

## You're Likely Eating Too Fast

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In this day and age, many of us are pressed for time or at least feel like we are. People will scarf down their lunches at their desk and get back to work immediately or get so hungry by the time they get home in the evening that they eat quickly. Moms of younger children rarely have a quiet moment to sit down and eat, so they end up grabbing quick food and eating it while standing or quickly during nap time.

Unfortunately, eating too quickly can lead to several negative side effects. According to some nutritionists, eating a regular meal that's between 16 and 28 ounces of food should take well over 20 minutes to consume. However, a [study](#) from the University of Rhode Island found that sixty percent of people are eating about 3.1 ounces per minute, clocking in at about 5 minutes of eating.

### So what's the big deal?

First of all, when you eat too quickly, **you won't absorb all the nutrients**. When eating quickly, you make your body work harder to break down the food, and more of it slips by without being properly digested. This can be especially frustrating if you're someone who is trying to eat healthier or you work out often, by eating too quickly you're not getting the nutrients you need to feel good and refuel from your workouts.

Another reason that's especially relevant to anyone trying to maintain or lose weight is that you **consume more food** when you eat quickly. Your body takes about 20 minutes to recognize that it's full, so if you're eating quickly you won't reach that level of recognition until you've overeaten, which is why you might find yourself suddenly stuffed near the end of a meal. By eating more slowly, your body will let you know when you've eaten enough before you go overboard.

Lastly, many people also notice that they have **digestive issues**, such as gas and bloating, when they eat too quickly. These digestive problems are partially a result of taking in too much air when you're eating quickly, but also because you're consuming larger chunks of food and not beginning the digestive process by chewing enough.

The number one way to help you slow down when you're eating is to take 20 minutes to eat your meal consciously. When you start keeping track, you'll probably be shocked at how quickly you ate, so keep a clock nearby and pay attention. Another thing to help you eat more slowly is to start with smaller portions and go back for more after a little bit of time if you're still hungry. You'll likely eat more food more quickly if you have a larger amount in front of you.

Distractions can also lead to eating too quickly. So many of us eat in front of the television, while reading a book, or even while talking on the phone. Focusing on your meal and eating more mindfully will help you recognize when you're full and make the meal more satisfying. Lastly, take pauses while you eat. Next time you're out to dinner with friends, notice how little people put down their forks. Between each bite, put down your fork and chew your food, then pick it back up again.