



*CACFP wishes you a wonderful and cheerful holiday season filled with the company of friends and loved ones, with the promise of a happy new year.*



It's the holidays and for most of us, that means indulging in a whole lot of comfort food. But why not take healthier means on WHAT we eat, but HOW we eat during this holiday season? Mindful eating might help you reach that approach.

According to Harvard Medical School, mindfulness refers to the practice of being aware and in the now. Applied to eating, mindfulness includes noticing the smell, flavors, colors, and texture of your food. It also means, chewing slowly, removing any distractions, such as turning off the TV or putting away your phone. Mindful eating can help you fully enjoy a meal and the experience of eating holiday food---with moderation and restraint.

Here are a few tips for more mindful eating.

1. **Control portions.** Especially during the holidays, know that second portions of festive treats will be readily available. You don't have to deprive yourself, just eat smaller portions and less often.
2. **Plan.** Prepare healthy snacks throughout the day. If you tend to get hungry between meals, bring a whole grain, high-fiber snack. Fiber keeps you feeling full longer.
3. **Chew 15 times.** Enjoy each bite and put your fork down. Try to get 15 chews out of each bite. Take time to enjoy flavors and textures in your mouth before swallow.
4. **Turn off distractions.** Have you ever glanced down from your phone, TV, or computer, to only wonder where all your food went? These distractions make us less aware of what and how much we are eating.
5. **Don't clean your plate.** Many of us were brought up to finish everything on our plate and were not allowed to leave the dinner table until we did. It is okay to not finish the plate. Try packing the leftovers to go. Even though no one likes to waste, overeating doesn't help either.

Mindful eating offers many benefits throughout the year, but is especially helpful during the holidays. The key to mindful eating is awareness. Simply by paying more attention to WHAT and HOW you eat, you're more likely to make beneficial changes and make the season more meaningful for you.

Source:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/10-tips-for-mindful-eating-just-in-time-for-the-holidays-201511248698>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/weight-loss/in-depth/weight-loss/art-20044318>

### Program Reminders/ Updates and Announcements

**Holiday Closures:** The CACFP office will be closed to the public from December 23 – January 1, 2018. We will re-open to the public January 2, 2018.

**Are you going away?** Please remember to call/email your program consultant and let us know in advance if you will be away from your home during this holiday season during a meal time.

## Menu Ideas – Meatless Mondays

### Breakfast

Whole grain cheerios	Baked egg muffins	Sliced ham	Whole grain tortilla & nut butter	Whole wheat English muffin
banana	stir fry potatoes	tomato and cheese slices	grapes	pears
<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>

### Lunch or Dinner

Firm Tofu Stir fry	Lean beef patties	Mozarella cheese	Baked fish fillet	Split pea soup
quinoa	whole wheat bun	whole grain pasta	wild rice	pita bread
asparagus	broccoli	corn	green beans	squash
carrots	tangerine	broccoli	orange slices	apple
<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>	<b>Milk (1% /whole)</b>

### Snack Am or Pm

Boiled egg	Green/red bell peppers	Baked garbanzo beans	Edamame	sweet potato
corn tortilla	hummus	tangerines	whole grain crackers	milk 1%/whole

#### \*Sweet Spinach Muffins

##### Ingredients:

2 cup flour, whole wheat	¾ cup milk
1 ½ teaspoon cinnamon	¼ teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder	½ teaspoon baking soda
½ cup honey	1 large banana
6 ounces spinach	½ cup unsalted butter
1 large egg	1 teaspoon vanilla

##### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F, and line a muffin pan with paper liners (or use silicone muffin cups sprayed with cooking spray).
2. Combine all dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl.
3. Melt butter. Blend the wet ingredients in a blender or food processor until completely pureed.
4. Pour the puree into the dry ingredient bowl, and fold together gently until just combined. (Do not over-mix.)
5. Spoon the batter into the muffin pan, and bake for 18-22 minutes, or until the muffins are firm to the touch on top, but not quite browning.
6. Cool most or all of the way before serving.

Yields: approximately 18 cupcakes

Source: recipe modified from [www.superhealthykids.com](http://www.superhealthykids.com)



### Training Corner



#### Introducing Food to Infants

The CACFP is now requiring parents to advise the provider when an infant is developmentally ready to be offered solid foods.

All providers caring for infants must send a Parent/Guardian Consent Form to the CACFP with both parent and provider signature to avoid any meal disallowances.



#### PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM FOR INTRODUCING FOOD TO INFANTS

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), introducing solid foods to infants before they are ready increases an infant's risk of weight gain during their early years and being overweight later in life. Also, when infants are not physically ready to accept solid foods, they are at a higher risk of choking because they have not developed the necessary skills for eating solid foods. Another major challenge of serving solid foods too early is infants may consume less breastmilk or iron-fortified formula and not get enough essential nutrients for proper growth and development. Therefore, it is important to introduce solid foods to infants around six months when they are developmentally ready to accept them.

There is no single way to determine when an infant is developmentally ready to accept solid foods. An infant's readiness depends on his or her rate of development. The AAP provides the following guidelines to help determine when an infant is developmentally ready to accept solid foods:

- The infant is able to sit in a high chair, feeding seat, or infant seat with good head control;
- The infant opens his or her mouth when food comes his or her way. He or she may watch others eat, reach for food, and seem eager to be fed;
- The infant can move food from a spoon into his or her mouth; and
- The infant has doubled his or her birth weight.

The CACFP requires parents to advise the provider when the infant is developmentally ready to be offered solid foods. Please have the parent fill out this form to determine what foods infant can be offered.



INFANT'S NAME:

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