

# Manage Stress and Practice Mindful Eating By Victoria Shanta Retelny, RD, LDN

## Take Charge of Your Behavior and Lose Weight

Let's face it; actions speak much louder than words when it comes to managing your weight. The way you treat your mind and body can keep your waistline in check more than you know.

Since stress is a big factor in our busy, over-scheduled lives, planning healthful meals and snacks can take a side step to convenience. Although research has shown that stress itself can cause hormonal changes in the body which may lead to weight gain – when combined with unhealthy behaviors creates the recipe for pounds and inches creeping on.

Do you eat more or mindlessly eat when stressed out? Do



Keep healthful foods on hand so you can prepare a variety of salads, fresh fruits, whole grains and other good choices at home.

you lose sleep and eat processed foods over the whole, fresh foods? Being present in the moment can help you stop, evaluate and feel fullness before taking another bite, unbuttoning your pants or getting heart burn that is caused by

overeating. Whether or not mindfulness leads to weight loss is still being investigated, but there is some evidence that people who live more mindfully – by practicing meditative techniques like yoga – have staved off weight gain in midlife.



Take the time to make a list of favorite meals you want to cook this week. Plan them around seasonal produce items that are ripe and delicious now. By having the right ingredients on hand you can save more than \$10 and over 200 calories per meal!

## Make Food Swaps

Substitute healthy foods for not-so-healthy ones. Steer clear of foods that are tempting, such as sweet and savory snack foods like candy, cookies, cake, potato chips, crackers and tortilla chips. Instead keep healthful foods around like baby carrots, cut-up peppers, broccoli florets, cubed tofu and/or edamame (soybeans). The less temptation you have in front of you, the less you will reach for comfort from food when stressful times arise. Plan to take healthful food with you to avoid eating on the run!

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