

# MINDLESS EATING

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# Objectives

- Explain the process of eating under different circumstances
- Examine various factors that lead to eating mindlessly
- Analyze the consequences of eating without focusing on food
- Review helpful strategies to combat mindless eating

# What is Mindless Eating?

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- Mindless eating occurs when the brain focuses on something else while we eat

# Contributing Factors



Distractions

Environment

Portion Sizes

Emotional Needs

Food

# Contributing Factors--Distractions

□ TV

□ Computer



Image Source <http://www.mindfuleatinghk.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/dont-eat-watchtv-400x400.jpg>

□ Movies in theatre

□ Driving



Image Source Page: <http://mix941kmxj.com/eating-while-driving-just-as-dangerous-as-texting-while-driving-poll/>

# Contributing Factors--Environment

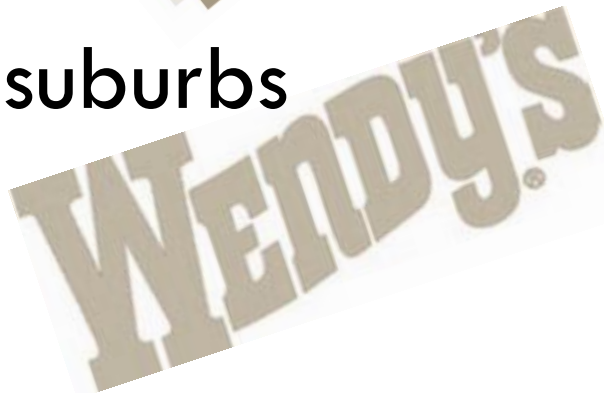
## Convenience

- Drive through



## Availability of food

- 94 Mc Donald's in San Antonio and its suburbs



# Then and Now

1960

Average fast Food Meal

Hamburger

Fries, 12 oz Cola

**590 calories**



2011

Average Fast Food Meal

Quarter Pounder

Fries, 32 oz Cola

**1390 calories**



# Portion Sizes

**1980**

**140 calories**



**2012**

**350 calories**





# Size Really Matters



<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/07/110714150949.htm>

# Contributing Factors....Emotions

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression





**Food**  
**We Love to Eat**

# What are the Consequences of Mindless Eating?

- Excess intake of calories
  - ▣ Obesity → other serious health complications
  - ▣ Tend to be unhealthy food choices
- Eat 20% more calories than needed
  - ▣ Daily excess of only 100 kcal to 150 kcal can contribute to obesity

# Consequences

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- Digestive process may be 30% to 40% less effective
- Signals that regulate food intake may not be received by the brain
- Lose the pleasure of eating food



**What changes can  
we make to eat  
more mindfully?**

# Eat Mindfully

- Use hunger cues
- Pay attention to food and its effects on the body
  - ▣ Taste
  - ▣ Smell
  - ▣ Sight
  - ▣ Texture
- Are you satisfied?
- Are you enjoying it?

# Change Plates and Utensils



Image Source <http://trainerjames.com/blog/article/portion-control-is-a-must/>



# Keep Healthier Foods at Eye Level



Image Source <http://maintainbodyshape.blogspot.com/>

# Eat in the Kitchen or Dining Room



Image Source <http://chasingriches.wordpress.com/2012/04/18/the-evening-meal/>

Don't eat snacks out of the box or bag  
Avoid re-sealable snack packages



# Limit Low Calorie Snacks



Image Source <http://andreapalen.com/blog/242>

# Meals and Snacks

- Watch portion sizes when dining out
  - ▣ Think about what/how much you order
  - ▣ Be careful with value meals
  - ▣ Large is often the default size
  - ▣ Package leftovers



Image Source <http://deliverawaydebt.com/frugal-friday-tips/friday-frugal-tip-dollar-menu/>

# Meals and Snacks

- Be purposeful when dishing portion sizes at home
- Don't let yourself get too hungry
  - ▣ Small meals and snacks
- Pre-portioned snacks



# Tune in to Your Hunger

- Slow down
  - ▣ Takes 20 minutes to realize we are full
- Don't eat by the clock
- Minimize distractions
  - ▣ Turn off TV, phone, computer
  - ▣ Parents can be role models

# Ambiance

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- With soft, dim lighting, people are more likely to take their time eating
- People exposed to a slow-music condition took significantly more time to complete their dinners than those exposed to a fast music condition



# Summary

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- Mindless eating occurs when the brain focuses on something else while we eat
- There can be significant health consequences
- Making small changes can help to eat more mindfully



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