

# INTUITIVE EATING

## FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH GI CONDITIONS



## WHAT IS INTUITIVE EATING?

Intuitive Eating (IE) is a philosophy that focuses on healing your relationship with food through learning how to respect and listen to your body and let go of external food rules. IE helps you build trust around food and accept your body as it is rather than trying to change it. Under this philos-

ophy, no food is inherently “good” or “bad,” and, while this might be counter to much of what you have learned, adapting this mentality can allow for a transition to a healthier, happier lifestyle. IE helps your body guide your food choices versus the “food rules” inside your head.

## EMBRACING INTUITIVE EATING MAY HELP GI SYMPTOMS

When eating causes GI symptoms, food fears can develop. In part, this is a normal adaptive response. Your body goes into protective mode to avoid pain. Unfortunately, food fears can escalate to a point where too many foods become feared and poor nutrition followed by GI symptoms can result. It is also common for peo-

ple who have struggled with eating disorders or disordered eating to experience GI conditions as a result. Therefore, it is essential that those with GI conditions take steps to develop a healthy relationship with food that allows for as diverse a diet as possible, learning to tap into your body’s cues when making food decisions. IE can help you do that!

## Learn More! Resources for You:

Shifting to an IE mindset can be difficult - it may not be something you are accustomed to, and you may have a lot of questions about it. While this handout provides an introduction, you may find it really helpful to grab one or a few of the following books to learn more!

- Intuitive Eating, 4th Edition: A Revolutionary Anti-Diet Approach by Elyse Resch MS RD CEDRD, and Evelyn Tribole MS RD
- The Intuitive Eating Workbook: 10 Principles for Nourishing a Healthy Relationship with Food by Elyse Resch MS RD CEDRD, and Evelyn Tribole MS RD
- Body Kindness by Rebecca Scritchfield MS RD
- Body Respect by Lindo Bacon and Lucy Aphramor
- Nourish: How to Heal Your Relationship with Food, Body, and Self by Heidi Schauster

# TIPS & TRICKS FOR PRACTICING INTUITIVE EATING:

## THERE ARE 10 PRINCIPLES OF IE. CHECK THEM OUT BELOW.



### PRINCIPLE 1: Reject the Diet Mentality

Let go of the idea of avoiding or restricting “unhealthy” foods for the purpose of weight loss.

### PRINCIPLE 2: Honor Your Hunger

Make sure you’re eating enough and eating regularly throughout the day. Letting yourself get too hungry will throw off your body’s cues and can lead to overeating and GI distress.

### PRINCIPLE 3: Make Peace with Food

Make sure your food choices are motivated by listening to your body and not based on a rule where a certain food is considered unequivocally “good” or “bad.”

### PRINCIPLE 4: Challenge the Food Police

Your self doubt, friends, family, or the media can act as the “food police” telling you what you should and shouldn’t eat. Listen to your body instead of the food police to stay connected with your body’s cues and keep your stress and anxiety levels in check. You are in charge of your body and what you eat.

### PRINCIPLE 5: Discover the Satisfaction Factor

While there may be foods that don’t work for you, make sure you are nourishing yourself with foods you are excited about eating that are prepared in ways that are enticing and tasty. For example, if you can’t eat gluten but love pasta, test out different gluten-free varieties and try out different sauces, toppings, and seasonings.

### PRINCIPLE 6: Feel Your Fullness

Comfortable fullness is a sign of nourishing your body. It is important to understand what comfortable fullness feels like, as feeling too stuffed can make symptoms worse. Experiencing gas or some bloating after eating is normal at times. When the gas or bloating is excessive or painful, address these symptoms with your healthcare provider.

### PRINCIPLE 7: Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness

Choose some non-food strategies for your gut and emotional wellbeing, including yoga, meditation, breathing exercises, therapy, gut-mediated hypnotherapy, and even tucking into bed a little earlier to ensure enough sleep.

### PRINCIPLE 8: Respect Your Body

Accept your body as it is. Treat your body as your friend, not your enemy that needs to change. Even if you are in the midst of the healing process, focus on all your body does for you rather than the ways in which it falls short. When making decisions, think about honoring and listening to your body.

### PRINCIPLE 9: Movement-- Feel the Difference

Find pleasurable movement that helps alleviate symptoms. Exercise that is too strenuous may exacerbate symptoms. Try taking a walk in nature, dancing, or going on a bike ride with a friend.

### PRINCIPLE 10: Honor Your Health with Gentle Nutrition

Think more in terms of what foods you can add in, rather than which foods you should restrict, adding as much variety as you can. For example, think about which low FODMAP fruits and vegetables you would be excited to eat more of, and find creative and flavorful ways to add these into your day!

