



Health & Wellness

April
2026
Issue 19

Mindful Eating

This month's Health & Wellness topic is **Mindful Eating**. This issue will go over what mindful eating is, what it isn't, tips to eat mindfully, and ways to recognize and manage hunger.



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Welcome to DuPage Senior Citizens Council/Kane Senior Council's April Health & Wellness Newsletter!

We're here to bring you a new topic relating to wellness as well as new brain teasers, seasonal recipes, book recommendations, and more!

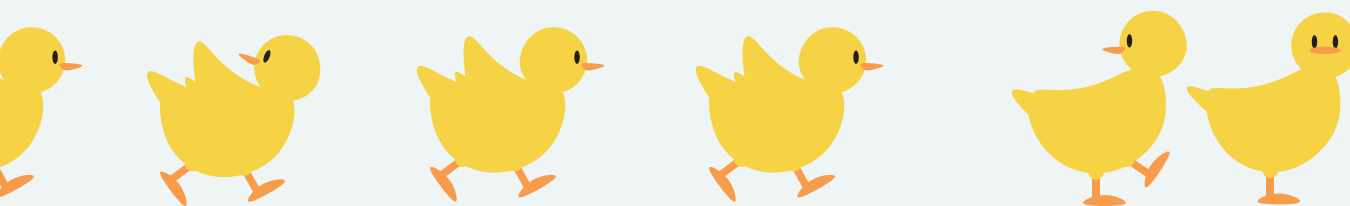
Providing Meals and More...



DuPage Senior
Citizens Council



Kane Senior
Council



Mindful Eating

Introduction

Mindful eating is the practice of being fully **present** and **engaged** during meals, focusing on physical hunger, taste, texture, and satiety cues rather than emotional eating or distractions.



Mindful eating **improves digestion**, **reduces overeating**, and fosters a **healthy relationship** with food by encouraging slow, **intentional** consumption.

Mindful Eating

considers **where** the food came from, **how** it was **prepared**, and **who prepared it**

notices **internal** and **external** cues that affect **how much** we eat

notices how the food **looks, tastes, smells,** and **feels** in our bodies as we eat

acknowledges **how** the body **feels** **after** eating the meal

expresses **gratitude** for the meal

reflects on how our food **choices** affect our **local** and **global environment**

Mindless Eating

is the opposite of mindful eating:

eating when you **aren't hungry**

eating for **external reasons** (e.g. after seeing a food commercial)

not **portioning** out food

eating while **distracted** (e.g. while watching tv)

eating in response to **strong emotions**

The Science Behind Mindful Eating

Hormones in your body send **signals** to your **brain** when you're **hungry** and when you're **full**.

Leptin suppresses appetite and signals to the brain that your body has sufficient energy stores.

Ghrelin is released in the stomach and signals to your brain that energy stores are low, and it is time to eat.

Recognizing these signs can lead to a **decrease** in **mindless consumption** or eating to the feeling of **discomfort**.

Next time you sit down for a meal, ask yourself:

“Do I feel **satisfied**?”

If the answer is **yes**, consider taking a break from the meal or stopping altogether.

If you still feel **hungry**, honor your body, and continue enjoying the food on your plate.

Tips to incorporate mindful eating into daily living

Eat Intentionally

Think about your **reason** for eating. Is it driven by emotion? Hunger? Boredom? Pay attention to **what** you are eating and **why** you are eating it.

Be present with the food

Engage all your **senses** while eating and pay attention to textures, flavors, aromas, etc. Utilizing these strategies will help to increase your **attentiveness** to the food on your plate.

Finish eating when you feel satisfied

Eating to **satisfaction** may or may not result in a “**cleaned**” plate, and that is **OK!** Everybody has different **hunger/fullness** cues, and as a mindful eater, it’s important that you can **recognize** what those **cues** look like for you.

Eat slowly and chew your food

Chewing your food **slowly** and **thoroughly** allows your brain the opportunity to recognize when it is full. By practicing this tip, you increase mealtime **satisfaction** and improve **digestion**.

Turn off distractions

Distractions can contribute to **mindless eating** and **prevent** you from **fully focusing** on your eating experience. Research has shown that “**mindless**” or **distracted** eating leads to overeating, anxiety, and weight gain. Some examples of mindless eating include eating while driving, while working, while sitting in front of the TV, or scrolling through social media.

Aim to eat 3 meals per day

Skipping meals may lead to increased hunger, thus leading to possibly **unhealthy choices**. Practice listening to your body when it is hungry and **honoring that signal** when you receive it. If you are struggling to interpret your hunger cues, try asking yourself how you would **physically** and **emotionally** feel if you were to eat at any given moment.

Use the Hunger Rating Scale

The **Hunger Rating Scale** can help you decide if you are experiencing **real hunger**

- 10** Stuffed to the point of feeling sick
- 9** Very uncomfortably full, need to loosen your belt
- 8** Uncomfortably full, feel stuffed
- 7** Very full, feels as if you have overeaten
- 6** Comfortable, full, satisfied
- 5** Comfortable, neither hungry nor full
- 4** Beginning signs and symptoms of hunger
- 3** Hungry with several hunger symptoms, ready to eat
- 2** Very hungry, unable to concentrate
- 1** Starving, dizzy, irritable

Remember that **physical hunger** builds **gradually** over time (usually over several hours after a meal), whereas **emotional eating** and **cravings** usually come on very **suddenly**.

