



SPRING/SUMMER 2018

# PATIENT Pulse

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## Mindful Eating Tip **The Stomach Meter**

– By Selene Yan, Registered Dietitian

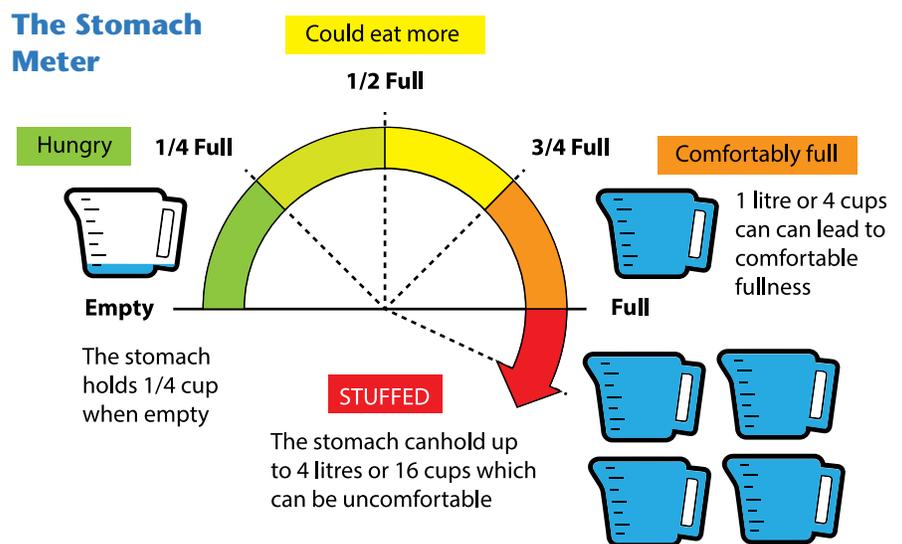
Do you often eat until you feel uncomfortably full? Do you eat while distracted with other activities like watching television, texting, working at your desk, or surfing the internet only to look down and realize you’ve finished your meal or snack without tasting it? It’s common to eat while doing something else at the same time. The problem is that it’s harder to identify fullness when we’re distracted while we eat. This may lead to overeating, not feeling satisfied, and craving more food or snacks later in the day.

Mindful eating is the concept of eating while paying full attention to what we’re eating, without distraction. It’s eating at a slower pace, using all five of our senses to appreciate how the food looks, smells, and tastes so that we may savour the food. Eating in this way often leads to eating less and feeling more satisfied with what we eat.

Understanding the body’s hunger and fullness cues can help. A tool that you can use is called the Stomach Meter. Our stomachs can only detect volume, not taste. Once we swallow, we can no longer taste it. The average stomach holds about a quarter cup of volume at rest and about four cups when comfortably full. The stomach is a stretchy organ and can stretch to hold up to four litres (about sixteen cups)! For most people this type of fullness can be an uncomfortable, stuffed feeling.

One question you may ask yourself before eating is this: How empty or how full is my stomach? Is it empty, a quarter full, half full, three-quarters full, full, or over-full? Checking in with your stomach may help

### The Stomach Meter



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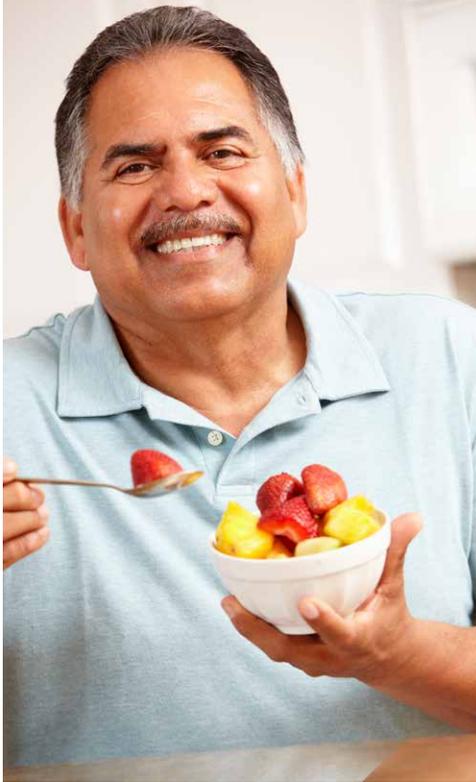
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## The Stomach Meter

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you take a pause before eating and allow your inner body cues to guide eating. This can help you feel more comfortable in your body after eating.

If you're interested in learning more about mindful eating and exploring your body's hunger and fullness cues, the PCN offers an eight week program called Mindful Eating Active Living. This program focuses on health and feeling well and helps you become the expert in your body so that you can respond to what it needs.

You'll learn to:

- Check in with your body to recognize hunger cues
- Stop eating when you feel satisfied and comfortably full
- Understand food cravings and learn what your body truly needs
- Increase physical activity by moving your body in a satisfying way

The first step is to attend a two hour introductory group to learn more about the full eight week program. Ask your doctor for a referral today!



## Mental Health Tip Got Test Anxiety?

– By: *Melodie Letwin, Registered Psychiatric Nurse*

A little bit of nervousness can be helpful. In fact the goal of the stress response is to promote enhanced functioning of the body and mind. Being stressed for a long time or lots of stress can have the exact opposite effect and can turn into many different symptoms, including suddenly forgetting things that you previously knew.

