

Food for Thought



By: Anne Jackson, Susie Ralph and Donna Stoness

**The production of this booklet was funded by
the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
and the National Literacy Secretariat**

© Kingston Literacy 2004

Introduction



In this book, we will talk about healthy food and how to help your children have a healthy diet.

Good food provides the energy you and your children need to think, learn, and grow.

Chapter One

What is in Food?



Everything you eat is made up of many nutrients. These are the good things that keep your body going. Vitamins, minerals, protein, fats, carbohydrates, fiber, and water are all important. Each one does its own job.

Part One: Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins

Vitamins are the workers which help other nutrients do their job. There are many different vitamins and they are all named after letters of the alphabet. All of these vitamins are important to you.



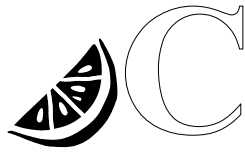
- Vitamin A**
- Helps your skin to be healthy
 - Helps your night vision
 - Helps your immune system

Sources: Carrots, spinach, broccoli, garlic, liver, pumpkin



- Vitamin B** There are lots of B vitamins, each with a different job.
- Helps your nervous system
 - Helps your digestion
 - Helps your circulation and blood

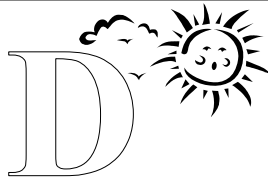
Sources: Eggs, cereals and grains, peas, peanut butter, nuts and seeds



Vitamin C

- Helps your immune system
- Helps your body repair itself
- Helps your blood

Sources: Oranges, orange juice, red peppers, strawberries, potatoes with skins, broccoli



Vitamin D

- Helps your bones stay healthy
- Helps your teeth stay strong
- Helps your body absorb calcium

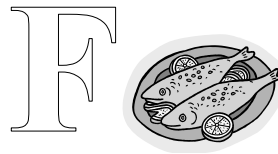
Sources: Sunshine, eggs, fish, milk products, oatmeal



Vitamin E

- Helps your immune system
- Helps your heart
- Helps your blood

Sources: Vegetable oil, leafy green vegetables, peanut butter, milk, eggs



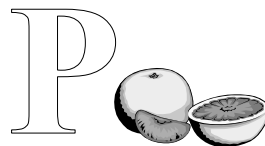
- Vitamin F**
- Helps your cholesterol level
 - Helps your immune system
 - Helps your skin

Source: Salmon, tuna, vegetable oils, olives, sunflower seeds



- Vitamin K**
- Helps your blood to clot
 - Helps your body absorb calcium
 - Helps in childbirth

Sources: Leafy green vegetables, broccoli, oatmeal, egg yolks, cauliflower



- Vitamin P**
- Helps your immune system
 - Helps your veins
 - Helps your blood

Sources: Oranges, grapefruit, grapes, lemons, cherries, prunes

Minerals

Minerals are nutrients that plants take from soil and pass on to you.

Calcium

- Calcium**
- Helps your bones stay healthy
 - Helps your teeth stay strong
 - Helps your blood

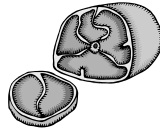
Sources: Milk, cheese, yogurt, leafy green vegetables, salmon

Magnesium

- Magnesium**
- Helps your heart
 - Helps your energy level
 - Helps your body

Sources: Grains, cereals, leafy green vegetables, beans

Iron



Iron

- Helps your blood
- Helps your concentration
- Helps your immune system

Sources:

Beef, pork, liver, turkey, beans, green leafy vegetables

Zinc



Zinc

- Helps your immune system
- Helps your body fight colds
- Helps your energy level

Sources:

Pork, liver, eggs, mushrooms, beans, fish

Mineral Facts

There are many other important minerals that your body needs. They are potassium, copper, selenium, iodine, and sodium.

Part Two: Protein, Carbohydrates and Fats

Protein, carbohydrates and fats give you the energy to fuel just about everything your body does, from breathing to thinking to walking.

Protein

Protein

- Helps your body grow
- Helps your body repair itself
- Helps your body build muscle

Sources: Meat, eggs, fish, cheese, beans

Carbohydrates

- #### **Carbohydrates**
- Help your energy level
 - Help your blood sugar level
 - Help your internal organs work

Sources: Bread, cereal, grains, pasta, fruits, energy bars

Carb Facts

There are different foods that give you carbohydrates. Some are better for you than others. You get quick energy from sugar and other sweet things but the energy does not last very long. The energy you get from bread, cereal and pasta is better for you because it lasts longer.

Fats



Fats

- Help your energy level
- Help your body use vitamins
- Help your body stay warm

Sources:

Olive oil, butter, pork, vegetable oil, milk products

Fat Facts

- It is important for children under five years old to have fat in their diet. They should drink homogenized milk.
- There are different foods that give you fats. Some are better for you than others. Fat from animal sources, like bacon and processed cheese, should be eaten less often. Fats from plants and nuts, like olive oil and corn oil, are better for you.

