



EATING TOGETHER

The Incredible Psychological and Physical Benefits of Eating Together as a Family

But First....

Be sure to eliminate the distractions from the family table.



And instead let the focus be on the relationships you want to grow with these precious people!





Benefit #1: Family Meals Lead To Better Family Relationships.

Making the time for a few undistracted family meals every week provides a sense of security and belonging to the members of the family.

Columbia University released a study asking teenagers what is their favorite part of their family's dinner. And a resounding 71% of the teenagers interviewed said that spending time with their families, catching up, and talking was their favorite part of the meal.



Benefit #2: Family Meals Inspire Better Emotional Health.

Research has shown that when children and teens eat dinner with their parents regularly, they experience better mental health, are more emotionally strong, socially adjusted, and are more likely to have good manners and communication skills.

Also, Mothers who eat meals regularly with their families were found to be less stressed and happier than Mothers who did not eat meals with their families regularly.



Benefit #3: Homemade Family Meals Encourage Healthier Eating Habits:

The average restaurant meal has up to 60% more calories than the average homemade meal. Therefore, making homemade meals is the better choice in terms of portion and calorie control.

Also, when children help prepare the family meal, they are more likely to avoid less-healthy foods that could lead to obesity, and instead, make healthier choices.

“STRESS IS THE TRASH OF
MODERN LIFE.
WE ALL GENERATE IT, BUT
IF WE DON'T DISPOSE OF
IT PROPERLY, IT WILL PILE
UP AND OVERTAKE OUR
LIFE.”

- DANZAE PACE

Benefit #4:
Eating
Homemade
Meals
Together
Reduces
Stress:

Brigham Young University conducted a study on IBM employees, and found that those who came home to a dinner with their families encountered a greater reduction in stress and tension (- which was brought on by the long hours in the office) than their counterparts who did not come home to a shared family meal.

**"All great change in America
begins at the dinner table."**

-Ronald Reagan



Benefit #5: Family Dinners Reduce the Risk of Dangerous Behaviors.

By making the time for regular family dinners, you slim down the chance that your child will become involved in any of the following habits that most parents fear: binge drinking, smoking, sexual activity, eating disorders, violence and school problems.

A study involving 5,000 Minnesota teens found that regular family dinners were associated with far lower rates of suicidal thoughts and depression.

TIPS FOR MAKING FAMILY MEALS A PRIORITY:

❖ **Choose meals that are hassle free, and relatively easy to prepare.**

(crockpot meals, one dish dinners, Instant pot meals, etc.)

❖ **Mark it on your calendar.**

Start with setting aside one meal a week to share with family or friends, and work up from there.

❖ **Delegate the meal.**

Get others involved in preparing the meal – if you don't have family around, invite friends to pitch in on ingredients and time. Then have everyone meet at your house (or someone else's) to prepare and share! – Or if you have a big family; delegate a few of the different chores surrounding the meal to the kids.

❖ **Plan meals for the week ahead in advance.**

Planning meals ahead of time will cut out a lot of the stress and uncertainty.

Feel free to make changes to your menu within the week (for example; "I would rather have chili this night instead of that one". Or, "I'm more in the mood for salmon and roasted vegetables tonight than spaghetti and meatballs - I'll make that tomorrow night.") Feel free to switch around meals within your planned week.



Choose to look at mealtimes as a time of joyful celebration.

A time to come together as a family after surviving another day of the unexpected and the wonderful.

Please don't wait for holidays and birthdays to commune happily together over a meal. Because life is too short.

It doesn't matter if you're eating a less-than-healthy meal with mismatched silverware. What truly matters is that you set out to make the mealtimes together a relaxed, open, encouraging and joyful time.

Therefore, let us seek to make the heart of our home – the kitchen – a place of creativity and love that all who partake in the meals thereof would remember them and the time spent together with fondness, as the most refreshing of all home experiences!



Healing Hands
Health Center