When you are **genuinely hungry**, you may experience one or several of the **symptoms** listed below:

- Stomach pangs or growling
- Emptiness in the stomach
- Irritability
- Headache
- Low energy/fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating



Before you eat, take a moment to **rate** your **hunger**. Think about how hungry you **physically feel**. Your goal is to eat between levels **four** and **six**. This means you are **eating** when you are **hungry** but **stopping** when you are **comfortably full**.

Information adapted from:

<https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/weight-management/get-touch-your-appetite>

Health & Wellness Education

WRAP UP

Try not to **put off eating** for too long. Waiting until level **one or two** - when you are starving and unable to concentrate - may lead to **overeating**. When you first start to feel any of the symptoms listed, you should probably start to think about eating.

Before you indulge, take a step back and think about **how you feel**.

Did you just eat a few minutes ago? Are you eating in response to an emotion or because you are experiencing physical hunger?

For more health and wellness tips, information and resources, visit our website.



BRAIN BOOSTERS

SUDOKU

			9		8			2
			3		2	4	6	7
	1		4					8
		6			3	7	8	
		4				9		
	3	8	5			1		
2					1		7	
3	6	1	7		4			
5			2		9			

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Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH

The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?

WORD SEARCH

C	K	K	S	M	F	M	G	M	V	U	D	W	Q
M	I	N	D	L	E	S	S	O	C	Z	I	O	L
P	O	R	T	I	O	N	I	N	G	M	G	E	N
J	H	U	N	G	E	R	E	V	G	T	E	S	V
R	O	M	T	N	F	A	D	U	M	B	S	A	N
Y	Q	L	W	N	D	B	L	X	C	N	T	T	E
M	M	I	N	D	F	U	L	S	V	W	I	I	S
Y	P	E	N	G	A	G	E	D	S	Q	O	S	Y
B	X	J	O	K	G	O	T	L	N	P	N	F	C
C	Y	C	P	F	G	N	R	Q	P	D	A	I	K
S	X	D	M	B	P	B	P	X	L	V	Q	E	S
D	I	S	T	R	A	C	T	E	D	B	D	D	E
I	N	T	E	N	T	I	O	N	A	L	L	Y	G
U	I	L	A	O	V	E	R	E	A	T	I	N	G

WORD BANK

DIGESTION

MINDLESS

DISTRACTED

ENGAGED

OVEREATING

SATISFIED

INTENTIONALLY

MINDFUL

PORTIONING

HUNGER

Our Picks of the Month

April Recipe: High Protein Mac and Cheese

Ingredients:

- 8 oz pasta of choice
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup milk
- 2 cups water
- 16 oz bone broth
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tbsp butter
- pinch of salt and pepper



Directions:

1. Add bone broth and water to pot on stove and bring to a boil. Add in pasta and cook. Drain and set aside.
2. While pasta is cooking, add cottage cheese, milk, and seasonings to blender. Blend until smooth.
3. Add butter to pot on low heat and melt. Once butter is melted, add cottage cheese sauce to pot and heat. Slowly add cheddar cheese and stir until mixed.
4. Turn off stove and add pasta to pot. Mix until all pasta is coated with cheese. If cheese is too thick, slowly add milk until texture is to your liking.

Our Book Pick of the Month

How to Age Disgracefully by Clare Pooley

Lydia takes a job running the Senior Citizens' Social Club where she meets a group of seniors with their own colorful backstories. When the city council threatens to sell the building where the club meets, they must come together with members of the community to save the building.



ANSWER KEY

C	K	K	S	M	F	M	G	M	V	U	D	W	Q
M	I	N	D	L	E	S	S	O	C	Z	I	O	L
P	O	R	T	I	O	N	I	N	G	M	G	E	N
J	H	U	N	G	E	R	E	V	G	T	E	S	V
R	O	M	T	N	F	A	D	U	M	B	S	A	N
Y	Q	L	W	N	D	B	L	X	C	N	T	T	E
M	M	I	N	D	F	U	L	S	V	W	I	I	S
Y	P	E	N	G	A	G	E	D	S	Q	O	S	Y
B	X	J	O	K	G	O	T	L	N	P	N	F	C
C	Y	C	P	F	G	N	R	Q	P	D	A	I	K
S	X	D	M	B	P	B	P	X	L	V	Q	E	S
D	I	S	T	R	A	C	T	E	D	B	D	D	E
I	N	T	E	N	T	I	O	N	A	L	L	Y	G
U	I	L	A	O	V	E	R	E	A	T	I	N	G

4	7	3	9	6	8	5	1	2
8	9	5	3	1	2	4	6	7
6	1	2	4	7	5	3	9	8
9	2	6	1	4	3	7	8	5
1	5	4	8	2	7	9	3	6
7	3	8	5	9	6	1	2	4
2	4	9	6	5	1	8	7	3
3	6	1	7	8	4	2	5	9
5	8	7	2	3	9	6	4	1

Riddle Answer:

The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?

Answer: Footsteps

Print Monthly Meal Menus at:

www.DuPageSeniorCouncil.org/Home-Delivered-Meals-Menus

www.KaneSeniorCouncil.org/Meals-On-Wheels



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