



People are generally particular regarding WHAT they eat. However, equally important to WHAT we eat is WHEN we eat. Ideally, a person should only eat when hungry, and should stop eating when satiated, before completely filling the stomach.

Haarith bin Kaldah, the renowned Arab physician, was once asked, “What is the best medicine?” He replied, “Necessity i.e. hunger.” He was then asked, “What is disease?” He replied, “The entry of food upon food.” The explanation of this statement can be found in the remark of Ibnu Sina who is reported to have said, “Never eat a meal until the one before it has digested.”

Since the norm in society is for three meals to be eaten daily, it is important for the times of these meals to be fixed so that each meal can be digested correctly.

Breakfast

Breakfast is the first meal of the day and is therefore one of the most important meals. A person’s metabolism does not work at its optimum until he eats something, and that is why breakfast is especially important for people trying to lose weight. Breakfast should be a filling meal for three reasons:

1. The body begins its movement when the day commences, and thus more energy is required.

2. There is a long interval between breakfast and the previous meal (supper of the night before).

3. The next meal is only eaten approximately six hours later.

Lunch

It is best for lunch to be eaten at midday. Lunch should be eaten on time as delaying it will cause the body to weaken. It is preferable to rest for a few minutes after eating lunch as this aids in digestion. Lunch should not be a very heavy meal as it will dull the mind and make a person lethargic and lazy.

Supper

Supper should be eaten immediately after sunset. However, because sunset is late in summer, one should rather eat supper before sunset during this season. Supper is a very important meal and should not be delayed. After eating supper, a person should not rest and relax as this harms the health and promotes constipation. Instead, he should walk or engage in nafl salaah as this activity will aid digestion. If supper is delayed for some reason, it should still be eaten three hours before going to sleep. Supper should never be skipped as this harms the body. If a person ate supper but is hungry before sleeping, then he should eat a snack of seasonal fruit or drink a cup of milk (provided there is at least a thirty minute interval before sleeping in which the snack may digest).

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