

Season of Thanks: How Gratitude Can Improve Your Eating Habits

As we enter the season of giving thanks, many of us naturally turn our thoughts to gratitude. But gratitude doesn't have to be reserved for one day on the calendar—it can be a mindset that influences our everyday lives, including our eating habits. Research suggests that gratitude can impact our relationship with food, encouraging healthier choices and fostering a more mindful approach to eating.

Studies have shown that people who regularly practice gratitude experience a range of physical and mental health benefits, from better sleep to reduced stress levels. When it comes to eating, gratitude can encourage mindfulness, the practice of being present in the moment. Mindful eating allows us to savor each bite, tune into hunger and fullness cues, and make healthier choices.

Research from *The Journal of Positive Psychology* found that people who practiced gratitude ate more fruits and vegetables, possibly because gratitude fosters a sense of respect for our bodies and a desire to nourish them. By paying attention to what we eat and why we eat it, gratitude can help us make choices that align with our health goals.

Want to bring more gratitude to your table? Here are some simple ways to start:

- 1. Take a Moment of Appreciation Before Each Meal**

Before you eat, pause to reflect on the journey your food has taken to reach your plate. Think of the farmers who grew the vegetables, the workers who harvested and transported the food, and the people who prepared the meal. Acknowledging this process can deepen your appreciation and make the meal feel more meaningful.

- 2. Express Thanks for Your Body**

Instead of focusing on “good” or “bad” foods, consider how each meal can serve your body and its needs. Try to appreciate your body for all it does—whether it's walking, working, or simply keeping you alive. This sense of gratitude can help you make nourishing choices without guilt or restriction.

- 3. Savor Each Bite**

Practicing gratitude doesn't have to be complicated. One of the easiest ways is simply to slow down and savor each bite. Try to identify different flavors and textures, and let yourself fully enjoy the experience. This approach can lead to greater satisfaction, so you're less likely to overeat.

- 4. Involve Your Family in a Gratitude Practice**

November is the perfect month to bring gratitude to the dinner table. Try going around the table and having each person share something they're grateful for that day. This can create a positive, appreciative environment that makes the meal more enjoyable and fulfilling.

As you celebrate this Thanksgiving, consider bringing a sense of gratitude to your table—not just for the holiday, but as a lasting approach to meals. By nurturing a thankful mindset around food, we can cultivate a more positive, balanced relationship with eating, one that serves both our health and our happiness.