

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY

A nation-wide panel of Registered Dietitians who are members of Dietitians of Canada have developed a set of practical, affordable tips to help Canadians overcome these barriers and start consuming the recommended daily servings of healthy foods.

1. MAKE SURE YOU ARE GETTING ENOUGH

Eating healthy doesn't need to be a chore. Start by trying to have three of the four food groups at every meal, and include two food groups for snacks. For instance:

For breakfast, upgrade your coffee to a latte or mix some plain yogurt with fruit. Enjoy some whole grain cereal topped with lower fat milk

For lunch, enjoy a glass of lower fat milk or chocolate milk with your meal.

For snacks, make a big batch of your own trail mix – throw in some whole grain cereal, some dried fruit and some nuts and you've got the perfect energy boosting snack to take to the office or to pack in your child's lunch. Pack some great 'fast food' -- a fresh orange, apple, or banana is great 'grab and go' food.

For dinner, look for some simple recipes like a one pot wonder that includes all four food groups. Check out ideas from DC's latest cookbook, Simply Great Food such as "Slow cooked Chili"; round out the meal with a crisp green salad, whole grain bun and rice pudding for dessert.

2. CREATE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND REMOVE THE COMPETITION

Create 'healthy snack zones' by keeping the fridge and pantry well stocked with healthy snack options.

In your fridge: pre-cut and washed veggies and fruit, healthy yogurt based dips – perhaps offer a quick recipe from Simply Great Food eg Minted Yogurt Dip or Spicy Hummus, convenient grab-and-go options such as cheese cubes, plain or flavored yogurts, , chocolate milk, homemade puddings, hard boiled eggs. Place them in the middle of the fridge where children will see them.

In your pantry: different breads and crackers such as whole-wheat pitas, home-made muffins, whole grain crackers, peanut butter, other nut butters, nuts, dried fruits, whole grain cereals, unsweetened canned fruits.



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY

3. PLAN AHEAD AND RELAX

Simple meal planning can reduce your stress during the week, save time, and improve your family's health. Once a week, set aside 20 minutes to prepare a menu plan and shopping list for the week. Make sure to include family members in the planning. Having their input will increase the success of improving your family's meals and snacks.

When you're making dinner, plan to make more than you or your family will eat. Package up the rest and take it with you for lunch the next day at work or school. Or freeze it in convenient servings

4. SAVE MONEY, MAKE IT YOURSELF, SHOP SMART

Start a recipe collection of homemade meals and snacks that incorporate all the food groups. Something as simple as whole wheat spaghetti with meat and tomato sauce topped with cheese and you have the four food groups!

Eating well doesn't have to cost a lot of money at the grocery store. Plan meals around vegetables and fruits that are in season or try to use pulses like kidney beans or lentils on occasion. Remember frozen vegetables and fruit can be just as nutritious as fresh, in-season produce. Become a flyer junkie to help find savings on the foods that you may be missing out on such as produce and foods in the dairy case.

5. BOOST FLAVOUR AND TASTE WITH A LITTLE CREATIVITY

Next time you're making dinner, try substituting milk for water in a recipe. Cooking and baking with milk is a great way to ensure you're getting all the health benefits milk provides and add flavour.

Experiment with different flavours –herbs and spices can add a great flavour boost to any vegetable side dish. Again – examples needed; 'kick up your carrots with dill; sprinkle nutmeg on cauliflower or brussel sprouts, add some cinnamon to baked apples'

Blending fruit with milk and yogurt and some ice creates a tasty smoothie chock full of nutrients. Try an orange milk shake with a touch of honey and vanilla;

Try roasting vegetables with a little canola oil and a few herbs like basil and oregano.



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY

SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE GETTING ENOUGH MILK AND ALTERNATIVES!

Research shows that milk and alternatives are one of the most under-consumed food groups. Here are some simple ways to infuse your daily diet with the goodness of dairy.

- Start your day with a delicious fruit smoothie made with milk or yogurt. Mix 1/2 cup (125 ml) fresh or frozen strawberries, peaches or banana chunks in a blender, with 1 cup (250 ml) milk, and 5 - 6 ice cubes. Blend for 20 seconds. Note: Omit the ice cubes if you are using frozen fruit.
- Swap your regular coffee for a café latté to get a recommended daily serving of milk
- Add two containers of yogurt to your lunch box: one for your snack and the other for your lunch.
- Prepare 50 g (1 ½ oz) servings of cheese to take with you. Enjoy them with pieces of fresh fruit or vegetables.
- Dip your raw vegetables in yogurt flavoured with pesto, curry, cumin, honey or mustard, etc.
- Insert a wooden stir stick in individual containers of fresh cheese and freeze them to make delicious frozen snacks. Huh? I don't get this one?
- Spice up your plain yogurt with cinnamon, apple puree, maple syrup, raisins...
- Opt for a yogurt drink to quench your thirst.
- Drink 250 mL (1 cup) of hot milk flavoured with honey or cinnamon, or infused with your favourite herbal or regular tea.
- Dip fresh fruit in yogurt, then sprinkle with crushed granola, cereal or coconut.
- For a deliciously simple snack, top plain or vanilla yogurt with any one or a combination of the following: cinnamon, applesauce, maple syrup, raisins or granola.
- Add your favourite fruit to cottage cheese or yogurt and sprinkle with cinnamon.
- A few hours before a meal, eating a protein snack like yogurt, milk or cheese can take the edge off your appetite and help prevent mealtime overeating.

www.dairygoodness.ca is a great source for tasty family pleasing recipes and they all incorporate dairy products.



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY

SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE GETTING ENOUGH VEGETABLES AND FRUIT!

Research shows that vegetables and fruit are one of the most under-consumed food groups. Here are some simple ways to infuse your diet with the daily recommended servings.

- Keep a bowl of fresh fruit within reach
- Store cut-up fruit and veggies in the refrigerator to remind you to snack on these nutritious foods when you open the fridge.
- For breakfast, top your cereal with fruit
- Have cut up veggies with hummus as a snack
- Add cut up veggies to your scrambled eggs for breakfast
- Shred veggies such as zucchini and carrots into casseroles
- Have a vegetable stir fry for dinner
- Add your favourite fruit to cottage cheese or yogurt and sprinkle with cinnamon.
- Start your day with a delicious fruit smoothie made with milk or yogurt. Mix 1/2 cup (125 ml) fresh or frozen strawberries, peaches or banana chunks in a blender, with 1 cup (250 ml) milk, and 5 - 6 ice cubes. Blend for 20 seconds. Note: Omit the ice cubes if you are using frozen fruit.
- Add a vegetable based soup such as minestrone to your sandwich at lunch
- Add a side salad to your lunch or dinner
- Buy packaged, ready-to-eat fresh vegetables and fruits – I'd leave out for cost reasons
- Add shredded or cut up vegetables to your sauces
- Add Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, and avocado slices to your sandwich
- Opt for a vegetable drink to add a daily serving of vegetables to diet

www.dietitians.ca is a great source for tasty family pleasing recipes.

