

E4YH – Mindful eating and satisfaction

Mindfulness is bringing focus to what you are doing in the present moment, with non-judgemental curiosity. Mindful eating is bringing that focus to the process of eating. This means you deliberately pay attention to:

- 1) Your senses – smell, colours, textures, flavours, sounds, temperature
- 2) Your body signals – hunger, fullness, satisfaction, dissatisfaction
- 3) Your thoughts – limiting distractions, avoiding judgement or criticism, thinking about how eating is affected by your mood and how it can affect your mood.

This process can help you to: understand your reasons for eating, choose foods that make you feel good - both physically and emotionally, and decide how much food your body needs at any given time.

How to eat mindfully *(read through all the points below before starting)*

- Choose a snack or meal that you would like to practice eating mindfully.
- Reduce the distractions around you (e.g. turn off your phone/TV, move away from your work desk).
- How much do you enjoy this food to begin with? Try to notice when you start enjoying the food less. When do you become satisfied with what you have eaten?
- Think about how you feel before eating - are you feeling hungry or are you experiencing any emotions? How does this change during and after eating?
- For each mouthful, think about what the food is like. Can you notice changes in the taste, feel, or smell? Does eating this food bring back any memories for you?
- Take time to notice the food before you eat it and throughout the eating process:
 - Colour – is the food more than one colour?
 - Smell – what can you smell? Can you identify the different smells? What do the smells remind you of?
 - Taste - notice the initial taste. Does the taste change as you slowly chew the food? Or if you move it around your mouth? Does the taste remind you of anything? Does it leave an aftertaste?
 - Texture - How does the food feel in your mouth? Is it hard or soft? How does the texture start to change as you eat the food?
 - Sound - Is there a sound when you bite or chew the food?

Patient name:

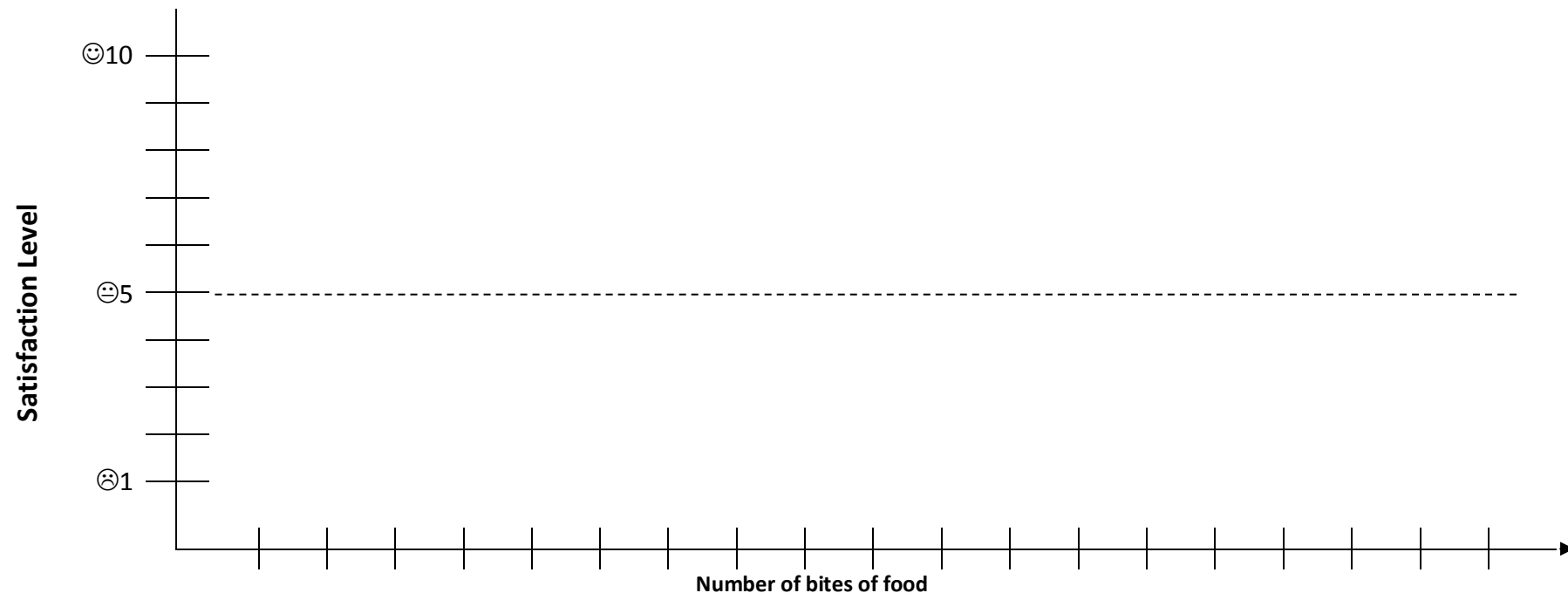
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Health professional name:

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Contact:

- Noticing your satisfaction levels can help you to stop eating a food when you are not really enjoying it anymore.
- For each mouthful of food, rate your satisfaction level using the graph below. 1 = 😞 not satisfying, 5 = 😐 kind of ok, 10 = 😊 very satisfying.
- Try to stop eating when your satisfaction drops below a 5 (below the dotted line), rather than continuing to eat just because you can or because the food is there. If you are still hungry, consider what other food you could enjoy instead.



This nutrition information has been developed for use by Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand – Waitematā Dietitians. It may be used by other healthcare professionals if appropriate training has been given. Please consult Te Whatu Ora Waitematā Dietitians if you have questions about using this information.