

health & wellness



Mid-Life Doesn't Have To Mean Extra Pounds

Sheila H. Forman, PhD

Many of us gain weight in middle-age despite dieting and exercising. Statistics reflect that most women gain a pound a year between ages and 40 and 55. That's 15 pounds! If we don't get a handle on our weight gain it may continue which could lead to serious physical and psychological consequences. Excess weight can cause heart disease, diabetes, difficulty walking, and joint pain. Extra weight can also be demoralizing leading to low self-esteem, isolation and depression. We could go on another diet. There's always a new one being touted in the media. We could increase our exercise, although new research tells us exercise is not a good way to lose weight. We could shrug our shoulders and do nothing. I don't know about you, but none of those suggestions work for me. I have a different solution that has helped me and I believe can help you. My solution is Mindful Eating.

Unlike diets which tell you what, when and how much to eat, mindful eating teaches you how to tune into your body to meet its needs, physically and emotionally. Mindful eating is eating with purpose, intention and full awareness. It's the key to ending midlife weight gain. Learning techniques such as mindful meditation, cultivating inner wisdom, and using outer guidance, mindful eating can be the answer you've been looking for. Given the changes women go through in perimenopause and menopause, who knows better than we do about what our bodies need? Mindful eating involves giving your full attention to the food you eat, including how you feel before, during, and after eating. It also means you eat without distraction (such as texting, typing or reading) so you can give food your complete attention. By giving your food your undivided attention you will taste it more, enjoy it more and be more satisfied. This leads to less eating over time. And, less eating leads to weight loss. Researchers have found that participants who took part in the mindful eating program lost significantly more weight than those who were part of a control group that were on a wait list to get into the mindful eating program. Here are three steps to get you started.

Step One: Become a Meditator. The key difference between mindful eating and other non-diet approaches is mindful meditation. By developing a daily mindful meditation practice (where you notice your thoughts rather than trying to eliminate them) you will be in a more relaxed state of mind, and consequently do less stress eating. You will also become less reactive to thoughts, feelings and circumstances which will allow you to pause and create the time to decide how to respond without being impulsive. This benefit of mindful meditation will remove much of the mindless and emotional eating you may be doing and help manage your weight. Begin by meditating 5 to 10 minutes a day and expand to 20 to 30 minutes when you are ready. Not sure how to meditate?



Simply, sit down, close your eyes and breath. Keep your attention on your breath and when your mind wanders (which it will) just refocus your attention onto your breath. That's all it takes to get started.

Step Two: Cultivate Your Inner Wisdom. Two important keys to being a successful mindful eater is knowing when you are hungry and when you are full. When you learn to eat only when you are hungry and stop eating when you are comfortably full, you will go a long way to managing your weight without ever having to diet again. I call learning your body's cues for hunger and fullness, Cultivating Your Inner Wisdom. Practice noticing how your body tells you when and how much to eat. As you tune in to those cues and obey them, you will naturally eat the amount of food that is right for you, and gently guide your body back to the weight that suits it best.

Step Three: Use Outer Guidance. Knowing when you are hungry and full are important tools in mindful eating. Also valuable is utilizing reliable nutritional and health resources to guide and educate you about what options might be best for you. I call this information Outer Guidance. Outer Guidance is not another form of diet, instead it is information that you experiment with to see what makes your body feel and look its best. For example, if you have dry, flaky skin you might do some research and discover that eating salmon helps. You can then use that information to guide you in making informed mindful choices about what to eat. Practice these three steps consistently and you will change how you eat and what your body looks like. ■

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13-year-old Candy Queen Entrepreneur Makes It Big With Healthy Teeth Lollipops Alina Morse

ZolliPops founder, 13-year-old Alina Morse asked, "Why can't we make a candy that's delicious and good for your teeth?" So, Zolli Candy was born. In 2018, Alina announced on CNN from the New York Stock Exchange floor her intention to give one million products to support oral health education in schools. From her ZolliPops earnings she donates 10% of her profits to fund oral health education in schools, contributes her healthy suckers to institutions and dentists who promote oral health education and has a partnership with the Special Olympics. ZolliPops are natural, gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan, non-GMO, containing xylitol and erythritol (healthy sugar alternatives) and certified sugar-free by Sugarwise. Zolli Candy neutralizes acid and helps reduce the risk of tooth decay and future development of cavities. Alina has appeared on Good Morning America, CNN, Dow Jones, US Weekly, Forbes Magazine, Entrepreneur Magazine, Bloomberg, Fortune Magazine, and The Washington Post among others. Alina's candies are the #1 sugar-free hard candy sold on Amazon, and she is the youngest vendor for the world's #1 retailer, Walmart. ZolliPops launched in 2015 on Good Morning America and her second line—Zolli Drops launched May 2016 with a splash at Dylan's Candy Bar. Product line includes: Zolli Pops which clean teeth; Zolli Drops which clean teeth and Zolli Taffy which clean teeth. For more information visit: www.ZolliPops.com