

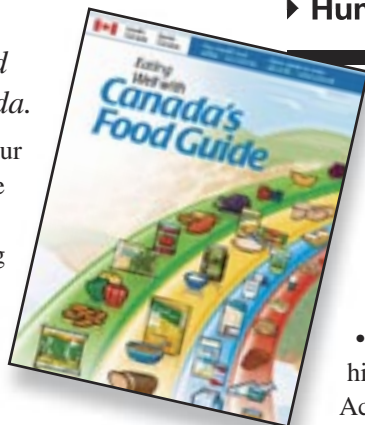
Health MATTERS

May 2007

Your best guide to healthy eating

The long-awaited new Canada's Food Guide has arrived from Health Canada.

The revised guide reflects many changes in our population and in available foods. The advice in it helps you meet your needs for vitamins, minerals and other nutrients – without having to do a lot of calculations. And to top it off, the advice on healthy habits can help you reduce your risk of obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer and osteoporosis.



- ▶ Parenting—the hardest job you'll ever do 2
- ▶ Outfit your child for day camp 3
- ▶ Human papillomavirus 4

oil and soybean oil each day is good for you. It can come from soft margarine, salad dressings or cooking oils.

- For better health and a healthy body weight, the guide suggests limiting foods and drinks high in calories, fat and sugar, and use of information on the “Nutrition Facts” table on food labels.
- The many health benefits of daily physical activity are highlighted. There’s more information in Canada’s Physical Activity Guide, at www.healthcanada.gc.ca.

What's new about the Food Guide?

“Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide” shows the right amounts and types of food for people aged 2 and over, according to age and gender. It also has practical tips and messages. Here are some highlights.

- Vegetables and fruit, especially dark green and orange vegetable choices are the most prominent food group, to stress their importance for overall health.
- A tasty range of whole grains is emphasized. It includes many different cultural foods like flatbreads, pasta and couscous.
- Drinking two glasses of milk is highlighted for all ages. Non-milk drinkers or those needing more servings can choose lower fat ‘milk alternatives’ like fortified soy beverage and yogurt.
- ‘Meat and alternatives’ choices call for lower fat meats, more servings of fish and beans, lentils and tofu. Look for links on www.canadasfoodguide.net for information on limiting mercury from certain types of fish.
- The food guide recommends a choice of foods from the four food groups with lower saturated and trans fats. It also points out that a small amount of unsaturated fats like canola oil, olive

Tailoring the guide to your needs

A section of the new Canada’s Food Guide has advice for different ages and stages, such as for children, physically active people and for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Women who could become pregnant or who are pregnant or breastfeeding are advised to consult with their health care professional about their specific vitamin and mineral needs. Men and women over 50 are advised to take a daily vitamin D supplement of 10 µg (400 IU).

On the food guide website, www.canadasfoodguide.net, you will find an interactive section – My Food Guide – which allows you to personalize Canada’s Food Guide information based on your age, gender, food preferences and activity choices.

Get your new Canada's Food Guide

Call Your Health Connection at 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520, or visit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org to get your own copy of the new Canada’s Food Guide or to get your questions answered.



Parenting—the hardest job you’ll ever have

Parenting is the most rewarding and challenging job an adult will have in their lifetime.

Being a parent involves protecting, teaching and caring for children so they will grow to be healthy and well adjusted with the skills needed to cope with adult life. With such a tall order, it’s not uncommon for parents to feel doubt or worry about their own ability.

Take heart: being a good parent is not something that comes naturally or just happens. It takes time to develop the knowledge and skills needed.



Have realistic expectations of your child. It helps to know what behaviours are common for the age of your child. Do not expect perfection.

Use positive parenting; it’s a way to motivate children positively through encouragement for behaving well, rather than yelling or spanking.

Look after yourself. It is much easier to look after your child if your own needs are met. Taking some time to be away from your children is normal and healthy.

Get support from family or friends. Talking to other parents means you can share experiences and ideas.

Recognize the warning signs. If you feel embarrassed by your child’s behaviour, notice you are losing your

temper more often and more easily or are feeling overwhelmed, these may be signs you are struggling with your parenting role. Consider seeking help from a professional who has expertise in child development and managing children’s behaviour.

Some common parenting traps

Many parents get caught in traps that add to the stress they may already be experiencing. Here are a few examples:

- **The Perfect-Parent Trap:** You lie awake at 3 a.m. because you didn’t take time to listen to a story your child wanted to tell you. You’re trying to be perfect. This can leave you feeling frustrated, disappointed and guilty, since there’s no such thing as a perfect parent.
- **The Negative-Parent Trap:** At a musical show, you spend most of the time telling the kids to stop squirming and be quiet. If you criticize a child’s problem behaviour rather than praising the things they do right, you can be heading for anger and power struggles with your child. And you can accidentally reward bad behaviour by not noticing your child’s good behaviour.
- **The Martyr Trap:** A friend invites you out to a movie, your husband says he’ll hold the fort and you’d love the break – but you don’t go because the kids might need you. Be careful about neglecting your own needs. You can end up feeling unhappy and resentful, perhaps even taking it out on your partner.

Hints to help manage the challenges

Have realistic expectations of yourself. No parent knows all there is to know about parenting. We all make mistakes and learn through trial and error.

Look for information and ideas on parenting

There are many different views on how to raise children; there is no single right way. Find the approach that you are most comfortable with and you think will benefit you and your children and most importantly, know where to go for help.

