

Find it

There is lots of information about nutrition out there, but it's important to gather that information from sources you can trust. A great place to begin is the list of resources below.



www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Your health unit has great healthy eating resources and web links.



www.healthyeating.ca

Get your copy of Canada's Food Guide.



www.healthcanada.ca

Find more information about label reading.



www.dietitians.ca

The Dietitians of Canada website has fun tools to assess food and nutrition, help plan menus and provide practical tips and suggestions for making healthy food choices.



www.eatrightontario.ca

Eat Right Ontario provides trusted and easy-to-use nutrition information and advice to help make the healthy choice the easy choice.



Take the Healthy Eating Challenge!

You can influence others—from schools to restaurants to municipalities—to make it easier for children to make healthy eating choices.

Be Involved

– with others who influence children's food choices

- Work with schools and school councils to choose healthy fundraising items, develop guidelines for foods served at special events and set up healthy school breakfast or lunch programs.
- Volunteer with community groups to make it easier for families to make healthy food choices at events like local charity walks and fundraisers.
- Talk with your friends and neighbours about ways to start or support community nutrition programs like the *Good Food Box or Fresh Food Basket, Eat Well to Excel or Student Nutrition Programs Muskoka, Farm Fresh! Buy Local!, Community Gardens and Community Kitchens.*

Speak Out

– for changes that will make your community a healthier place to live

- Ask your municipality to provide healthy choices in vending machines and snack bars at arenas and sporting events. Encourage them to make this a municipal policy for all of their facilities.
- Ask youth/sports groups to choose nutritious menus for special team events, distribute guidelines for healthy snacks and serve water or 100% juice at games rather than sugary drinks.
- Write letters to the editor with ideas for making your community healthier.
- Speak out for better food choices for children at restaurants.
- Encourage teachers to give projects that allow children to practice healthy eating and physical activity with their family. Reinforce classroom nutrition and physical education in school newsletters and challenge parents to pack healthy lunches.
- Thank decision makers when they take positive action.



Kids Health Matters

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SIMCOE MUSKOKA DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Food smart families

Busy lives can make eating together as a family hard, and mealtime can be even more challenging when children don't want to eat the nutritious food you serve. Help your children make healthy choices by becoming a "food smart" family. Use the tips and tools suggested in this newsletter to help your family eat well and build a lifetime of good health together.

Seven steps to help families build healthy eating habits

- 1 Teach your family how to make healthy food choices—be a good role model.
- 2 Make healthy foods FUN!
- 3 Follow *Canada's Food Guide* when planning meals and snacks.
- 4 Respect your children's appetites.
- 5 Be consistent about family mealtime rules.
- 6 Shop with a list to resist marketing tactics and use food labels to make wise choices.
- 7 Take the healthy eating challenge and be involved in making your community healthier.



Be a healthy eating role model.

The best way to teach your children about healthy eating is to be a good role model by making healthy food choices for you and your family. Include activities in your children's day that help them develop the skills to make healthy food choices, wherever they are. Begin when your children are young, so they can develop life long healthy eating habits.

Get a copy of other issues of Kids Health Matters, as well as A Call to Action – Building a Lifetime of Good Health Begins Now, which includes suggestions for parents, health professionals, workplaces, businesses, organizations and schools. Call Your Health Connection at 721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) or download a copy from www.simcoemuskokahealth.org



Tel: 721-7520
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520
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Eating well, step

Local data from 1st graders suggests:

- Only 1 in 3 children eat enough fruits and vegetables, and grain products, including whole grains.
- Almost half need more meat and meat alternatives.
- 1 in 3 do not drink or eat enough milk products.
- 1 in 4 drink sweet drinks daily.
- Just over half meet the 90 minute per day national guideline for physical activity.
- About one quarter are at risk of overweight, or are overweight.

How do the portions eaten by your family compare to these servings?

- meat (75g) or meat alternatives like beans (175mL) = a deck of cards or computer mouse
- vegetables, fresh, frozen or canned (½ cup or 125mL) or 1 medium piece of fruit = a tennis ball
- ¼ cup of dried fruit = 2 golf balls
- ½ cup pasta or rice, or ½ bagel = 1 hockey puck
- cheese (50 g) = 2 thumbs



2) Make healthy foods FUN!

