

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Slow down and give taste enough time**

In this fast-paced society, adults and children often eat food and gulp down soft drinks quickly to rush to the next activity. This rush can lead to obesity; fast eating doesn't give the body sufficient time to signal to the brain that it is satisfied, which can cause overeating habits.

Tastes, as well as the moderation of eating rate, are important gatekeepers to proper nutrition and eating behavior. Every person has an average of 9,000 taste buds—most of which are on the tongue. WVU Extension experts say that when individuals are exposed to a variety of foods, taste buds develop a favorable palate for many good-to-eat, wholesome foods that lead to a healthy heart and lifestyle.

Many adults could say that when they were younger, they didn't like certain types of foods. Only after trying the food many times did they develop a favorable taste for it.

Research indicates it may take as many as 15 different "taste times" to acquire a favorable taste to some foods. Many adults can relate this research finding to their own lives—with many saying they now enjoy food that they did not like when they were children.

In addition to exposing yourself and your family to a variety of tastes and nutritious foods, WVU Extension experts also recommend that families slow down and sit down together at mealtime. Family-style meals encourage parents and kids to build conversations. Such interactions slow down eating pace. A slower pace results in family members eating smaller amounts of food and consuming fewer calories.

Research has documented that eating at an unhurried rate helps people control their weight because the brain has time to receive the "I'm full" message.

The lesson for parents is to keep trying. Offer your children and yourself small portions, present many opportunities to try different foods and remember to eat slowly to allow your brain and stomach to communicate effectively with one another.

For valuable health resources and tips and help on how to live better, visit the food and health section of WVU Extension's website [ext.wvu.edu/food\\_health](http://ext.wvu.edu/food_health).

WVU Extension Service's Heart Health Movement is adapted from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's campaign and is targeted to help West Virginians become educated and enabled to take charge of their own health.

To learn more about ways WVU Extension uses trusted research and local experts to empower citizens to improve their health, contact your local WVU Extension Service county office or visit [www.ext.wvu.edu](http://www.ext.wvu.edu).

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