



NUTRITION MONTH: FIND YOUR HEALTHY

For over 30 years, March has been Nutrition Month - a public awareness campaign about the importance of healthy eating by identifying dietitians as the most credible source of food and nutrition information. Each year Nutrition Month has a theme, and this year's theme is "Good for you! Dietitians help you find your healthy". Dietitians recognize that everyone has their own cultures, traditions, preferences and nutritional needs and that's why this year's theme centres around the idea that healthy eating looks different for everyone.

TOP 5 REASONS TO SEE A DIETITIAN:

- 1 You want to prevent or manage a health condition such as diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, kidney disease. Health conditions can impact your diet and eating habits. A dietitian can help work through those challenges to help you improve your health and how you feel.
- 2 You have a digestive issue such as irritable bowel syndrome, acid reflux, celiac disease, Crohn's disease or Colitis. A dietitian can help you figure out which foods and beverages to avoid to help alleviate symptoms while making sure you get the nutrients you need and include the foods you enjoy.
- 3 You have a food allergy or intolerance. Dietitians can help you find safe food substitutes to keep you healthy and enjoy eating, while indicating which foods to avoid that may be harmful.
- 4 You would like accurate and practical advice to improve the way you eat and feel, to help you reach a health goal. Generally, we are confused about food and nutrition because advice and information can be found everywhere, including the internet. Dietitians help you look beyond fads and gimmicks to provide you with accurate nutrition and food information.
- 5 You are providing care for someone else and need help managing their diet. This can be kids or elderly persons. Some people may be picky eaters and caring for them may be frustrating and stressful. A dietitian can work with you to make mealtimes more pleasurable by giving you ideas and strategies to help try new foods.

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach when it comes to healthy eating because everyone is different and have different nutritional needs. There are lots of fad diets or generic meal plans out there made to "lose 15 lbs in 1 week!" or "detox your body" but dietitians see through them because of how unrealistic it may be, it may not be evidenced-based information, and it's definitely not tailored to fit your needs. Finding your healthy means considering your personal preferences, needs and circumstances:

HEALTH CONDITIONS

Dietitians work with clients of all ages and health conditions. These may be within the community or even in long term care homes. To name a few, clients may have celiac disease, heart disease, diabetes, high stress that affects their intake, gut problems, may be on a blenderized diet from jaw surgery, have a tube because they can't eat orally, or even have allergies and intolerances. Dietitians understand everyone has their own concern and they tailor your nutritional needs to fit your lifestyle.



PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES



Personal circumstances shape our nutritional needs from work schedules like shift work, always on the go, active lifestyles, to living alone, cooking for 2, living with a disability, and living on a budget. Dietitians advocate for social justice and consider factors that impact individuals' ability to implement nutrition recommendations.

CULTURE AND FOOD TRADITIONS

Everyone has different cultures and traditions that can influence your food choices including how you eat, what you eat, when you eat, where you get food and how you prepare your food. It's important to include your culture and food traditions as part of a healthy diet because it allows you to choose foods you enjoy, grow your skills and knowledge, learn about other cultures and food traditions and keep your cultural roots alive by sharing them across generations or with others.

These food traditions can be making homemade baby food instead of buying prepacked food in the groceries, having special family meals weekly, or even cooking with your kids. Dietitians need to practice cultural competence and cultural safety, so no matter which culture or food tradition you have, a dietitian can help you include those special ways to make them healthy and enjoyable.



For recipes and more info, check out:

NutritionMonth2021.ca
WhatYouEat.ca

GRILLED CHEESE WITH ASPARAGUS AND MUSHROOMS

PREP TIME

Prep 10 m | Cook 8 m

Makes 4 servings

Source: WhatYouEat.ca



INGREDIENTS

- 12 small asparagus, cut in 2 cm (1 in) pieces
- 4 tsp unsalted butter
- 1 cup leek, white part, minced
- 2 small (or 1 big) Portobello mushroom, finely minced
- 1 small clove garlic, finely chopped
- 8 slices whole grain bread
- 1 ⅔ cup Canadian Gouda cheese, grated
- Pepper to taste

PROCEDURE

- 1** In a small pot of boiling water, cook the asparagus al dente, 2 to 4 minutes, depending on the size. Cool and set aside.
- 2** In a skillet, heat 2 tsp butter over medium heat. Cook the leek and mushrooms for 2 to 3 minutes. Season with pepper and add the garlic. Remove from the skillet and set aside.
- 3** Lightly butter 4 slices of bread with 1 tsp butter. Turn the slices of bread over and top with 1 cup of Gouda. Add the cooked mushrooms and leeks. Cover with the rest of cheese. With the remaining 4 slices, lightly butter with the rest of butter and cover over cheese.
- 4** Cook in a grill, panini grill or skillet, over medium heat. Lightly press the sandwiches and turn them once throughout until the cheese is melted and the bread is golden brown.

TIPS

Cheese is a good source of protein as it contains all 9 essential amino acids that the body cannot make. Try substituting a variety of cheeses per your liking. This recipe makes a great meal for active lifestyles that is tasty, easy, and full of protein and healthy carbs to fuel your body.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Per 1 serving, 1 sandwich

Calories 400

Fat 18.4 g

Saturated 9.8 g

Polyunsaturated 2.3 g

Monounsaturated 1.1 g

Sodium 465.7 mg

Carbohydrates 44 g

Fiber 8.4 g

Sugars 1.6 g

Protein 18 g

Vitamin A 36.5% **Calcium** 36.4%

Potassium 379.5 mg **Iron** 17.3%