



THE BENEFITS OF LUNCH BREAKS

Studies show that taking a lunch break allows your mind to rest, recharge and refocus, which can directly improve your productivity for the rest of the day. When we take a break, our minds become more creative and we can gain a fresh perspective on challenging projects. Even just a 15-20 minutes lunch break has been shown to keep concentration and energy up during your day. So, make some time for a healthy, nutrient-packed lunch each day!

Tips for Maximizing Your Lunch Break:

1. Have a real break

Avoid eating at your desk or in your work area. Taking a step away from your workspace will help you relax and clear your mind. Research has shown multiple negative health effects from sitting for long periods of time. So, use this opportunity to get up, take a stretch and move your body a little. Try to avoid checking email and other distractions so that you head back to work feeling refreshed.

2. Choose nutritious foods

Your lunch meal doesn't have to be elaborate just make sure it contains a good dose of nutrients. Foods such as lean protein, seeds, nuts, fruits, vegetables and wholegrains are particularly good for your mind and provide sustained energy to help you power through your afternoon.

3. Eat mindfully

When you eat mindfully, you take time to focus on your body and your food. Check in with your hunger before you begin and while you eat. Can you notice the presence of food in your stomach? How much food do you need before you start to feel full? Appreciate the colors, smells, flavors, and textures of your food. Eating mindfully helps you slow down and enjoy the experience of eating which can improve digestion and increase satisfaction with smaller portions of food.

Ideas for quick, healthy lunches:

- Cottage cheese, fruit, and some whole-grain pita chips
- Mixed greens topped with pre-cooked chicken, beans, corn, and avocado
- Smoothie – blend up a frozen banana, your favorite fruit, a handful of spinach and a scoop of peanut butter
- Batch cook a whole grain, some lean protein, and a tray of roasted vegetables. Use them in different ways throughout the week in salads, wraps, bowls, etc.
- Leftovers!

Check out these great lunch recipes:

<https://ucla.app.box.com/s/c4b8dj3dgog7o64u9efd91hvco7rmff6/file/666558852998>

<https://www.fannetasticfood.com/grain-salad-bowl-recipes/>

<https://www.eatwell101.com/easy-meal-prep-bowl-recipes>

Resources:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110208131529.htm>