

# Health Concepts

September 2024

## Enjoy quality over quantity

### PREFACE

Our lives are fast paced and packed with various activities and duties we need to perform during the day. During this process, we tend to forget the most important parts of our day, which are meal and snack times. We tend to pay less attention to it and try to pack in activities that keep our mind stimulated with everything else but food.

When there is a lot of food kept on a table, or when there is a lot of work on your mind, we tend to eat fast and, in the process, miss maintaining portion sizes. Research has shown that it takes 12 or more minutes for food satisfaction signals to reach the brain. By eating slowly, you can ensure you are giving enough time for these important messages to get communicated between the gut brain and the main brain.

Having the least amount of distractions helps us focus on the food we eat, helps us be in the moment with family, friends, and colleagues, and most importantly, helps us eat portion-controlled meals. Here is where being mindful about the food you eat comes in, which can help you lead a healthy lifestyle. Small tips help bring mindfulness into what you eat and how much you eat.

To effect change, the key is to change the way we snack and eat our everyday meals mindfully keeping portion sizes in mind.

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

काली मिर्च (Hindi)  
கருப்பு மிளகு (Tamil)  
నల్ల మిరియాలు (Telugu)



### BLACK PEPPER

Black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) is a flowering vine in the family *Piperaceae*, cultivated for its fruit (the peppercorn), which is usually dried and used as a spice and seasoning. Like many eastern spices, pepper was historically both a seasoning and a traditional medicine. Pepper contains phytochemicals, including amides, piperidines, and pyrrolidines. One tablespoon (6 grams) of ground black pepper contains moderate amounts of vitamin K (13% of the daily value or DV), iron (10% DV), and manganese (18% DV), with trace amounts of other essential nutrients, protein, and dietary fibre. Pepper loses flavour and aroma through evaporation and exposure to light, so airtight storage helps preserve its spiciness longer.

**High in antioxidants-** Rich in a potent antioxidant called piperine, which may help prevent free radical damage to your cells.

**Has anti-inflammatory properties -** Active compound piperine has been shown to decrease inflammation.

**Helps absorb antioxidants better-** Piperine can help body absorb antioxidants like beta carotene and curcumin.

**Boost brain health-** Black pepper might improve your cognitive health and vitality by reducing your risk of neurodegenerative disease.

**Improves digestive health-** Protects against ulcers by reducing oxidative stress and inflammation in the stomach lining. Has potential anti-flatulent effects.

**Improves cardiovascular health -** Found to have hypotensive and vasodilatory effects, which means that it may help to lower blood pressure and improve blood flow in the body.

**NOTE:** Black pepper can have side effects if consumed in large amounts or taken in high doses, may lead to the feeling of heartburn or indigestion.

### MEDICAL UPDATE

#### DENGUE FEVER

Dengue fever is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes, particularly during the monsoon season in India. Dengue can sometimes progress to a severe form known as dengue haemorrhagic fever, which can be life-threatening. The symptoms may include high fever, severe headache, joint pain, body aches, skin rash, vomiting, and bleeding gums.

There is no specific antiviral treatment for dengue fever; however, supportive care is provided to manage the symptoms and complications associated with the disease. Resting, staying hydrated, and monitoring platelet count are essential elements of dengue fever treatment. If you experience severe symptoms or complications, seek immediate medical attention.

### PREVENTIVE PEARLS

#### Prevention of mosquito-borne infections.

Avoiding mosquito bite is the first precaution against these mosquito-borne diseases. Cover yourself completely and do not go out wearing half pants or sleeveless attires. If any symptoms of fever or muscle pain are noticed, please reach out to your nearest doctor.

“Moderation. Small helpings. Sample a little bit of everything. These are the secrets of happiness and good health.”

--- Julia Child.

## Should you eat full stomach or less?

It's generally recommended to eat until you feel satisfied but not completely full.

By focusing on eating until you're satisfied rather than full, you can enjoy your meals more and support your long-term health.

1. **Better digestion** - Eating until you're just satisfied helps your digestive system work more efficiently.
2. **Weight management** - Eating to about 80% full can help with weight management
3. **Mindful eating** - Slowing down and paying attention to your hunger and fullness cues can improve your relationship with food thereby recognizing when you are truly hungry.
4. **Portion control** - Being aware of the amount of food you consume and adjusting it based on your nutritional needs helps in your long-term health goals.
5. **Sustained energy levels** - Eating smaller, more frequent meals can help maintain steady energy levels throughout the day, avoiding the sluggishness that often follows a large meal.
6. **Health and wellbeing** - Consistently overeating can lead to non-communicable diseases like obesity, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes.

Portion control does not necessarily mean eating very little but rather appropriate quantity required for your body's energy demand.

It's especially important to moderate the consumption of foods high in saturated fats to reduce risk of chronic diseases.

In fact, lower calorie intake will improve insulin resistance and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

There are numerous ways to mindful eating practices. Mindful eating is a practice that involves paying full attention to the experience of eating and enjoying food without distractions. Some simple tips to be followed are

1. Eating slowly and enjoying your food.
2. Listen to your body. Recognize when you are hungry.
3. Eating smaller and more frequent meals.
4. Pre-portioning snacks and meals to help avoid overeating.
5. Using visual cues to help control portions.
6. Understanding serving sizes on food labels.
7. Making nutritious choices of food. Having a balanced diet.
8. Smaller size dinnerware can help in eating less without feeling deprived.
9. Eliminate distractions like TV, smart phones, computers so that you focus solely on your meal and appreciate it.
10. Engage all your senses to enhance your eating experience.
11. While snacking, portion out a serving as needed instead of eating directly from the package.

By incorporating these tips into your routine, you can develop a healthier relationship with food and enjoy your meals more fully.

After eating, take a moment to reflect on how the food made you feel.

Balanced meal includes providing half plate with vegetables, a quarter with lean protein, and a quarter with whole grains.

Diets tend to focus on rules of eating (e.g., what to eat, how much to eat, and what not to eat), with the intended measurement of specific outcomes. While the purpose of mindful eating is not only to lose weight, but the intention is to help individuals enjoy the moment and the food and encourage their full presence for the eating experience. It has little to do with calories, carbohydrates, fat, or protein.

Eating Healthy begins at home. What we miss a lot of times, is to include the right food groups in our everyday meals. A great way to think of planning a menu for a meal, is by cooking a variety of dishes and adding colours to your plate. Your plate should look colourful and include food from the various food groups. This ensures your body is getting the adequate nutrition. Once you have included the right food groups in your meal, it's important you exercise portion control so that we don't overeat.

A good example is using slotted thali plates or small bowls for practicing portion control and mindful eating.

### END NOTE

Portion control is one aspect of healthy eating. It is not a Diet. It makes you more mindful about the foods you're eating and how much.

Dr.Y.Sreenivasa Varma MBBS, MBA, PhD

Yalamanchili Healthcare  
Services Private Limited

# 17, First Main Road, IIT Colony,  
Pallikaranai, Chennai 600100.

dr.varma@yalamanchili.co.in  
+91- 9962060702 / 9444074005

