

Join us for the Fitwize

# Nutrition Session

Friday, November 22  
4 to 5 PM!



When you eat, do you use all  
your senses to enjoy your food?

This month we'll practice a  
mindful eating exercise to  
teach us how to do just that.

## Mindful Eating: Eating with Intention and Awareness

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

Are you able to use all your senses when you eat? Just like Spiderman uses all of his Spidey-senses to detect danger so he can save the day, you should be using all of your senses to eat mindfully. Mindful eating means eating with intention and awareness. It means you know why you are eating and you know how much you are eating. Are you responding to hunger, your appetite or an emotion? Are you eating just enough to satisfy the reason for why you are eating without overdoing it? Using all of your senses allows you to connect with your body so you can respond appropriately. How many of you eat while on your phone, iPad or watching TV? Many of us are guilty of doing so but that distracts us making it very difficult to eat mindfully.

Mindful eating involves all of our senses: smell, sight, touch, taste and even hearing. Think about these questions as you eat:

- How does the food smell? Is it good? What smells do you detect?
- How does the food look? What feeling or sensation do you have in your mouth and stomach as you look at the food? Is your mouth watering?
- What does the food feel like? Notice the texture and temperature.
- How does the food taste? Move the item all around your mouth hitting all of your taste buds. Is the taste satisfying? Chew thoroughly noting how the taste or flavors of the food changes.
- Are you listening to your food? Are you listening to how your body responds to the food?

The last one can be difficult to apply unless you are eating something like fajitas or Rice Krispies cereal with milk, which are foods that make obvious noise. However, hearing is part of our senses and it is important to activate all five senses to truly master mindful eating.

This month at the Fitwize nutrition session, we are going to explore the definition of mindful eating. The kids are going to be guided through a mindful eating exercise. The kids will eat a snack two different ways: 1) the kids will eat a snack (such as Goldfish) out of a large bowl and they will be allowed to talk to their friends without focusing on their eating; 2) they will portion out the same snack and will eat it while staying focused and mindful. We will then compare and contrast the two strategies.

For additional information on mindful eating practices in kids, please see this blog article:  
<http://blog.harvardvanguard.org/2013/04/smart-kids-practice-mindful-eating/>