Call Health Connection to find out more about

- Getting Ready for Baby Prenatal Series: offers classes to prepare families for baby’s arrival.
- Triple P – Positive Parenting Programs: offers support, practical suggestions and a plan of action for parents by phone, through group or individual sessions or more intense therapy.
- Home consultations for families of children up to age 6 from a public health nurse and family home visitor through the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program.



How to outfit your child for day camp

You've planned the summer to keep your children happy and busy—found a good summer camp—scheduled family outings. Here are some things to consider as your child heads out to day camp or any recreational outing.

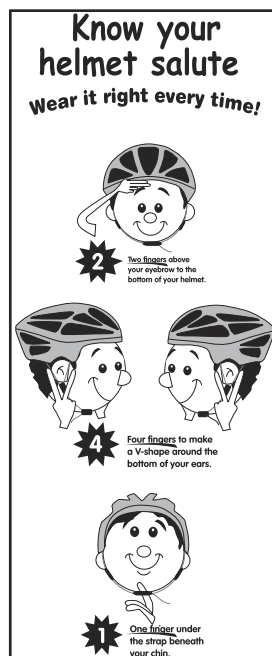
In general

- Use a Canadian approved lifejacket that supports the child's head for activities near open water.
- Swimming? Always stay within arm's reach of your child. At day camp, ensure that a certified lifeguard or instructor is on duty.
- Watch for local heat alerts or air quality advisories. If your child has allergies or asthma, let camp staff know.
- Insect repellent? If activity is near weeds, tall grass, bushes or in an area known for high mosquito activity, or takes place at dusk or evening, children should take precautions against mosquito bites.
- Limit the time they spend in the sun during the hours of 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



On top

- Always have a certified helmet and other protection for bikes, blades, boards ... remember to fit it using the 2-4-1 salute. (see the drawing)
- In the sun, wear a wide-brimmed hat – three inches is best.



On the body

- Loose fitting clothing that protects against the sun. Tightly woven fabrics and dark colours, such as deep blue and black, or bright colours such as orange and red, offer more protection.
- Sunglasses that protect against UVA and UVB.
- UVA and UVB protective sunscreen with minimum SPF 15 (20 to 30 when out in the sun for more than 2.5 hours), applied 30 minutes before going outside. Apply lip balm with SPF sunscreen, too.

On bottom

- Team play? Firm soled running shoes
- Swimming, canoeing fun? Sandals or “water socks”
- Long walks? Shoes with ankle support
- Don't forget to protect your feet with sunscreen if wearing sandals or barefoot.

In a lunch pack

- Pack several healthy fluids such as water, 100% juice or milk.
- Make sure that all four food groups are packed for lunch.
- Pack juicy fruit & vegetables for tasty and thirst quenching snacks.
- Use frozen water bottles or juice boxes to keep lunch pack cold and safe to eat.
- Camp days are busy days so make sure there is enough food packed to fuel your camper.



A sexually transmitted cancer?

Yes – but it can be prevented

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a family of many very common viruses. There are more than 100 different types of HPV, about 30 of which are passed on through sex.

Two of these cause 90 per cent of genital warts in Canada. Two other strains often cause cancers, the most common being cancer of the cervix.

HPV is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in Canada. Unfortunately most sexually active people who have HPV are unaware that they have it. So the infection is often passed on to partners without even knowing it.

HPV is the leading cause of cervical cancer. In fact, the link between HPV infection and cervical cancer is even stronger than the link between smoking and lung cancer.

Physical and emotional impact

HPV can cause warts in many body areas for men and women. The most common sites are the anus, penis and vagina — as well, HPV can cause changes to the cells of a woman's cervix.

Beyond the physical changes and health risks, HPV can have an emotional impact on people diagnosed with an infection. It can cause people to feel shame about their body, guilt or fear about how their partner will react. They may also worry about their sexual life and the possibility of cancer.

Education is a must

Most people have heard the term HPV. However very few, whether young or old, know how common it is; how easily it is spread; the significant risk of cervical cancer; or how to prevent the spread of HPV.



What you need to know

- People who are sexually active at an early age are more likely to get HPV.
- The risk for HPV goes up for people who have multiple partners, those who smoke and for those with a weakened immune system.
- Always using condoms and limiting the number of sex partners in a lifetime can help to prevent HPV.
- A Pap test can detect HPV of the cervix. Pap tests within the first three years of sexual activity are recommended — early detection can save lives.
- Genital warts can be treated but they can return. Although there is no cure for HPV, early treatment may lower the risk of passing it on to other people.

New vaccine

Health Canada recently approved a new vaccine to protect young girls and women ages 9-26 from four types of HPV that can cause genital warts or cancer. Even people who have HPV should consider the vaccine; although it won't cure the infection, it can protect against other strains of the virus that are in the vaccine. Recently the federal government pledged vaccine funding to prevent cervical cancer. Final details on how Ontario will implement this program will be known soon.

For the time being, HPV vaccine is available, at a cost, from health-care providers and through the health unit. Some private drug plans may cover the cost. However, it will take more than vaccines to fight HPV. Dealing with the virus also requires a collective effort—safe sex education, screening, and, when detected, treatment to help manage the infection. All strategies are needed to impact this rising health concern.

For more information on HPV or the new vaccine, contact Your Health Connection at 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 and speak with a public health nurse.



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