Part Three:

Fiber and Water

Fiber and **water** do not provide you with nutrients or calories. You do, however, need lots of fiber and water.



Fiber

Fiber

- Helps your body to be regular
- Helps your cholesterol level
- Helps your body fight cancer

Sources:

Apples, broccoli, celery, bran, beans

Fiber Facts

- Fiber comes from plants only.
- Fiber is not digested by the body.
- Fiber is not absorbed by the body.



Water

- Helps your body stay alive
- Helps your internal organs stay lubricated and cleansed
- Helps your body maintain a constant temperature

Sources: Pure water, juices, fruits, vegetables

Water Facts

- The body is made up of about 70% water.
- You should drink 6-8 glasses of water a day.
- It is best to drink water at room temperature.
- You should drink even more water when you are sick.

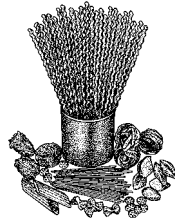
Chapter Two

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating



Canada's Food Guide says that you should,
“Enjoy a variety of foods from each food
group every day.”

Grain Products



Sources: Breads (especially whole wheat), bagels, pitas, buns, hot and cold cereal, pasta, rice

D.R.A. (Daily Recommended Amount) for people four and over:

5-12 servings per day

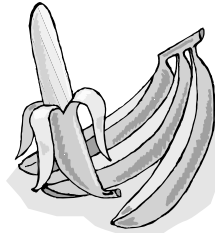
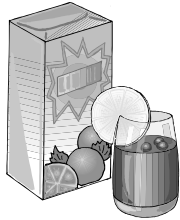
For people over four:

One Serving	=	1 slice of bread
	=	1/2 cup of rice or pasta
	=	3/4 cup of cereal
	=	1/2 bagel or pita or bun

Grain Facts

- You should choose whole grain and enriched products more often.

Vegetables and Fruit



Sources:

Fresh fruit and vegetables
Frozen fruit and vegetables
Canned fruit and vegetables
Fruit and vegetable juices

D.R.A. for people four and over:

5-10 servings per day

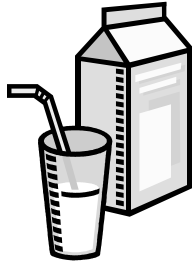
For people over four:

One Serving = 1 medium size fruit
= 1 medium size vegetable
= ½ cup juice
= 1 cup salad
= ½ cup cooked or canned fruit or vegetable

Vegetable and Fruit Facts

- You should choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.

Milk Products



Sources: Milk, cheese, yogurt

D.R.A. for people four and over:

- Children 4-9 years.....2-3 servings per day
- Youth 10-16 years.....3-4 servings per day
- Adults.....2-4 servings per day
- Pregnant and nursing women.....3-4 servings per day

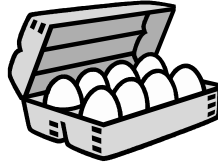
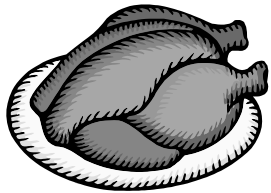
For people over four:

One Serving = 1 cup milk
= $\frac{3}{4}$ cup yogurt
= 50 grams cheese

Milk Product Facts

- You should choose lower fat products more often.

Meat and Alternatives



Sources: Chicken, ham, beef, pork, fish, eggs, beans, nuts, tofu, peas, lentils, peanut butter

D.R.A. for people four and over:

2-3 servings per day

For people over four:

One Serving = 50-100 grams of meat, poultry or fish (roughly the size of a deck of cards)
= $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{2}{3}$ can of salmon or tuna
= 1-2 eggs
= 125-250 mL beans ($\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup)
= 100 grams tofu ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup)
= 30 mL peanut butter (2 tablespoons)

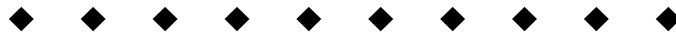
Meat and Alternative Facts

- You should choose leaner meats, poultry and fish as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.

- insert page from Health Unit flyer: “Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating for Toddlers”

- insert page from Health Unit flyer: “Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating for Preschoolers”

Canada's Guidelines for Healthy Eating



Enjoy a variety of foods

Eating a variety of foods will provide you with a balance of nutrients. Try to include different foods in your diet by choosing a new food or a new recipe each week.



Emphasize cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruits

Ensure that these foods are part of each and every meal to increase your daily intake. Having fruit juices instead of soft drinks or vegetable based dishes more often than meat based dishes are examples of how to do this.



Choose lower fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat

Many lower fat food products are available in grocery stores and in restaurants so that healthy choices can be easy ones.



Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating

The best forms of physical activity are the ones you enjoy doing the most!



