



Almus Nutrition & Health Sciences
Post Office Box 7724
Phoenix, Arizona 85011-7724
E-Mail: anhs.info@almusinc.com
www.almusinc.com

Vol.II No.IV October 1, 2005

How Much Time do You Take to Eat a Meal?

How much time do you take to eat a meal? How many times do you chew each mouthful? How important is it to you to have a pleasant atmosphere at mealtime? How often do you argue around the dinner table?

These questions are part of a very long list of concerns that can affect digestion. The process of digestion does not start in the intestinal tract. It starts the minute you put food into your mouth. The saliva mixes with the food and immediately starts the digestive action. If a person eats hurriedly and does not take time to chew, and if they drink water to wash their food down, the saliva cannot start the digestive process. The food ends up in the stomach and the stomach is required to do the work the saliva should have started. It really isn't fair to ask the stomach to do a job for which it is not prepared. The digestive juices in the stomach are different from the saliva, and they are created to digest food in a different way. Then the food goes into the small intestine where it mixes with digestive juices from the pancreas and the liver. At this point, if the food had not been properly prepared for these digestive juices, it frequently begins to ferment, and gas is formed. If, on the other hand, the food was adequately chewed so that the digestive process started in the mouth and continues in the stomach, by the time it gets to the intestinal tract, a great deal of digestion has already taken place.

If your meals are associated with stress - whether it be rushing to get through a meal, having a stressful meeting, or sitting down to eat when you are angry - your digestive juices do not flow properly.

It's not a good idea to eat a big meal and then go sit in front of the TV. After eating, it's best to get up and walk around for about a half-hour before you sit down, giving the body time to digest food.

It's probably also wise not to eat all your meals, whatever the size, while watching TV. This can be emotional and stressful. On the other hand, if you live alone and the TV programs help you to relax and digest your food, then I say, "Go for it."

Indigestion can cause severe abdominal pain, frequently associated with pain that goes up into the chest and neck, sometimes mimicking a heart attack. If you have this kind of pain, don't self-diagnose - get help.

I can't emphasize enough the importance of laughter and joy while eating. This stimulates the digestive process in a way that almost nothing else does and is highly recommended for people who have a tendency toward chronic indigestion **A**