With final exam season approaching consider these tips for successfully managing and channeling your stress response:

- Plan ahead. Develop good study habits and research strategies appropriate to the format of the exam you are taking.
- Remember the pillars of mental wellness: Sleep, diet and exercise. Avoid cram sessions into the night (especially the day prior to the exam), make healthy food choices and be active.
- It's impossible to be anxious and relaxed at the same time. Practice relaxation exercises regularly

outside of situations that make you anxious. Many techniques like deep breathing can be used in the moment without anyone noticing but will work best if you have been practicing prior.

- Be kind with your self-talk. Use positive statements ("I know my stuff, I just have to take it one question at a time" "everyone experiences anxiety, I'm okay). For added believability practice saying these statements out loud to yourself.
- If possible plan ahead to do a relaxing or enjoyable activity after. We tend to think about stressful situations like watching a movie to the climax/stressful event and then starting it again usually with greater intensity and prediction of negative future outcomes each time. Visualize yourself successfully leaving the exam and heading off to do this activity.
- Use technology to your advantage. Reduce social media use and consider downloading apps that help you manage your anxiety like Mindshift or BellyBio.



## Nutrition Tip All About Lentils!

– By: Kimberly Porter, Registered Dietitian

Did you know lentils are locally grown in Canada? They are a heart smart food containing many nutrients, protein and fibre. They are also low on the glycemic index, meaning they may help lower blood sugars.

Dried lentils do not require soaking before cooking. Whole dried lentils cook within 15-20 minutes and dried split lentils only take five to seven minutes to cook. Use split lentils to help thicken soups and sauces. If you don't feel like cooking, try canned lentils. Draining and rinsing canned lentils helps to remove some of the salt.

Lentils can be added to many different recipes. Try them in a smoothie, chili, taco, omelette, salad, quesadilla, pasta, muffins, dessert, and/or pizza. For recipe ideas, check out [pulsecanada.com](http://pulsecanada.com) and [lentils.org](http://lentils.org).

### Bean Salsa

#### Salsa:

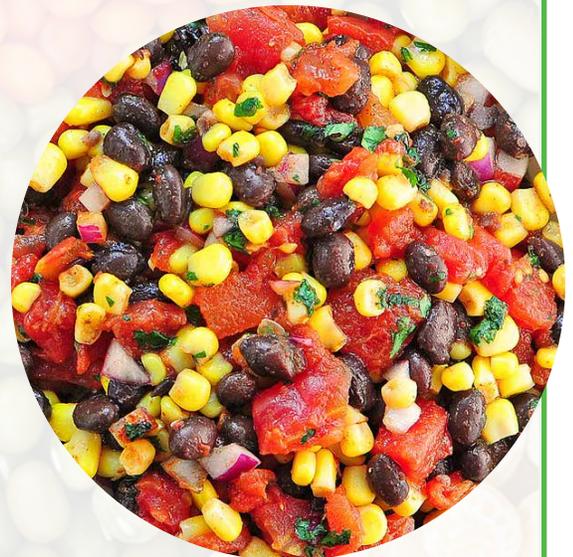
- 1- 15 fl oz. can whole kernel corn, drained and rinsed
- 1- 19 fl oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1- 19 fl oz. can lentils, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 red onion , diced
- 1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

#### Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix together the salsa ingredients.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the ingredients for the dressing.
3. Add the dressing to the salsa and stir until combined.
4. For best results, allow the mixture to sit in the refrigerator for at least an hour to allow the flavours to develop. Serve with taco chips and enjoy!

#### Dressing:

- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp white vinegar
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- Juice from 1/2 large lime
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/4 tsp pepper





## Active Living Tip **Getting Active this Spring**

– By: *Kevin Jones, Exercise Specialist*

With the snow almost gone, many of us are excited to get back to the outdoor activities we love. Whether you've been out and active all winter or you're just getting back into it, there are a few important things to keep in mind:

### **Watch your step**

With the snow melting, a winter's worth of grit and gravel are out and about on the roads and sidewalks. While a little bit is helpful for grip on the snow and ice, a lot on a dry sidewalk can actually make it more likely to lose your footing. Always keep an eye on where you're stepping and take extra care if you're walking over any patches of thick gravel, or any shaded patches where there may still be some ice lurking.

### **Smell the flowers... or don't**

For those that have spring allergies, a lovely spring walk can turn into a sneezing, watery eyed ordeal. If you suffer from spring allergies, consider using an anti-histamine or save walks for earlier in the morning or after a rain shower to limit your exposure to pollen.

### **Keep your feet dry**

Melting snow and ice can leave water lying around on the sidewalk, and sometimes what looks like a small little puddle can be surprisingly deep. Wet feet can turn an enjoyable walk into an unpleasant one very quickly. If the roads are wet when you're out walking consider wearing some rubber boots or waterproof shoes to help keep your feet dry.

### **Check the sun**

People with fair complexions or who have spent the whole winter doing indoor activities may find themselves much more sensitive to the sun than they were last summer. Wear sunglasses on sunny days and apply sunscreen 15 or 20 minutes before you go outside to help avoid a sunburn.

If you're looking for more advice on how to get active this year in ways that are appropriate for you, ask your doctor for a referral to see an Exercise Specialist at the PCN.



### **Do you know someone who is looking for a family doctor?**

Tell them about [www.edmontonareadocs.ca](http://www.edmontonareadocs.ca) This website makes it easy to find a PCN family doctor who is accepting new patients.

#### *Hours of operation:*

*Northgate Centre: 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday – Thursday; Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.*

*Rundle Health Centre: 11:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. on Mondays, 8:00 a.m. - 5:15 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. on Fridays.*