



## Calm your mind

*Our busy lives can be overwhelming; balancing work, family, social life and our own personal time. Many people put others first, but it's important to care for your own physical and mental wellbeing, as not doing so can lead to feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression.*

Meditation or mindfulness is a mind and body practice that has a long history of increasing calmness and physical relaxation, improving psychological balance, and enhancing overall health and wellbeing. It promotes focussing on the present moment, and acknowledging, accepting, and coping with painful or intrusive thoughts, feelings, and sensations.

There are many evidence-based therapies, including:

- ▶ Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
- ▶ Mindfulness-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (MCBT)
- ▶ Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- ▶ Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)

### How does mindfulness work?

It's easy to dwell on painful memories, old problems, and fears about the future, especially during periods of depression or anxiety. Without an anchor to the present, our minds can become overwhelmed by stress. Mindfulness is that anchor. By focussing on the present moment, usually by turning your attention to your breath, body, and senses, you can learn to let those stressful thoughts and feelings come and go without getting caught up in judging or controlling them.

### How to practice mindfulness – simple starting points for beginners

- ▶ Sit or lie comfortably. It doesn't matter where you are, just get comfortable.
- ▶ Close your eyes.
- ▶ Make no effort to control your breath; simply breathe naturally.
- ▶ Focus your attention on your breath and how your body moves with each inhalation and exhalation, without controlling its pace or intensity. Observe your chest, shoulders, rib cage, and belly. If your mind wanders, return your focus back to your breath.
- ▶ Maintain this practice for two to three minutes to start, and then try it for longer periods.

There are many apps that can help keep you on the right track, including Headspace, Calm and Smiling Mind.

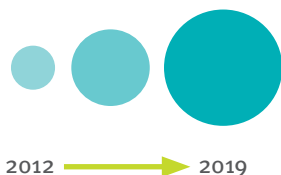


### The statistics

**It is believed 200-500 million people practice mindfulness globally**



**The number of people practicing mindfulness has tripled since 2012**



**In the US, 52% of workplaces offered mindfulness training in 2018**

### The effects of mindfulness

The benefits of mindfulness meditation have been talked about for centuries, but recently neuroscientists have found evidence that mindfulness meditation helps to:

- ▶ Preserve the brain's grey matter — the thinking part of your brain
- ▶ Grow the parts of the brain associated with learning, thinking, emotional regulation, empathy, compassion and taking perspective
- ▶ Reduce fear, anxiety and stress
- ▶ Improve attention, concentration and memory

Most people can benefit from mindfulness practises, but if it makes you feel worse, stop. There's some indication that people prone to symptoms of psychosis should be cautious with intensive mindfulness meditation. If that's you, speak to your GP, therapist or other health professional for specific advice.

# When did you last visit the dentist?

Has it been 6 months, 12 months, 2 years – or even longer? You are not alone; however it is never too late to book that appointment. Dental Health Week is 5-11 August, which is a great time to focus on your dental health.

The Australian Dental Association recommends brushing your teeth twice per day with toothpaste that contains fluoride, flossing at least once a day (usually at night), eating a healthy, balanced diet and limiting sugar intake, and regularly visiting your dentist for check-ups and preventative treatment.

**It's important to look after your teeth, gums and tongue, because:**

**Tooth decay** is a preventable disease that happens when bacteria in the plaque on your teeth create acid out of sugar and carbohydrates in food and drink. The acid attacks the tooth's surface, eventually leading to cavities in the teeth.

**Bad breath** can be embarrassing, but it can also be a sign of poor oral health. Most commonly, bad breath is caused by the bacteria in your mouth breaking down old food and dead skin cells left on your teeth, gums and tongue. While these bacteria are naturally occurring, if you don't brush regularly the bacteria can build up and cause bad breath.

**Gum disease** is the inflammation of the gums caused by a build-up of plaque and calcified plaque (called calculus). Inflammation of the gums is called gingivitis, which causes the gums to become red, swollen, tender, and bleed when you brush or floss. Gingivitis can be reversed, but if left untreated it can turn into the much more severe periodontitis. Periodontitis causes bone around the teeth to be destroyed.

Tooth decay and gum disease can both lead to infection in the mouth. An infection around the root of the tooth or gum can cause the gum to swell and pus to develop, creating abscesses. **Oral infections** can spread to cause serious infections in the jaw bones and tissue surrounding the mouth.

Oral health is not just about your teeth and gums, it's about your **overall wellbeing**. The bacteria in the mouth not only cause inflammation in the gums, but other parts of the body as well. That's why poor oral health is also linked to cardiovascular disease and diabetes-related complications.

If you're a **parent of young kids**, it's important to lead the way. How well mums and dads look after their oral health can have a big impact on the oral health of the next generation.



of Australians haven't seen a dentist in the last two years.



of Australians only brush their teeth once a day.



Nearly 40% never floss or clean between their teeth.



73% of young people (14-18 years) are consuming too much sugar.



## Mexican quinoa, chickpea and corn casserole

Packed full of flavour, this colourful casserole will keep you warm during winter evenings.

Serves 4

### Ingredients

- ▶ 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ▶ 1 brown onion, diced
- ▶ 1 red capsicum, diced
- ▶ 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- ▶ 1 x 400g tin of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ▶ 1 x 400g tin of diced tomatoes (or use fresh if you like)
- ▶ 1 cup corn kernels (fresh or tinned)
- ▶ 2 tsp chilli flakes (or to taste)
- ▶ 2 tsp ground cumin
- ▶ ½ lime
- ▶ 2 tbsp fresh coriander
- ▶ 1 avocado, smashed

### Method

1. Heat the olive oil in a flameproof casserole dish or a large, deep frying pan over medium heat. Add the onion and capsicum and cook for 3 minutes until softened.
2. Add the quinoa, chickpeas, tomatoes, corn, chilli flakes, cumin and 2 cups of water and stir well to combine. Increase the heat to medium-high and cook, covered, for 15 minutes until the quinoa is tender.
3. Transfer the quinoa mixture to a serving dish, if necessary.
4. Finish with a squeeze of lime juice and a sprinkling of coriander and serve with the mashed avocado on the side.
5. Store any leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge for 3-4 days or freeze for up to 3 months.



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