

Back to Basics: Tips for Healthy Bodies

Learning about nutrition and how to eat a healthy diet means turning your attention to the ingredients. Choose whole foods to get all the nutrients your body needs.

GO FOR WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grains contain many vitamins, minerals, and most importantly, fibre. They help prevent or manage diabetes because they slow down the digestion process and make you feel satisfied longer.

- Good options are oats, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, oat bran and barley
- Instead of white bread, choose whole-wheat, multi-grain, rye, or pumpernickel bread. But, look for the word “whole-grain” in the ingredient list, as many options like rye breads are actually made with white flours.
- Whip up some bannock (or baking) with 50% whole wheat and 50% white flour.

FRUITS ARE YOUR FRIEND

Fruits provide us with many vitamins and are good for building strong bodies and immune systems. They are a simple carbohydrate so they are absorbed quickly for energy.

- Choose fresh or frozen fruits of a variety of colours.
- Experiment with blending fruits into smoothies with plain yogurt or milk as a healthy snack.
- Avoid canned fruit as they often have added sugars. But if you have it, be sure your label says “Packed in Water” instead of syrup.



SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATES are absorbed quickly for energy. They're found in fruits, honey, and milk products, as well as sugars added during processing.



COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES are absorbed more slowly, which allows your body to take in more vitamins and minerals and keeps you full for longer. They're found in whole grains (bread, pasta), potatoes, beans and vegetables.

Back to Basics

EAT A RAINBOW OF VEGETABLES

Vegetables are important for providing us with the minerals and nutrients our bodies need.

- Eat a variety of colours - the darker the better. Try purple eggplant, dark greens, (kale, spinach, or broccoli) and brightly coloured carrots.
- Add frozen vegetables to your soups, stews, sauces, or any meal.
- Chop up your veggies in tiny pieces and add to meals to make them easier to hide for the young ones.

WATER IS ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE

Water plays a role in nearly every major body function. It regulates the body temperature, carries nutrients and oxygen to cells in the blood and helps carry away waste.

- Serve only water with meals and snacks; take away the option of juice or pop except for special occasions.
- Try infusing water with flavour by adding cut up fresh or frozen fruit like lemons, berries, oranges, or sliced cucumbers. Avoid “infusion packets” which are usually packed with sugar.

“When we give honour to our bodies with wholesome foods that Mother Earth provided us, we find that physical and spiritual balance within.”

– Yellow Wolf



Fibre comes from plants and helps move nutrients through your system. There are two types of fibre. Soluble fibre (found in citrus, apples, pears, dried beans, and oatmeal) helps lower blood cholesterol, slows the rise in blood sugar, and helps to maintain regular digestion. Insoluble fibre (found in many vegetables, wheat bran, and whole-grain breads) maintains digestions and helps prevent constipation.



Juice is not a good alternative to fresh or frozen fruit. Eat whole fruit with a glass of water instead.

Back to Basics

TRIM THE FAT AND CHOOSE HEALTHIER PROTEINS

Proteins are important for growth, repair, energy and strength.

- Choose lean proteins like fish, eggs, and beans and avoid eating too much beef and pork.
- When cooking with hamburger meat, drain liquid fat from the pan before serving.
- Instead of adding a whole package of meat to a dish, use half the meat and supplement other half with beans.
- Eat fish, like canned tuna and salmon, or egg salad for heart-healthy sandwich options instead of cold cuts.
- Beans and legumes are fibre packed little pouches of goodness provided by nature, so toss on salads, make dips or add to soups.
- Cheese is often high in fat - a little goes a long way.



Wild meats like moose, deer, geese, and rabbit are some of the lowest-fat and highest protein options.

WATCH OUT FOR SUGAR IN DAIRY PRODUCTS

The calcium found in dairy products is important for building bones and nourishing us, but they can also contain lots of added sugar.

- Serve regular milk not chocolate.
- Avoid processed products like Kraft Singles and Cheese Whiz.
- Choose plain yogurt and sweeten it yourself with fresh or frozen fruit or a spoonful of honey or molasses.
- Consider including non-dairy sources of calcium like almonds, broccoli and fortified soy beverages.



Fats are a natural component of various foods and important for growth and development. Choose healthier fats found in fish, nuts, and seeds and reduce red meats, butter, and deep fried foods.