Limit salt, alcohol and caffeine

The less salt, alcohol and caffeine you have on a daily basis, the better.

Chapter Three

Feeding Your Child



Children know best how much they need, but adults must help them to eat enough healthy foods to give them energy and to keep them fit.

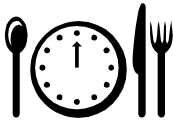
Children and Food



Children are curious about their world and like to touch, see, hear, smell and taste.



Children try to be independent and may show it by choosing whether to eat or not. A parent's main job is to serve nutritious food. Try not to create a power struggle at dinner time. Food should not be used as a reward or a weapon.



Children like security. Usually this means a regular routine and meals or snacks served around the same time and place each day from their own plate or bowl.



Children are only able to focus on one thing for a short time. Once they have had enough to eat, they soon lose interest.



Children like to copy other people. If you like to eat healthy foods, let them see you eating them with enjoyment.

Children and New Foods



Try new foods in small amounts.



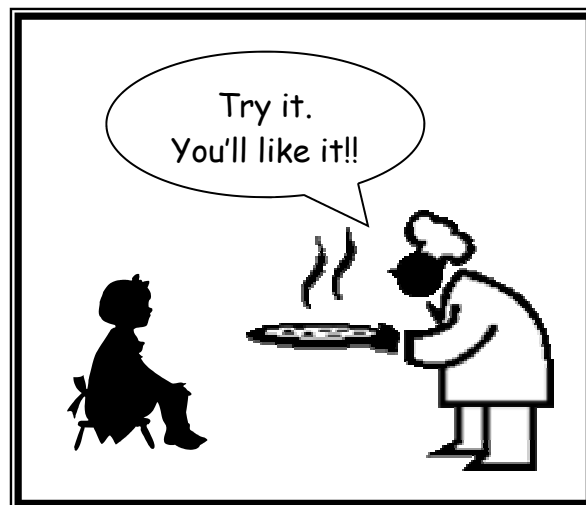
Try new foods when children are with other children as they like to copy each other.



Try new foods by eating the same food yourself. Show them you enjoy it.



Try to be patient. Remember, every child has likes and dislikes, just like us.



Children and You



Be sure to:

- ◆ Eat before you are too hungry.
- ◆ Make time to eat well. Do not rush meals and snacks.
- ◆ Set regular meal and snack times.
- ◆ Offer child-size portions.
- ◆ Let your child have a spoon too, even if you are doing the feeding. They will soon learn to feed themselves.
- ◆ Make eating a family time. It helps to eat at the same table. Meals can be enjoyed by the whole family, talking about their day instead of watching television or playing at the same time as eating.
- ◆ Try not to put pressure on your child to eat.
- ◆ Ask a friend sometimes to share a meal or snack.
- ◆ Be aware that appetites vary:
 - If a child is in a growth spurt or playing outside, they may want to eat more.

 - If a child is too tired or overexcited, they may want to eat less.

Children and Food Facts

- ◆ The amount of food a child needs will depend upon their age, size, growth rate, appetite, and how active they are.
- ◆ Children's stomachs are small and so they do not need as much food to fill them up. This means that they will be hungry for their main meals as long as you do not give them snacks too close to meal times.
- ◆ When children come home from school they are usually hungry. If it is too soon for your family's suppertime, offer a healthy snack or let the children eat supper sooner.
- ◆ Try not to make candy a reward for being good. A hug is much better for your child.
- ◆ We all eat some foods just because we like the taste and not because they are good for us.
- ◆ Many things have changed over the years, but when it comes to feeding children, the key to success is still moderation.
- ◆ A child-size serving is about one-half of the full amount of food in each food group. Serving sizes will vary, but expect a toddler to eat small amounts often.



Vitamin Pills for Children



- ◆ Vitamin pills are often given to children but it is important to understand how much and when to give them. A picky eater may need extra vitamins to make up for the lack of vitamins in their diet. Ask the advice of a doctor before giving your child vitamin pills.
- ◆ The best help for your child's good health is a balanced diet and exercise.
- ◆ Vitamin pills may be needed to keep your child's immune system strong.
- ◆ Vitamins and herbs can have bad side effects. Too much may harm a child.
- ◆ Do not give your child iron pills unless they have been prescribed by their doctor.
- ◆ Usually children's vitamin pills are balanced, so you do not need to give separate vitamins as well.

Chapter Four

Sample Menu



“ You don’t have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces - just good food from fresh ingredients.”

- *Julia Child*

Sample Child's Menu

Breakfast: Egg (any style)
Whole wheat bread (one slice)
Glass of orange juice

**Morning
Snack:** Banana (small)

Lunch: Glass of milk
Cheese and lettuce sandwich
Apple

**Afternoon
Snack:** Carrot sticks
Energy bar

Supper: Chicken
Pasta
Peas
Salad (green)
Yogurt and strawberries or grapes

**Evening
Snack:** Cereal, milk