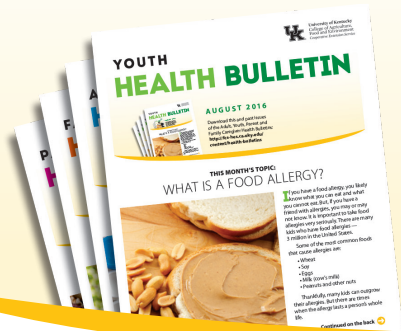


YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN



JANUARY 2018

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: THE MINDFUL BRAIN

WOW!
 This really
 is calming!



What is mindfulness?

According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, the scientist behind mindfulness, mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in a present moment, and non-judgmentally. Mindfulness also includes acceptance. This means paying attention to thoughts and feelings without judgment. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to be mindful or feel in a particular moment.

Mindfulness helps us calm down and allows information to flow to the part of the brain that helps make good choices. When calm, we can be mindful and make good choices. Cool, right?

Continued on the back 



The more you practice mindfulness, the easier it will be to be mindful when you are in a stressful situation.

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How to practice mindfulness

When you feel overwhelmed, stop for a moment, take five deep breaths and exhale slowly. Name the emotion you are experiencing. Instead of reacting badly, mindfulness helps you observe emotions, thoughts and surroundings in an even-minded way so that you can respond calmly.

Ways to be mindful

- **Walking.** Take a mindful walk outside. Walk slowly in a steady and intentional manner. Take in how the wind feels on your face, how your legs are moving you forward and the nature surrounding you.
- **Belly breathing.** Lying on the floor place your hands on your stomach. Empty your mind and take slow deep breaths. Feel your tummy rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.
- **Expressing.** Everyone can draw, paint, color or write. And everyone can be mindful. Use a pencil, pen, paint, marker or crayon to express yourself on paper. There is no right or wrong drawing because it is your expression. Find your focus, concentration and inner peace by experiencing a moment of creativity.



- **Listening.** Play calming or soothing music. Sit or lay down in a comfortable position and bring your attention to the sensations of sound and feelings the music gives you. Listening to the music may stir your emotions or thoughts, which is OK. You can also write or journal about an experience or thought the music brings up.

Multiple short mindful moments per day help your brain become more mindful, even when you do not mean to be. In other words, the more you practice mindfulness, the easier it will be to be mindful when you are in a stressful situation.

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YOUTH
HEALTH BULLETIN

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