



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

WORKPLACE HEALTH

March is *Nutrition* Month

*Get Healthier this March by Shopping Smart:
Your guide to pre-packaged foods.*



This year's theme for nutrition month is all about getting Canadians to put their best foot forward when grocery shopping. The grocery store can be overwhelming when it comes to weeding out the healthy choices versus the not-so healthy choices. For example, figuring out which pre-packaged foods are healthy choices can be confusing. There are so many to choose from! Read on to get helpful tips on how to spot healthy pre-packaged food options while grocery shopping.

What are pre-packaged foods?

Pre-packaged foods are foods that are sealed in a box, bag, can or other container. They are sold in the grocery store in their packages. Some examples of pre-packaged foods include:

- Ready-to-eat frozen entrees
- Frozen chicken nuggets and hamburgers patties
- Crackers and granola bars
- Ice cream, cakes and cookies
- Pop and juice
- Pre-washed salad
- Bagged frozen fruit
- Canned tuna
- Milk, yogurt and cheese

Are pre-packaged foods bad for me?

Some pre-packaged foods like ready-to-eat frozen entrees, granola bars, frozen chicken nuggets and pop may be high in calories, fat, salt and/or sugar. If you fill up on these pre-packaged foods, you may be missing out on other more nutritious foods and filling up on empty calories.

Can pre-packaged foods fit into a healthy eating pattern?

Yes. Some pre-packaged foods are not only convenient, but nutritious too! Try these healthy, pre-packaged food choices:

Canned Foods (rinse canned goods or buy plain, low sodium versions)

- Tuna and salmon
- Beans
- Lentils
- Corn
- Carrots
- Tomatoes

Frozen Foods

- Plain frozen vegetables like broccoli, carrots and peas
- Plain frozen fruit like strawberries,

- mangoes, blueberries and cranberries
- Unseasoned fish like plain salmon, cod, trout and halibut



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UPCOMING EVENTS



March:

- National Colorectal Awareness Month
- National Nutrition Month

April:

- Cancer Awareness Month
- World Autism Day – April 2
- World Health Day – April 7
- National Immunization Awareness Week – April 20 - 27

May:

- National Summer Safety Week – May 1 - 7
- National Mental Health Week – May 6 - 12
- Canada Health Day – May 12
- World No Tobacco Day – May 31

Bagged or Boxed Foods

- Pre-washed lettuce
- Shredded carrots
- Cut up vegetables
- Fruit trays
- Whole grain, high fibre breads and cereals
- Plain oatmeal
- Plain whole grain pasta and brown rice

Other healthy pre-packaged foods

- Low fat milk, yogurt and cheese
- Unsalted nuts like almonds and walnuts
- Natural, plain peanut and nut butters



How do I spot a healthy pre-packaged food?

Read the nutrition label!

All pre-packaged foods have a nutrition label and an ingredient list. Visit www.eatrightontario.ca to see a few short videos to learn how to use a nutrition label.

Bottom line

It is possible to find pre-packaged foods that fit into a healthy diet by reading nutrition labels. Compare nutrition labels and look for items that are lower in calories, sodium, sugar, fat and higher in fibre.

For more tips on grocery shopping and the 2013 nutrition month campaign including printable factsheets and posters for your workplace visit: www.dietitians.ca/nutritionmonth

Information adapted from: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Grocery-Shopping/Your-guide-to-pre-packaged-foods-en.aspx>

Mental Health for the Whole Family

Being mentally healthy means there is balance in all areas of life: social, physical, spiritual, and emotional. Reaching a balance is a learning process, and sometimes you get off balance. What matters is you get back on balance again. Modelling and teaching kids this balance can help prevent illness (physically and mentally). Here are some things to try:

- **Build self-esteem** – Have the whole family try new activities. Some will be better at some activities, but probably not so good at others. What matters is that everyone has fun and is active.
- **Accept compliments** – Most people have a hard time accepting compliments. When someone says some-

thing nice, smile and say, "Thank you." Compliment family members often.

- **Volunteer** – Being involved and doing things that matter to us give a sense of purpose and satisfaction. Find different ways to volunteer with the family, like doing a shore clean-up, or even helping a neighbour move.
- **Cope with stress** – Stress is normal, but too much stress makes it easier to get physically and mentally sick. Learn how to say, "No" when you are busy and teach your kids to do the same. Make sure everyone takes time to do things they enjoy.

Canadian Mental Health Association, 2012

Physical Literacy

Just as children need to be taught how to read and write, they also need to be taught how to run, jump and throw.

Children need to be physically active EVERY DAY in order to grow, develop and thrive. Research shows that physical activity promotes health, brain development, physical, social and emotional development and improves sleep.

Childhood obesity is becoming an epidemic that robs children of the joy of play. And obese children are at risk of being obese adults. So what can be done about this?

- Making good food choices.
- Reducing screen time [includes TV, computers, and electronic media].
- Increasing opportunities for active play.



Children need to use their muscles in vigorous play. They need to learn and practice fundamental movement and sport skills so they can keep up with their friends on the playground. When a child has the skills

and confidence to move in a wide variety of physical activities, in multiple environments, they have developed Physical Literacy.

This is why it's so important to make sure your children learn these skills when they are young. There's a really great website:

www.activeforlife.ca that shows you all the basic movement skills you need to play a variety of sports.

Take running for example. Once a child has mastered the skill of running, he has the opportunity to participate in any games where running is required, like soccer and basketball. The back side of this sheet outlines more examples.

Check out the Active for Life website and then go play with your kids. Kick, run, skip and throw. Keep it fun and it'll keep them moving and active for life!

Submitted by: Michele Crowley, Physical Activity Promoter

Preventing Cancer

About 40% of Canadian women and 45% of Canadian men will develop cancer during their lifetimes. As our population grows and ages, more people will be living with and dying from cancer. However the good news is; nearly 50% of cancers can be prevented. Individuals can reduce their risk by not smoking, eating healthy, being physically active and having regular cancer screening. For more information about cancer screening and prevention tools visit Cancer Care Ontario at: www.cancercare.on.ca.





RECIPE

QUINOA PUDDING

Ingredients

Original recipe makes 6 servings

- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 cups of water
- 2 cups apple juice
- 1 cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, or to taste
- Salt to taste
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Directions

1. Place quinoa in a sieve and rinse thoroughly. Allow to drain, then place quinoa in a medium saucepan with water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cover pan with lid, lower heat, and allow to simmer until all water is absorbed and quinoa is tender; about 15 minutes.
2. Mix in apple juice, raisins, lemon juice, cinnamon, and salt. Cover pan and allow to simmer for 15 minutes longer. Stir in vanilla extract. Serve warm.

allrecipes.com

Energy Drinks Take a Closer Look!

Think energy drinks are harmless? Think again.

The average energy drink has:

- 224 calories (same amount found in a slice of pizza).
- 14 tsp of sugar (more than pop).
- 250 mg of sodium (same amount found in 25 BBQ chips).
- 174 mg caffeine (same amount found in 1 ½ cups of coffee and more than children should have in a day).
- Other ingredients like guarana, taurine, glucuronolactone, ginseng and

ginkgo biloba that have limited scientific evidence to support claims that they 'improve performance'.

Energy drinks should not be consumed by children, pregnant and breastfeeding women. They should never be mixed with alcohol and should be avoided during exercise.

If you're low on energy try healthy energy boosters instead like drinking water, getting enough sleep, exercising regularly and eating healthy meals and snacks.

