



2007/2008
Monthly Healthy Eating Tips for School Newsletters
from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for September 2007

Lunch to Munch

Healthy lunches are part of the daily routine for many. It is important to keep it healthy and interesting. Many people quickly tire of taking the same old thing everyday. Try to aim for foods from at least 3 food groups. There are a wide variety of foods to choose from. Here are a few ideas:

- Shake up your sandwiches. Choose a variety of breads - whole wheat, multigrain, rolls, wraps, bagels, foccacia, baguette ...
- Mix up the fillings - chicken, beef, tuna, ham, salmon, egg, veggie ...
- Pile on the veggies - tomato, lettuce, spinach, pepper strips, thin onion slices, cucumber slices, shredded carrot ...
- Pita wedges with hummus
- Stuff a pita
- Bean burritos
- Pizza slices
- A mug of soup
- A container of spaghetti to warm up
- Pasta salad
- Salad and a bun
- Bagel with cream cheese and some fruit salad
- Last night's leftovers
- Chili
- Biscuit and cheese

Round out the meal by adding some fruit, yogurt, cheese, pudding ...

Add a beverage - milk, chocolate milk, yogurt beverage, 100% fruit juice or water

Pack it. Tote it. Enjoy!

Here is a favorite lunch recipe to try that is easy for kids to make:

Roll-ups

Take 1 multi-grain wrap. Spread with light cream cheese. Add sliced ham or turkey. Sprinkle on grated cheese. Add lettuce, sliced tomato, diced green peppers, green onion, and shredded carrot. Roll up and enjoy! (The wrap can be sliced to make a few smaller pinwheels.)

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **October 2007**

Mom Was Right About Breakfast!

What simple activity can help students learn better, focus better and retain more at school, have more energy and decrease the number of days lost because of illness? Eating breakfast! Breakfast provides children with the energy and nutrients necessary to perform their best at school and play. However, preparing a balanced breakfast can be a challenge when mornings are busy. Aim for three of the four food groups in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. Planning ahead can help breakfast preparation go quickly and smoothly. Here are a few ideas:

- Keep the kitchen stocked with a variety of whole grain ready-to-eat cereals and bread products.
- Put out dishes and non-perishable foods like cereals the night before.
- Pre-mix pancake batter or scrambled egg mixtures and store in the fridge for the next morning.
- Keep cut up fruit in the fridge for a breakfast fruit salad or for a smoothie.
- Pre-mix dry ingredients for muffins the night before. Add liquids and bake in the morning.

Smoothies can be fast, fun, and a healthy breakfast choice. Grab a muffin, cereal bar or a handful of nuts and you are set to go!

Mixed Berry Smoothie

- 1 cup (250 ml) mixed berries
- ½ cup (125 ml) low fat yogurt
- ¼ cup (50 ml) orange juice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) honey

Blend together until smooth. Serves 2.

Source: Food Network website (www.foodnetwork.com)

Chocolate Bananarama

- 1 ½ cups (375 ml) cold chocolate milk
- 1 sliced banana

Blend until smooth. Serves 2.

Source: Dairy Farmers of Canada brochure

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Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **November 2007**

Let's Look at the Label!

Have you noticed at the grocery store that more and more people are reading labels and comparing products? Families want to know what they are eating and want to make the best food choices that will lead to better health. Health Canada now requires most packaged food to have nutrition information on food labels. The label will tell you a number of things. It will give you a list of every ingredient that is in that food. The company may make a special claim, if allowed by Health Canada, either about a specific nutrient or about how your diet can affect your health. The Nutrition Facts table on the product will tell you the amount of calories and nutrients for the serving size shown. Always compare the serving size on the package to the amount that you eat. The % Daily Value puts nutrients on a scale from 0% to 100%. This scale tells you if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient in one serving of the packaged food. You can then compare it to other similar products and decide which is a better choice for you and your family.

Many grocery stores have registered dietitians on staff who will give grocery store tours and help you understand food labels. Check at the store where you shop!

Here's a great one-bowl, one-dish, no-brainer recipe you can throw together quickly at the end of the day! Serve with a crusty whole grain bread.

Luscious No-Crust Cheese and Spinach Pie

3 large eggs
6 tbsp (90 ml) flour
500 g container Cottage cheese
½ cup (125 ml) diced ham (optional)
10 oz (264 g) bag of spinach (well washed)
1 cup (250 ml) grated Cheddar or Swiss cheese

In a large bowl, mix eggs, flour, Cottage cheese and ham together well.

Fold in spinach.

Spread into a 9 inch (23 cm) pie plate.

Sprinkle grated cheese over the top.

Bake in a preheated 350°F (180°C) oven for 45 minutes.

Cut into 4 wedges and serve!

Source: Dairy Farmers of Canada website (www.nutrition2007.ca)

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Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **December 2007**

Meat and Alternatives

One of the food groups included in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* is the Meat and Alternatives group. This group offers us high quality protein which we need for healthy growth and repair of the body. Many of us are familiar with the meat choices in this group - beef, chicken, pork, turkey, and fish. Many of us are not quite as familiar with the alternatives available from this group. Let's explore some of these alternates.

Legumes include foods such as beans, dried peas, legumes, and chickpeas. Many of these foods can be enjoyed in casseroles, added to salads and soups. Favorites include baked beans, split pea soup, 3-bean salad, and hummus.

Tofu is made from soybean. It tends to take on the flavor of the foods it is prepared with. It is available as a firm tofu which is used in stir frys, pasta sauces, and casseroles; and as a soft tofu which is often used in smoothies.

Nuts and seeds are often used as snacks on their own, in a trail mix, or added to salads. Toss a few in a stir fry for added crunch. Many nuts are also available as a nut butter such as the familiar peanut butter, as well as almond butter and cashew butter.

Here's a recipe for a meat alternate to experiment with:

Mexican Tofu Appetizers

12 oz extra firm tofu
1 pkg taco seasoning mix

Cut tofu into cubes. Toss cubes with taco seasoning mix to coat. Bake on a cookie sheet for 20-25 minutes at 350°F. Arrange on a platter and serve with salsa or plum sauce for dipping.

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **January 2008**

Fabulous Fiber

Healthy eating and physical activity are both important for maintaining healthy weights and lifestyles. One part of healthy eating is to include fiber-rich foods into the diet. A high fiber diet can help reduce the risk of developing high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and colon cancer. A diet high in fiber is also a great way to maintain a healthy weight, as it keeps us fuller longer. It is important for both children and adults to get plenty of fiber in their diets. By establishing healthy eating patterns as children, they are more likely to continue them on into adulthood.

What foods contain fiber?

- ⇒ Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, peas, celery, corn, potatoes)
- ⇒ Fruit (apples, pears, raisins, oranges, bananas, strawberries)
- ⇒ Grain products (especially “whole grains” brown rice, whole wheat pastas/bread/crackers/granola, bran, oatmeal, high fibre cereal)
- ⇒ Meat and Alternatives (beans, lentils, legumes)

Simple Ideas to Increase Fiber Intake...

- ⇒ Eat the skins on vegetables and fruit: they are a good source of fiber.
- ⇒ Eat vegetables and fruit rather than 100% fruit or vegetable juice more often.
- ⇒ Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
- ⇒ Add granola or bran buds to yogurt or cereal.
- ⇒ Add wheat germ, bran, oatmeal or flax seed to recipes such as muffins.

Hurry-Up Fill-Me-Up Burritos (makes 10)

This burrito recipe is super quick and easy. Try freezing them for your own version of fast food.

- 1 cup (250 ml) cooked brown rice
- 14 oz (398 ml) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup (250 ml) corn, canned or frozen
- 3/4 cup (175 ml) salsa
- 10 large (10 inch) whole wheat flour tortillas, warmed
- 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) shredded cheddar cheese

In a non-stick pan over medium heat, stir together rice, beans, corn and salsa. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until warmed through. Divide mixture evenly between tortillas. Sprinkle with cheese. Roll up tortillas and enjoy!

Source: Dietitians of Canada *Great Food Fast* cookbook

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **February 2008**

Healthy Eating Cheap and Easy

Eating well with your family is one of the best things you can do for your health, but it doesn't need to cost more or take a lot of time. Planning your meals ahead can help you get a variety of food from all four food groups of Canada's Food Guide and save time by shopping less often.

Here are a few tips to help you eat healthy and save time and money:

- Make a list to help save money by purchasing only the foods you need.
- Use food you already have on hand.
- Cook larger amounts of foods such as soups and sauces, and freeze unused portions for a quick and easy meal at another time.
- Buy frozen vegetables to save money and reduce spoilage.
- Stock up on healthy, low-cost foods that keep well, like rice, potatoes, pasta and frozen orange juice.
- Use store brands. They are just as healthy as the brand names but cost less.
- Look at grocery store flyers to find the best deals.
- Save coupons for foods you plan to buy, but be sure to check other prices since coupons don't always give you the best deal.
- Be wary of packaged or prepared foods, as they are often more expensive.
- Take care in shopping with children. When your shopping is influenced by children's requests you often end up buying more food, and less healthy choices.

