitchen or car? Yet out of these 200+ food decisions, most we cannot really explain.

Wansink discovered that environmental cues and eating habits cause people to eat far more than they need, or even realize. This “Mindless Eating”, as he calls the process, has many causes. For example:

- **Plates and bowls** – large plates and bowls can cause people to add more to fill the plate or bowl. The wrong plate can cause you to take an extra 20% or more without knowing it. Large serving bowls can cause people to serve an extra 40% or more.
- **Glasses** – short, wide glasses can cause people to pour more for each serving.
❖ **Family style service** – serving food at the table often leads to more second and third helpings and it increases the frequency of taking extra portions by over 50%.

❖ **Eating while watching TV** – people eat until their show is over, usually long after they’re no longer hungry. One of the studies showed that people who watched 60 minutes of TV ate 28% more than those watching 30 minutes.

❖ **Food in easy reach** – candy bowls, bags of chips, and other snacks within arm’s reach can prove irresistible, so we eat until the bowl or package is empty.

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**We Eat With Our Eyes, Not With Our Stomachs**

“We eat with our eyes, not with our stomachs. If a portion looks large enough, it is perceived to be satisfying. Mindless Eating causes you to eat more than you need. People think they make about 15 food decisions a day, but actually they make hundreds. If just some of those decisions favor eating more food, the combined effect of those many small decisions over time is great. Just 100 or so Mindless Eating calories a day can mean more than 10 extra pounds a year.”

~ Dr. Brian Wansink, author “Mindless Eating. Why We Eat More Than We Think”

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**How To Reduce Mindless Eating and Stop Overeating?**

It’s easy. As Dr. Wansink says, it’s easier to change your environment than to change yourself. Replace poorly-designed dinnerware and utensils with pieces designed to help with portion control. Replace big plates and bowls with smaller ones, drink from taller glasses and don’t eat while watching TV. This alone should help reduce mindless eating and creating a gradual trend toward weight loss. It really can be that simple.
How to determine when to stop eating?

The overeating threshold is different for everyone and can change with age, level of stress, form of exercise, and the time of the day or year. But regardless of any external condition, there are 5 simple tools you can use to determine when to stop eating. You can try all of them and use the one that resonates best with you.

1) The Hunger Scale

You already know the hunger scale as a perfect tool to help you recognize when you are truly hungry and when you can start eating. But the hunger scale can also tell you when you should stop eating, before you overeat. **If you are trying to lose weight you should stop eating at stage 5, when you are pleasantly satisfied but not yet stuffed.** It's a stage when you feel satisfied, but could still eat a little bit more without feeling discomfort. When you stop eating at this point you are not overloading your stomach, and allow it to digest the food in the fastest and most optimal way. The food you’ve eaten will be transformed into energy, instead of being stored in your body as fat.

2) The 2 Palms Rule

According to many Yogis and Rujuta Diwekar, the author of the famous book “Don’t Lose Your Mind, Lose Your Weight”, the stomach is actually the size of 2 palms. The food it can take at a time is the amount that fits in your 2 palms and this is exactly the amount you should be eating as a full meal.

The “2 Palms Rule” will be useful for you in the beginning of your healthy lifestyle journey, when it might be confusing to read your hunger scale properly. By limiting the size of your portion to the food that can fit in your 2 palms, you are automatically lowering the odds of overeating.
Remember this rule whenever you are tempted to load you plate with too much food. **Eat only the amount that would fit in your 2 palms** - anything more than that will have negative consequences for your weight. Your stomach will stretch when you’ll eat too much and with time you’ll need more food to feel satisfied. If you only eat small amounts of food at a time it won’t take as much to make you feel full.

Sometimes you might feel that even this small amount of food that can fit in your 2 palms can be too much - then go back to rule number 1, listen to your body and stop eating before you are stuffed.

3) The 4 Stomach Quadrants

When you know how much you should eat, the next question is: what should be the proportion of solid and liquid food in your stomach. The ancient Ayurvedic philosophy advises the following eating strategy: **with every meal make sure to fill half of your stomach with solid food, 1/4 of your stomach with water and 1/4 with the air (empty).**
Following this strategy will surely help you with eating just the right amount of food - the 1/4 of your stomach left empty will ensure that you stop eating just when feeling comfortable, but still having space for more food.

When it comes to water, remember not to drink it during the meal - drink before or 30 minutes after the meal, to avoid diluting digestive juices in your stomach.

4) The Clean Plate Club

We have all grown up being told by our parents that leaving food on our plate is bad manners and we should eat everything on our plate because there are starving children in Africa. This was just the beginning of our lifetime membership in the so-called “Clean Plate Club”.
As loyal members of the ‘club’ we are obliged to finish food on the plate even if we already feel full. It was deeply imprinted in our mind that unless we finish everything on our plate we are misbehaving. Now let me ask you the question:

**How could you being overweight help the starving children in Africa?**

I don’t know about you, but I can’t think of any way to improve the lives of starving people in India or Africa by simply eating everything that’s on your plate. You can be sure that leaving food on your plate will not insult the millions who go hungry every night. Overstuffing your stomach has not helped the poor (it never will) and it definitely doesn’t help you.

If you are feeling guilty when leaving food on your plate, you can start with making your portions smaller in the first place. If you cook less, you can buy less ingredients, and use the savings to support those in need. If your portion is still too big, don’t be afraid to leave a little food on your plate. **It is better WASTED than WAISTED.**

Never feel obligated to clean your plate by eating every crumb. Instead, always listen to your inner voice. Your body knows exactly when you should start and stop eating - you just have to tune in to its signals and it will surely guide you towards a slim and healthy body. Always mind your body, not your plate.

Give up your membership in the “Clean Plate Club” and exchange it for the “**Listening To Your Body Signals Club**” - because your own body is your best friend in your journey towards weight loss.
❖ **Eat slowly**, chew each mouthful 32 times, and pause in the middle of your meal - this will give your body the time to recognize that it’s full.

❖ Use the **Hunger Scale** as your guide: stop eating at stage 5, when you are pleasantly satisfied but not yet stuffed.

❖ **Eat only the amount that would fit in your 2 palms** - anything more than that will have negative consequences for your weight.

❖ With every meal make sure to fill **half of your stomach with solid food, 1/4 of your stomach with water and 1/4 with air (empty)**.

❖ **Ditch the Empty Plate Club** - don’t feel obligated to clean your plate by eating every crumb - make/choose smaller portions instead.

❖ **Wait at least 10 minutes before going for seconds.** This will give your body time to process how full you are and allow your brain to emit the "full" signal. Chances are good that you won’t be tempted to have a second portion after the wait.

❖ **Prevent mindless eating**: replace poorly-designed big plates and bowls with smaller ones, drink from taller glasses and don’t eat while watching TV.

❖ For more info on how to prevent mindless eating and stop overeating get Dr. Brian Wansink’s book **“Mindless Eating. Why We Eat More Than We Think”** from [http://www.mindlesseating.org](http://www.mindlesseating.org)
For More Healthy Eating Tips Visit: www.slimyogi.com/blog