

# UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF FOOD

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## THE POTENTIAL TO FUEL

### Stay energized by planning nutritious snacks into your day.

Nutritious snacks, in the right portion sizes, can be part of a healthy eating plan. Almost half of all Canadians say that eating a balanced diet is challenging for them because they are so busy. They often skip meals, and close to 30 per cent of Canadians say they snack to stay fuelled in a busy day. Dietitians can help you unlock the potential of food by teaching you how to plan and choose snacks and meals. Just ask!

### FIVE TIPS FOR HEALTHY SNACKS

Snacks are foods or drinks that are consumed between meals. When you're on-the-run during a busy day, think of snacks as mini-meals that offer some nutritional value and an energy boost. These are different than treats, such as cookies, chocolate and chips, which are not nourishing. Here are five helpful snacking tips:

- 1. Plan ahead.** Keep a variety of healthy, ready-to-eat snacks on hand for when you get hungry. Being prepared helps you avoid less-healthy treats.
- 2. Be aware of portion sizes.** Instead of snacking from a large bag or box, take a portion and put it on a plate or bowl.
- 3. Listen to your hunger cues.** Ask yourself: am I truly hungry, or am I eating because I am bored, tired or stressed?
- 4. Skip distracted snacking!** Avoid munching while looking at a screen, driving or working. You may eat more than you need if you're distracted from your feeling of fullness.
- 5. Snack on vegetables!** About half of all Canadians don't eat enough vegetables or fruit. Snacking on them between meals is a great way to add more.

Find all 10 feature recipes at [www.NutritionMonth2019.ca](http://www.NutritionMonth2019.ca)



DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Diana Steele RD**  
Vancouver, BC

Fueling your body with healthy snacks between meals can help maintain stable blood sugar levels and lead to more consistent energy throughout the day. I have an afternoon snack every day. I always include a fruit or vegetable and a source of protein to anchor my energy. Some of my favourite snacks include: blueberries with Greek yogurt and walnuts, or apple slices with peanut butter and bran cereal.

### TRY THIS!



**Honeydew, Apple and Avocado Smoothie**



**Avocado & Beet Wrap**



**Crispy Chickpeas and Pumpkin Seeds with Lime**



Get inspired with recipe ideas from **Cookspiration**.



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## HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

We asked dietitians about their favourite snacks. They recommend looking for snacks with some protein and fibre. Here are 11 great ideas!

1. Carrots and peppers with hummus
2. Almond butter on banana slices
3. Greek yogurt topped with berries
4. Whole grain toast with peanut butter
5. Cheddar cheese and apple slices
6. Small handful of trail mix made with nuts, seeds and raisins\*
7. Roasted chickpeas and popcorn mix\*
8. Whole grain cereal with milk
9. Sliced vegetables with yogurt dip
10. Tuna on crackers
11. Whole grain toast with avocado and sesame seeds

*\*Great to keep in your bag, car or desk drawer*

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Talk to a dietitian at [www.dietitians.ca/find](http://www.dietitians.ca/find).  
A dietitian is key.

Find all 5 fact sheets at [www.NutritionMonth2019.ca](http://www.NutritionMonth2019.ca)

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## THE POTENTIAL TO DISCOVER

### Foster healthy eating habits in children by teaching them to shop and cook.

Starting from a young age, inspiring children to shop, cook and prepare food can set them up for a lifetime of healthy eating. Yet, a recent Ipsos survey found that 38 per cent of parents rarely or never let their child prepare a meal or snack. Dietitians can help you to shop for and prepare healthy meals, giving children the power to discover better health as they grow. Just ask!

### FIVE TIPS FOR COOKING WITH KIDS

It's fun and rewarding to involve kids in meal preparation – whether it's at breakfast, lunch or dinner. Here are five tips for getting your kids involved:

- 1. Pick a recipe and shop together:** Children need to be part of the plan from the beginning, and it helps if they choose and prepare something that they love to eat.
- 2. Incorporate learning:** Build on lessons they learn in school, such as math, social studies, media literacy, spelling, science and reading. Younger children can practice fine motor skills.
- 3. Keep it fun!** Imaginative play helps children get deeply involved. Make a theme night or turn your kitchen into a restaurant.
- 4. Be a role model:** If you're excited, they will be too. Try a new food, describe the flavour and be adventurous to inspire your kids to do the same.
- 5. Be cool about the mess:** Spills and accidental messes happen, and it's important to remain calm.



#### DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Madonna Achkar**  
**MSc, RD**

Montreal, QC

(Currently working in Iqaluit,  
Baffin Island, Nunavut)

Improving childrens' ability to prepare food can lead to healthier eating habits, including eating more vegetables and fruit. Cooking can expose children to fresh, healthy ingredients.

### TRY THIS!



**Montreal Bagel and Avocado**



**Yogurt-Dipped Berries**



**Walnut and Flax Carrot Cookies**

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## IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Do you want to inspire your kids with food? Here are three ways to get started:

1. Head to your nearest grocery store or farmer's market and taste something new.
2. Call your local public health department or boys and girls club to see if they offer cooking programs for children.
3. Check the children's programming at the local supermarket. Many offer grocery store tours, food demos and cooking classes for children.

## WHAT CAN MY CHILD DO?

Here's a guideline of kitchen skills based on age:

- 2-3 year olds can wash vegetables and fruit or tear lettuce and salad greens
- 3-4 year olds can mash potatoes and bananas or mix together batters
- 4-6 year olds can measure dry and liquid ingredients or set the table
- 6-8 year olds can toss salad ingredients together or make a simple breakfast
- 8-12 year olds can make their own school lunch or help to plan meals
- Teens can follow more complicated recipes or assemble and mix most ingredients. They can also be in charge of making one meal per week in addition to making their lunch.

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## THE POTENTIAL TO PREVENT

### Understand how food can help prevent chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Lifestyle factors, including what we eat, can influence our health. A nutritious diet can help prevent illness and can lower the risk of developing chronic diseases. Dietitians can help you follow a healthy eating pattern that suits your individual needs and health goals. Just ask!

### BUILD A BALANCED DIET

There are many diets or “eating patterns,” and some are healthier than others. The best eating pattern is one that you enjoy and can stick with. The eating patterns that have been the most researched for their health benefits include the Mediterranean, DASH and MIND diets. The foods that are recommended on these patterns can help prevent type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, dementia and some types of cancer.

Here are some foods that are common to all of them:

- Vegetables and fruit
- Whole grains
- Legumes like beans and lentils
- Nuts and seeds
- Milk, cheese and yogurt
- Fish, seafood and poultry
- Healthy oils like canola and olive oil.



Get inspired with recipe ideas from **Cookspiration**.



DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Andy De Santis**  
RD MPH

Toronto, ON

A third of cancers can be linked to poor diet, obesity and lack of exercise. Eating vegetables, fruits and whole grains can help protect you against some types of cancers. As a dietitian, I work with clients to help them plan healthy diets that meet their individual needs and prevent disease.

### TRY THIS!



**Chickpea**  
**Tikka Masala**



**Greek**  
**Salad**



**Bruschetta**  
**Fish**

Find all 10 feature recipes at [www.NutritionMonth2019.ca](http://www.NutritionMonth2019.ca)

# POTENTIAL TO PREVENT

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These nourishing foods are the basic ingredients that form the diet for disease prevention. You may also notice what's missing from these eating patterns. They don't contain highly processed products, like cake, chips, cookies and sugary drinks that are high in added sugar, salt and trans fat.

## WORK WITH A DIETITIAN

Almost 80 per cent of premature stroke and heart disease can be prevented through healthy lifestyle behaviours. These include eating healthy, being active and living smoke-free. The journey toward wellbeing begins with how we eat and dietitians have the knowledge, compassion and flexibility to help you achieve. Consider working with a dietitian if you have health goals or concerns about your risk of chronic disease. Find a dietitian at [www.dietitians.ca/find](http://www.dietitians.ca/find).

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## THE POTENTIAL TO HEAL

**Learn how food can promote healing and how dietitians collaborate with doctors, nurses and pharmacists and other allied health professionals to ensure patient care is optimal.**

Dietitians believe in and understand the potential of food to enhance lives and improve health. Dietitians can help you select and prepare the foods you need to meet your nutrient needs. They use food to promote healing, and educate about how nutrition can help prevent or manage certain conditions, such as diabetes, celiac disease, swallowing problems (dysphagia), heart conditions, cancer and more.

