

Slowing Down to Eat (and Feel) Better

Slow Food is an international movement that started in Italy in the 1980's. It promotes some very important concepts about "how" to eat, like the "protection of the right to taste" and the belief that meals are meant to be enjoyed rather than simply swallowed. Here are some easy, and healthful ways to slow down and eat better.

101 **Eat when you are sitting at a table**

It's hard to feel satisfied when you quickly eat a bowl of ice cream while standing in front of the refrigerator or toss down a burger and fries while driving down the highway. It's also easy to eat more than your body wants. Eating while sitting at the table allows you to focus on the food in front of you for both pleasure and nutritional value.

101 **Prepare more meals for your family**

Home cooked meals are generally lower in cost and higher in nutrients and you control the portion size. Think you have no time to cook? Just switch a few minutes of your evening TV time to "assembling" a meal from healthy convenience foods, like whole wheat rolls, microwave chicken breast, frozen vegetables and salad-in-a-bag.

101 **Eat when you are hungry**

This is a tough one since we are surrounded 24/7 by tempting foods and the ads that tempt us to buy them. It is important to keep in mind, however, because when we eat in the absence of hunger, we tend to eat guiltily and quickly. This usually means high-sugar, high-fat snack foods in larger amounts than we might otherwise eat.

101 **Savor whatever you are eating**

Taste is the number-one reason why we eat. When we eat quickly, there is no time for our taste buds and sense of smell to get maximum flavors and pleasure from food. By eating slowly and paying attention, we get greater satisfaction from all meals and snacks. And, remember, it takes 20 minutes for your brain to "hear" that you are full!

101 **Eat only what you really enjoy.**

Although this may seem obvious, it really isn't. We often eat something just because "it's there." Ever eat the last fruit-filled chocolates in the box, when all your favorites were gone? Or how about the last cookie on the tray, even when you don't really like raisins or oatmeal? Eating food you don't like is a waste of calories and enjoyment!

101 **Take a stroll before or after a meal**

When it comes to health and fitness, nutrition and physical activity go hand-in-hand. Physical activity helps your appetite and hunger signals operate normally. It's really all about healthy self-care. If you move your body regularly, you'll also want to fuel yourself healthfully instead of eating willy-nilly whatever happens to be available.

For more information about the Slow Food philosophy and activities visit:

- Slow Food USA® at: <http://www.slowfoodusa.org>
- Slow Food International® at: <http://www.slowfood.com>



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