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Nutrition Nibbles

Savor the Flavor of Eating Right

There are two things I frequently tell my clients: 1. Eating should be enjoyable and 2. Most of the time, it's not what we eat but *how much* we eat, *how* we eat, and *what we do* to our food that counts. These simple truths tie in nicely with the theme for National Nutrition Month® 2016: ***Savor the Flavor of Eating Right***. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages all of us to make the most of our eating experiences by focusing on the different flavors, food traditions, and social aspects that eating has to offer.

Eat the Right Foods the Right Way

"Eating right" is much more than eating the right amount of calories or nutrients. It includes being more mindful of the process of eating: everything from deciding what to eat, when to eat, where to eat, how to prepare the food to eat, with whom to eat, and why you are eating. Slowing down connects you with the food you put into your body and maximizes the pleasure of the dining experience. Try single-tasking--eat without distraction. Take one bite at a time, chew slowly, and pay attention to the aroma, textures, and flavors. Notice your stomach filling and when you begin to feel satisfied. Soon you will start to notice the foods that are right for you--the ones that you enjoy the most AND help you feel your best. You will naturally have a better idea of how much food your body needs to be comfortably nourished.

An Exercise to Help You Eat Right

To get the hang of savoring the flavor of eating right, try out these tips:

1. Start by asking yourself: "What do I feel like eating?" Sit quietly with this question and see what comes up. Once you have a few ideas, ask yourself: "What is it that my body needs from these choices?" If you conjured up the idea of eating a salad, maybe your body is craving fluids and something to cool it down. If you dreamt of chocolate, maybe you could use a little pampering or indulgence. This tip is all about tuning inward to your body's taste preferences and needs, do not pass judgement on your choices. See if you can find a way to honor them.

2. Set up a pleasant eating environment. We tend to eat our meals in the same places. For instance, you might eat breakfast in your car, lunch at your desk, or dinner at home. Do you need a change of venue for a pleasurable eating experience? Or maybe you just need to spruce up your dining area a bit by adding a placemat and clearing away the distractions. Ideally, we are eating distraction-free (no devices, no work, etc), seated at a table, and consciously enjoying our food.

3. Make time for food traditions or create some new ones. Many of us have fond memories around particular foods (helping my grandmother make homemade ravioli) and traditions (Sunday night dinner). Revive these traditions! If it's not feasible, think about creating some rituals or specialty foods that you would love your family to think fondly of later in life.

Enjoy savoring the flavor of eating right, however that looks for you!

Don't forget: March 9th is National Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day. Hug your RD/RDN that day!

**Questions or Comments? Email me at
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