## DIETITIANS ARE HERE TO HELP

Dietitians are members of the health care team and work with doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals to provide quality care, and they use food to promote healing. You can find dietitians working in many places, including:

- Hospitals
- Doctor's offices
- Private practice offices
- Community health centres
- Public health offices
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Seniors' residences
- Long-term care settings
- Cooking studios
- Grocery stores
- Diabetes education centres



DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Mandy Megan Conyers-Smith RD**

Edmonton, AB

Dietitians undergo comprehensive and rigorous training, both on the job and in universities. Dietitians are held accountable to the highest standards of education and ethics, which means they look beyond fads and gimmicks to deliver reliable, life-changing food-related advice that supports prevention and healing.

## TRY THIS!



**Shrimp, Avocado, Basil, and Fresh Parsley Salad**



**Falafel Salad**



**Greek Potatoes with Lemon Yogurt Sauce**

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# POTENTIAL TO HEAL

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Dietitians use foods to help you get the nutrients needed for the growth and repair of your body. Their advice helps prevent disease, treat conditions and keep the immune system healthy.

## WORK WITH A DIETITIAN

Lifestyle interventions from a dietitian, such as nutrition counselling, physical activity and behaviour modification, can help heal patients/clients in many situations.

Here are some examples:

- Working with a dietitian can help people with diabetes manage their blood sugar levels.
- Dietitians work with their clients on lifestyle changes that can improve blood pressure, cholesterol levels and help promote weight control.
- In the cancer care setting, advice from dietitians promotes healing, weight maintenance, and manages side effects of treatments to help patients feel their best.
- Dietitians can help people with celiac disease plan and navigate a gluten free diet, to promote gut healing and restore nutrient absorption.
- People with swallowing problems (dysphagia) can work with a dietitian as part of a health care team to find the right meal pattern, food texture, supplements and assistive devices to stay well-nourished.



### DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Symone Moodoo RD**  
Winnipeg, MB

Dietitians empower patients, clients and communities to embrace, understand and enjoy food. We consider a client's ethnic background, personal needs (including taste and accessibility) and translate the science of nutrition into terms they can understand!

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## THE POTENTIAL TO BRING US TOGETHER

### Enjoy the benefits of bringing families and friends together with food.

Canadians are busy! In a recent Ipsos poll, 30 per cent of Canadians said it's challenging to find time to eat meals with friends and family. It's an enriching experience for people of all ages to share meals. Dietitians can support your family to make changes to your mealtime behaviours. Just ask!

### WHY SHARE MEALS WITH OTHERS?

The biggest barriers to eating together are busy schedules like work and evening activities. It's worth the effort because everyone benefits when you eat in the company of others!

- Children who eat with their family have more nutritious diets, better academic performance, a lower risk for being overweight and less risk of eating disorders. Plus, children tend to have increased intake of vegetables and fruit, and a decreased intake of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Teens who share family meals get better grades, and are less likely to smoke, use drugs or alcohol, or to participate in serious fights.
- Adults who eat with friends and family tend to eat more vegetables and fruits, drink less pop, eat fewer meals at fast food restaurants, and have lower body mass indexes.
- Older adults who eat as part of a group have better diets, improved nutrient intake and lower rates of malnutrition.
- People who come together in communities can eat together at community kitchens, where they learn to cook, share meals, try new foods, have fun and learn about nutrition.

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DIETITIAN PRO TIP

**Coleen Nolan RD**

Halifax, NS

Twelve per cent of Canadians say they look at texts or emails during meals. In our home, we have a “no phones at the table” policy so we can focus on each other’s company, sharing highlights from our day. It also allows us time to focus on and enjoy what we’re eating, instead of what our friends on Instagram or Snapchat are eating!

### TRY THIS!



**Avocado Chilli**



**Turmeric and Basil Roasted Turkey Burger**



**Spinach, Artichoke and Sun-Dried Tomato Family-Sized Frittata**



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# POTENTIAL TO BRING US TOGETHER

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## START A CONVERSATION

For many people, sharing meals is a favourite time of day to interact with family and friends. It allows people to connect share traditions, learn, communicate and listen. If you are new to family meals, here are some Do's and don'ts:

1. **Do** give everyone at the table a chance to speak.
2. **Don't** use it as a time to scold or discipline picky eaters.
3. **Do** ask questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer. So, instead of "did you have a good day?" try asking "tell me something interesting that happened today."

Sharing family meals doesn't only mean dinner! If your evening schedule is hectic, share breakfast meals or have brunch together on the weekends. Most studies done on the benefits of family meals start with sharing at least four meals together per week. They all count!

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