# A Guide to Mindful Eating

You've probably heard of the term mindfulness. You may already be implementing some mindfulness practices into your day to day life, but have you thought about how mindfulness influences eating habits? Often this is an area that can be neglected.

If you ever feel disconnected with your eating habits, not to worry. You are not alone, and luckily, just like as with everything else, we can make a conscious choice to improve our eating habits.

Mindfulness can encourage healthy eating habits, leading to a healthier body composition, and can train us to savour our food.

Practicing mindful eating will also help to strengthen other mindful behaviours in all areas of your life.

**Eating an apple a day keeps the doctor away**

This is actually backed by solid science. Apples can help prevent heart disease because fiber and antioxidants prevent cholesterol buildup in the blood vessels of the heart.

The fiber in apples can also help move waste through the intestines, which can help lower the risk of problems such as irritable bowel syndrome.

The apple skin contains half of the vitamin C in an apple and is rich in phytochemicals which helps fight chronic disease. They are also packed with potassium which helps keep blood pressure under control.

*Here's a brief exercise to practice mindful eating with an apple.*

**A Taste of Mindfulness**

Mindfully wash and dry the apple.

Breathe in and out a couple of times to help you focus and become more in touch with how you feel about the apple.

Look at the apple in your palm and ask yourself: When I eat an apple, am I really enjoying eating it? Or am I so preoccupied with other thoughts that I miss the delights that the apple offers me?

Give your undivided attention to the apple. Notice its weight in your hand. Look at the color variations. Smell the apple. What variety is it?

Now smile at the apple and, slowly, take a bite. And chew it. Be aware of your breath and focus on the experience:

What does it feel like in your mouth?
What does it taste like?
What sounds do you hear as you eat it?
What is it like to chew and swallow it?
Chew slowly and completely – 20 to 30 times for each bite.
Chew consciously, savouring the taste of the apple and its nourishment, immersing yourself in the experience 100%.

Appreciate the apple as it is.

As you become fully aware of eating the apple, you also become fully aware of the present moment. You become fully engaged in the here and now.