

Transcript – Let’s Talk Food Literacy: Mindful Eating

Luisa Magalhaes, Registered Dietitian, appears on screen after she places a large bowl of fruits and a vase full of colourful flowers on the kitchen counter. As she does this, images of puzzle pieces pop up in sequence with the words ‘explore’, ‘build’, and ‘connect’. Then we see her sharing a meal with a household member at the kitchen table. Next, we see Luisa in the kitchen.

Hi! I’m Luisa, and a Registered Dietitian.

Think of the last meal you ate. What did you have? Did you eat slowly or quickly? Why were you eating? Were you hungry, bored? What time was it? Where were you? How much did you have? How did your food choice make you feel? If you can answer most of these questions, you were likely being “mindful”. In other words, you took the time to pay attention to the taste, texture and smell of your food, your current feelings, and your body’s cues telling you how hungry or full you were. This is a good thing.

We see Luisa sharing a meal and eating from a dinner plate filled with salad and a whole grain tuna sandwich. Text appears in the foreground: make healthier choices more often. An image of Canada’s food guide website appears on screen, with text, “Eat a variety of healthy foods each day,” “Have plenty of vegetables and fruits,” “Eat protein foods,” “Choose whole grain foods,” and “Make water your drink of choice”. Half of the plate is filled with vegetables and fruit, a quarter is filled with protein foods, and a quarter is filled with whole grain foods, with a glass of water pictured on the side. We also see a link to the food guide, food-guide.canada.ca.

Mindful eating habits can help you make healthier choices more often. Using the food guide, serve up a balance of vegetables and fruit, proteins and whole grains. Eating well feels good. Not sure where to start? Connect with a registered dietitian to meet your unique nutritional goals.

We see Luisa’s dinner plate on screen again, with the text ‘be conscious of what you eat.’

Being mindful helps us be more conscious of what we eat. Finding foods that reflect your taste, culture, budget, can help improve your eating habits. This is not meant to make you feel guilty or bad about your choices. It’s simply an invitation to be curious about what foods you choose and why.

Luisa and her household member cheer with their glasses of water as they enjoy each others company during a meal. The text ‘enjoy your food more’ appears in the foreground.

Being mindful helps us enjoy our food more. Tasting the flavors, trying new foods and noticing how foods make your body feel, can make mealtime more enjoyable.

Mindless eating is the opposite way to eat. It often results in eating faster, multitasking, eating more than we need, and choosing less healthy foods that are higher in fat, salt and sugar, and lower in important nutrients. In the long run, this can negatively impact our wellness.

We see Luisa eating with her household member again. The text ‘take time to eat’ appears in the foreground.

Time is a key part of good eating habits. Eating slowly and thoughtfully and without distractions like screens helps you know when you’re full.

Eating happens in many places: at home, the mall, work, school, a friend's place. Wherever you are, consider how you can make changes to your surroundings so that the healthy choice is the easy choice. At home? Stock your pantry with foods you like and know are good for you. Out and about? Pack healthy snacks or look for a restaurant option that include whole grains, vegetables and fruit and a protein. At a friend's house? Pick a meal that is fun to make together and balanced too.

Luisa sets the table with cutlery and napkins. She also adds a vase with flowers. Afterwards, Luisa and her household member sit down with their dinner plates full of a colourful salad and whole grain tuna sandwich. A puzzle piece with the word 'connect' flashes on the screen. Next we see the text 'share traditions' in the foreground of the dinner plate.

Consider these tips to make meal times more satisfying:

- Make your eating area attractive. Set the table, add a centerpiece, sit looking out a window.
- Turn on your favorite music.
- Cook and eat with others - Did you know that just by cooking and eating together with others, Canadians tend to make healthier food choices? For me, taking the time to grill some protein, cook up some whole grains and prepare some greens more likely happens when preparing food for more than myself!
- Can't meet in person? Connect virtually by phone. And try foods new to us.

Bottom Line: Take time to eat mindfully. When you can, gather friends or family to prepare and enjoy tasty meals together. Company can fill the soul, and you might just notice healthier foods on your plate.

Eat well. Live well.

The video ends with an image of a puzzle piece with the words 'Eat well. Live well' on the left-hand side, with food-guide.canada.ca below it. An acknowledgement logo for Food Literacy for Life, foodliteracy.ca, appears on the right-hand side along with 'created by Peterborough Public Health' (logo shown). A visual of the food literacy framework, from foodliteracy.ca appears on the left-hand side of the screen, with 'Food Literacy' pictured in the center of a circle. The following colourful puzzle pieces surround it: 'Food Skills, Self-Efficacy and Confidence, Ecological Factors (External), Food Decisions, and Food and Nutrition Knowledge.'