- Try different colours, shapes and textures of fruits and vegetables. Try melon balls, carrot curls, zucchini sticks, frozen peas, smooth and creamy avocado.
- Spice up your fruit choices by offering them in a variety of ways. Try fruit kabobs, fruit salad, fruit shakes, fruit with yogurt dip, fruit on pancakes, French toast, sandwiches and pizza.
- Spice up your vegetable choices by offering veggies and dip, grilled kabobs, a variety of salads such as green/yellow bean salad, coleslaw, or add to soups.
- Use a variety of whole grain breads, like mini pitas pockets and bagels, tortillas, flat breads, and bread sticks.
- Mix up your meat and alternative choices. Have baked beans for breakfast, cubes/slices of leftover ham, chicken, turkey or beef for lunch, an omelet for dinner.
- Try having white or chocolate milk on cereal, in smoothies, hot chocolate, soups, puddings and sauces.



3) Follow Canada's Food Guide

Make each Food Guide Serving count... wherever you are. Make meal and snack planning easier—and make sure your family gets the wide variety of foods they need to stay healthy, be active and grow well.

Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings per Day									
Age in Years	Children			Teens		Adults			
	2-3	4-8	9-13	14-18	19-50	51+			
Sex	Girls and Boys		Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	
Vegetables and Fruit	4	5	6	7	8	7-8	8-10	7	7
Grain Products	3	4	6	6	7	6-7	8	6	7
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4	2	2	3	3
Meat and Alternatives	1	1	1-2	2	3	2	3	2	3

The chart above shows how many Food Guide Servings you need from each of the four food groups every day.

Having the amount and type of food recommended and following the tips in Canada's Food Guide will help:

- Meet your needs for vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.
- Reduce your risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer and osteoporosis.
- Contribute to your overall health and vitality.

4) Respect their appetites

Sometimes your child will eat a little, sometimes a lot. This is normal. Children know best how much they need to eat. Different children need different amounts of food depending on things like age, body size, activity level, growth rate and appetite.



Healthy eating away from home

People are eating more meals at restaurants - meals that tend to have higher fat, salt, sugar and calories and less vegetables, fruits and milk.

- Choose milk or water at meals. Avoid pop and fruit beverages.
- Choose lower - fat options or ask for sauces on the side. Those little "extras" like salad dressings, sandwich sauces, mayo, spreads and gravy can add a lot of fat and calories to your meal.
- Say NO to SUPER-SIZING. Often restaurant portions are too large anyway - share a meal with another adult or child or take some home with you.
- Let restaurants know what you want on the menu.
- Ask for substitutions like salad for french fries, whole wheat bread for white dinner roll, milk for pop.
- Choose steamed, baked, broiled or grilled and avoid deep fried items that add extra calories from fat.
- Check nutrition information on restaurant websites for more details about what you're eating.



by step

5) Be consistent about family mealtime rules

It's easy to get into a power struggle with children around eating. Parents are responsible for deciding what foods to offer, when and where meals are to be served.

It is the child's role to decide whether to eat and how much. Let children know your menu plans and be consistent with the rules around family meals.

Meal times work best when families take the time to enjoy food and conversation around the table. Avoid outside distraction such as TV and radios.



6) Resist marketing tactics

There are thousands of food choices in the grocery store and each year thousands more appear—including an increasing number of snack foods and convenience foods. It's no coincidence that heavily advertised products are displayed at cart height where young children sit, that packaging is colourful and appealing, and that products offer prizes and games.

Take along a shopping list based on a weekly menu plan to help you resist marketing and packaging tactics. Tell your children why you buy specific foods, let them help shop, and only buy foods that you want your family to eat.

Tip – Read food labels.

Figure out the real cost of convenience foods that often come in larger portion sizes, contain more calories, fat, sugar and salt, and cost more than similar items made at home.

For more information about how to read labels, check out www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca

