

GOOD FOOD BOX



September...back to routines!

As Fall comes, it brings a new season of activities, the start of a new school year and a fresh start for many people.

Here are a few tips to ease the stress of your busy schedule...

Get plenty of sleep: both children and adults can benefit from a good night's rest to repair & heal your body & mind. Both your health and energy can be affected when you are deprived of sleep. Getting to bed on time is important!

Organize: keep a calendar of activities and appointments to help coordinate your family life.

Plan ahead for healthy meals: read weekly grocery flyers for specials. Plan menus, make a list and visit the grocery store to stock up. Make a pot of chili or a hearty soup to heat up on busy nights and an extra serving for the freezer. Be sure to buy healthy snacks for after school such as local fruit and vegetables. Fill the fruit bowl on the counter. Cut up vegetables and store in a container in the refrigerator for quick healthy snacks or additions to meals. Enjoy a family weekend "treat" night – plan a favourite meal, watch a movie or play a game together.

Take time for activity. Walk, cycle or just plan time for a family outing at the park. Kick a soccer ball, play catch or throw a Frisbee. Bundle up on cool days and breathe the fresh air! Daily activity is important for all ages – aim for at least 60 minutes for children and youth. Remember to set time limits on TV, computer and playing video games. Adults: Activity not only strengthens your body, it also makes you feel good about yourself. Physical activity improves health and well-being. It reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps you get and keep a healthy body weight. (*Health Canada*)

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Peppers

Nutrition: an excellent source of Vitamin C & source of folic acid.

Store: in refrigerator crisper for up to 1 week.

Preparation: rinse in cold water, slice in half, remove core & seeds.

Slice or chop – enjoy raw in salads or with a dip. Peppers can be used in stir-fries, stews, omelets or pizza toppings. Roasting or grilling peppers develops their naturally sweet flavour.

Pears

Nutrition: One medium pear (160 g) has about 100 calories, is a good source of fiber and a source of Vitamin C, potassium and folate.

Store: ripe pears in refrigerator & use within a couple of days of purchase.

Flavour is best when served cool.

Preparation: Handle pears with care to avoid bruising. Rinse under cool running water prior to use. Do not peel or core until ready to use.

Pears are great as a fresh snack or dessert. They can also be used for baked cakes, fruit crisps. For an interesting **fall salad:** toss mixed greens & fresh pear slices with your favourite vinaigrette dressing; sprinkle with a little blue or feta cheese & a few chopped pecans or walnuts.



SUPPORTERS OF THE GOOD FOOD BOX



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RECIPES

The Lunch box Challenge !!

Packing a bag lunch for workdays or school is a smart step to reduce food costs & improve your nutrition.

Many parents struggle with planning school lunches.

Individually packaged “lunchables” such as crackers and processed meats/cheese are expensive, high in fat and sodium. Buying a large block of cheese when on special and cutting it yourself can reduce costs and boost nutrition.

Get your kids involved...talk about the foods they like to eat.

Have a variety of breads, pita, wraps and whole wheat crackers on hand. Make homemade muffins, wrap individually and freeze.

Keep a drawer of your fridge stocked with lunch items such as fruit, cut up vegetables, dips, cheese and yogurt.

Include a protein source such as a hardboiled egg, tuna, leftover cooked chicken or meat, cheese, cottage cheese, hummus or bean dip.

For a change from sandwiches, try cold pasta salad or a slice of pizza. Hot soups, stews, chili or baked beans can be carried in a wide mouth thermos.

Remember to include water, milk or 100% fruit juice.

Fruit punch, ice tea and energy drinks are not healthy drinks.

Reusable food containers and bottles are better for our environment. Wash thoroughly in hot water every day.

A freezer pack will help keep cold foods safe until lunch time.

Healthy lunch options:

- Whole wheat tortilla with sliced turkey, cheese, spinach or lettuce, sliced peaches, yogurt and water to drink
- Bean chili, cherry tomatoes, whole wheat crackers, grapes and milk to drink
- Tuna salad in a pita, cucumber slices, pudding and 100% orange juice to drink
- Vegetable soup, whole wheat bun, hard boiled egg, melon slices and milk to drink

Healthy Snack options:

- Homemade oatmeal or bran muffin & sunflower seeds
- Cottage cheese topped with fresh or canned fruit
- Yogurt with cereal topping (eg. low fat granola)
- Whole wheat pita with hummus & raw vegetables
- Cheese cubes & fresh fruit
- Whole wheat crackers with cheese cubes

Info adapted from EatRight Ontario

Pasta with Sweet Peppers, Cheese & Basil

½ lb (250 g) pasta (rigatoni or fusilli)
1 tsp (5 mL) olive oil or canola oil
1 small onion, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 medium red, yellow or green peppers, cut in strips
1 large tomatoes, chopped
1/2 cup (125 mL) finely shredded basil or
2 tsp (10 mL) dried basil leaves
1 cup (250 mL) crumbled feta cheese (4 oz/120 g)
6 black olives, sliced (optional)

Preparation:

In large pot of boiling water, cook pasta until tender but firm; drain & return to pot.

Meanwhile, in large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion & garlic for 3 minutes. Add peppers; cook until tender, about 2 minutes. Add to hot pasta along with cheese & olives; toss well.

Makes 3-4 servings

Recipe adapted from Lighthearted Everyday Cooking – Anne Lindsay

Eggplant, tomato & cheese casserole

1 eggplant (about 1 lb/500g)
1 Tbsp (15 mL) olive or canola oil
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tsp (10 mL) crushed dried rosemary or 1 Tbsp (15 mL) fresh
2 large tomatoes, sliced
2 oz (60 g) part skim mozzarella cheese, sliced thinly

Preparation:

Cut eggplant into ½” thick slices; mix garlic with oil & brush over both sides of eggplant.

Grill on barbeque, over medium heat for 8-10 minutes.

Turn & sprinkle with rosemary. Grill for 8-10 minutes longer or until lightly browned.

(Alternatively, broil on a baking sheet for 4-6 minutes per side)

In a shallow baking dish, arrange overlapping slices of grilled eggplant, tomato & cheese slices.

Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven for 25 minutes or until heated through & cheese has melted.

Make 6 servings

Recipe adapted from Lighthearted Everyday cooking by Anne Lindsay