Here's a cheap and easy meal for any night of the week.

Shepherd's pie

- 6 potatoes, peeled and boiled
- ½ cup (125 mL) of milk
- 3 cups (750 mL) frozen mixed vegetables
- 1½ lbs (750 g) ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- Pinch of salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

In a bowl, mash together potatoes and milk.

In a skillet over medium heat, cook ground beef until browned. Add onion and cook until onion becomes transparent. Drain off excess fat.

Transfer beef to a 13 X 9 inch baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Spread frozen vegetables over the meat, then spread potatoes over vegetables.

Bake for 30 minutes. Serves 6.

Leftovers are great reheated the next day for lunch. It also freezes well for a quick weeknight meal.

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **March 2008**

Milk.....Nature at it's Best!

Making sure children eat a healthful diet is no easy task! We know it's important to eat a balanced diet consisting of choices from the new food guide, *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, which includes the milk and alternatives group. No other single food provides as much nutrition as a glass of milk, which is our number one source of calcium. Milk and milk products offer many nutrients that build and maintain strong bones and teeth and keep muscles working well. The new Canada's Food Guide recommends children age 4-8 years get 2 servings of milk and alternatives each day and children and teens age 9-18 years get 3-4 servings a day. So, what is a serving of milk and alternatives?

- * 1 cup (250 ml) of white or chocolate milk
- * 1 cup (250 ml) Fortified soy beverage
- * 3/4 cup (175 g) of yogurt
- * 1 ½ oz (50g) of hard cheese or 2 cheese slices

And yes, chocolate milk has all the same nutrients as white milk and no more sugar than an equal amount of unsweetened apple or orange juice.

Here's a tasty way to add milk to your diet!

Luscious Lime Frost

1½ cups(375ml) lime sherbet
2 cups(500ml) milk
½ cup(125ml) frozen limeade concentrate, thawed

Spoon sherbet into a blender.
Add milk and limeade.
Cover and blend well.
Makes 4 child-sized servings.

Source: Dairy Farmers of Canada (Ontario)

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **April 2008**

Water - The Champion of Beverages!

Fluid needs vary for each individual, depending on factors such as age, sex, body size and level of physical activity. When adults and children do not consume enough fluids they may become dehydrated. Dehydration can cause many problems such as headaches and fatigue. Also, dehydrated children tend to have trouble concentrating in the classroom.

Many studies have shown that very few children are drinking enough fluid throughout the day. The best way to stay hydrated is to drink water. It is the cheapest, most accessible fluid and is effective at replacing lost fluids. However, fluids can come from other sources such as milk, chocolate milk, 100% vegetable or fruit juice, and soup.

Simple Ways to Stay Hydrated

- ⇒ Have children carry a clean water bottle in their bag, for easy access to water throughout the day.
- ⇒ Try 100% unsweetened vegetable or fruit juice. It is a good idea to restrict juice to no more than 1 serving (½ cup) a day.
- ⇒ Many vegetables and fruit also contain a lot of fluid which keep us hydrated. For example: apples, grapes, watermelon, oranges, lettuce, green pepper and broccoli.
- ⇒ Place a container of water filled with ice and slices of orange or lemon in the fridge; it gives the water a new great taste.
- ⇒ Don't be fooled into thinking that children need sports drinks to re-hydrate if they are physically active. Only endurance athletes (such as marathon runners) need sports drinks. They contain added sugar and salt. Generally, children who take part in physical activities are best re-hydrated with water.
- ⇒ Remember to use caution around sweetened drinks such as kool-aid, iced tea or regular pop. These drinks have a lot of added sugar which results in extra calories that people may not need.
- ⇒ Avoid products with the words "fruit drinks", "punch", "cocktail", "beverage" or that end in "ade". These products are high in sugar and contain little fruit.

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca

Plus try these great recipes:

Sunshine Shake

1 cup (250 ml) orange juice
½ cup (125ml) grapefruit juice
1 banana
½ cup (125ml) low fat vanilla yogurt
½ teaspoon (2 ml) vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Pour into glass, and serve immediately. Makes four 4 ounce servings.

