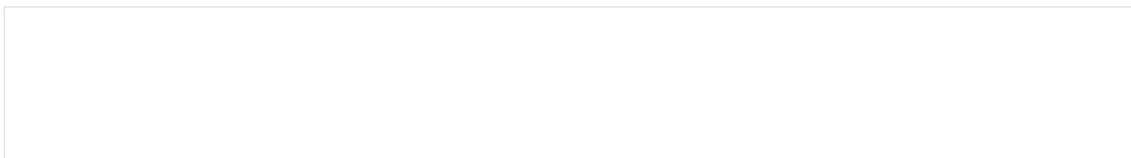




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Slow Down, You Eat Too Fast

Eat less and enjoy it more with mindful eating

By Kathleen M. Zelman, MPH, RD, LD



FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES

Have you ever noticed how long it takes most thin people to eat their meals? My sister was always the last one to finish her meal, and it drove the rest of the family crazy. We were sure it was her ploy to get out of clearing the table or doing the dishes! It was not until years later that I realized her slow eating is the secret to her trim figure.

Most Americans eat too fast, and, as a result, they take in too many calories before they realize they've eaten enough. It takes approximately 20 minutes from the time you start eating for your **brain** to send out signals of fullness. Leisurely eating allows ample time to trigger the signal from your **brain** that you are full. And feeling full translates into eating less.

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Study of [Obesity](#) showed that [overweight](#) men and women took in fewer calories when they slowed their normal eating pace. And a recent Japanese study involving 1,700 young women concluded that eating more slowly resulted in feeling full sooner, and thus eating fewer calories at mealtime.

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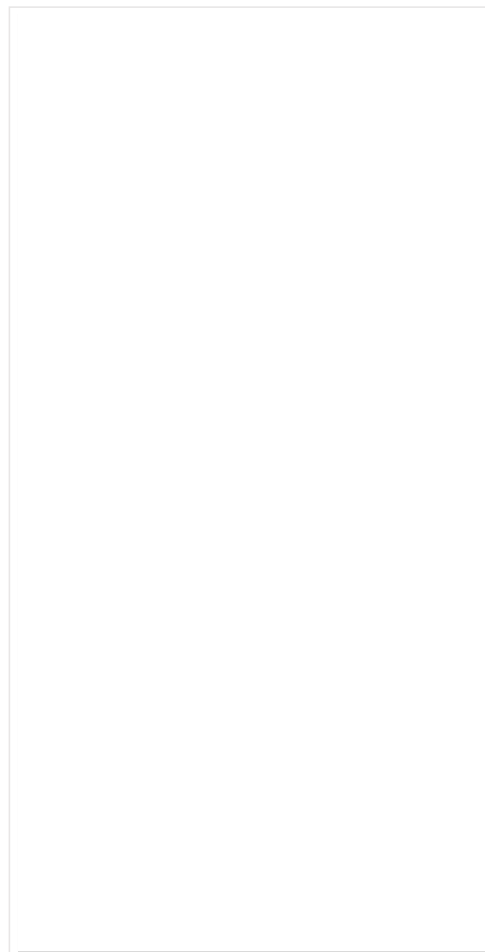
See how the body impacts the brain.
the MS MindShift

It's especially important for people who have had [gastric bypass](#) operations to heed advice to eat slowly. A study of [gastric bypass](#) patients showed that those who ate too fast and failed to recognize the signs of satiety were less successful at [losing weight](#) than other patients.

The Pleasure Principle

Not only does eating slowly and mindfully help you eat less, it enhances the pleasure of the dining experience. To master the art of slow eating, put on some music, light a few candles, turn off the TV and any other distractions, and concentrate on your meal.

A perfect place to start is with dessert. Let's be honest, who is still [hungry](#) when dessert arrives? But our innate desire for sweets nonetheless makes desserts very tempting.



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All women should know the *You can* have your cake and eat it, too -- as long as you only take a few bites. Take a bite, eat it slowly, savor it, and do nothing but enjoy the flavor, texture, and experience of the delicious dessert. You will find that one or two bites give you the sweet indulgence without a lot of extra calories.

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