Source: www.floridajuice.com

Pomegranate Pink Jade

2 cups (500ml) pomegranate juice
1 ½ cup (375ml) orange juice
1 ½ cups(375ml) water
Ice cubes

In a pitcher, mix pomegranate juice, orange juice and water. Add ice cubes and serve.

Source: www.pomegranates.org

Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **May 2008**

New Exotic Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit contain many vitamins, minerals and fibre that are needed for the body to work properly. The consumption of vegetables and fruit also reduces the risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. The most colourful vegetables and fruit tend to be the richest in vitamins and minerals. Some people may find it boring to consume the same types of vegetables and fruit day in and day out. Many people do not try new vegetables and fruit because they do not know how to eat or prepare them.

Here are some new vegetables and fruits to try:

Pomegranate - The seed of this fruit is the part that is eaten. The taste of this fruit depends on the variety and state of ripeness. It can be very sweet or very sour. To eat simply cut the fruit into 4 sections. Place one section in a bowl of water and roll out the seeds with your fingers. The white structures will float to the top and can be discarded. Strain the seeds from the water and enjoy!

Ugli Fruit (Tangelo) - An ugli fruit is a citrus fruit made by combining a grapefruit and a tangerine. It is called “Ugli” because it has a rough, wrinkled, greenish yellow skin. The fruit has a sweet taste of a tangerine rather than the bitter side of a grapefruit. The Ugli fruit is usually available in stores between November and April. Simply eat like an orange!

Zucchini - Can either be yellow or green and resembles a cucumber. It is usually served cooked rather than raw. Zucchini is best when quickly cooked for about 4 minutes (steamed, boiled, grilled) so it is firm. There is no need to remove the skin of the Zucchini when cooking.

Artichoke - Cut away about a quarter of each scale with scissors. This will remove the thorns that can interfere with eating the leaves. The artichoke can be boiled or steamed until tender anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes. If boiling the artichoke do not cover the pot with a cover (the artichoke may turn brown). You can then eat the leaves and the “heart” or the “choke” (the center of the vegetable)

Pomegranate Yogurt Dip

1 large pomegranate

2 cups (500ml) chilled plain yogurt

2 scallions finely chopped

1/4 cup (50ml) pomegranate juice

1/4 cup (50ml) cilantro finely chopped

1/4 tsp (1ml) salt

Separate seeds from pomegranate. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the yogurt, pomegranate juice, scallions, cilantro and salt. Gently fold in all but 2 tbsp of the pomegranate seeds. Place in serving bowl and garnish with seeds. Chill for 30 minutes. Makes 2 cups.

Source: www.pomegranate.org

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Healthy Eating Tips from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance for **June 2008**

Picky Eaters

Children can become picky eaters for a variety of reasons. Some are naturally sensitive to taste, smell and texture, and others develop picky eating habits by imitating others.

Here are some tips to help your child eat a healthy, balanced diet:

- Give your children reasonable limits to what they eat.
- Let your child make some choices while grocery shopping, such as which type of fruit or vegetable to buy. They will be more likely to eat the foods they chose themselves.
- Scheduled meals and snacks are important in establishing good eating patterns.
- Meal time as a family should be pleasant and an experience for all family members to look forward to.
- Avoid cooking a separate meal for the child. Offer them their meal and they will decide whether to eat it.
- Don't give up! It may take as many as ten to fifteen tries with a new food before a child is willing to accept it.
- Be a positive role model. Eating a variety of healthy foods offers a model for your children to do the same.
- Think about the color, smell and texture when introducing new foods. A child might enjoy raw, crunchy broccoli, but not cooked broccoli.
- It doesn't work to force the child to eat certain foods.

Remember that both you and your child share responsibility around their eating habits.

- You control what, where and when food is provided, but the child controls how much and whether or not they eat the food.
- When offering a snack, ask the child if they would like an apple or a pear, rather than asking if they would like a fruit or chips.

It's a common problem to get picky eaters to eat more fruits and vegetables. Here are some tips to help them eat more variety:

- Add thinly cut, grated or pureed vegetables to sauces, chili or casseroles.
- Offer your child a smoothie made with fruit and milk.
- Have your child help you pick out vegetables and dip for a snack.
- Make frozen fruit kabobs by putting cut-up fruit on a skewer and freezing them for a cool treat on a warm day.

Check out the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca