

HealthPoint

TRENDS IN HEALTH & WELLNESS

JANUARY 2012



Healthier Eating, One Change At A Time

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The start of a new year is a great time to think about making healthy change. And why not do it as a family?

Studies show that when all family members are involved, there is a greater likelihood of achieving long-term goals.

Here's how to set your family on the road to healthier eating.

Plan for success

Choose to make one small change that is manageable and realistic. For example, if your end goal is to get your gang eating more vegetables and fruit, the actual behaviour change needs to be measurable and specific, such as:

- Have salad almost every night at dinner, or
- Buy one new vegetable or fruit each week when you grocery shop, or
- Eat fruit for dessert at least four times a week.

Get everyone's buy-in on the family goal. Then write it down. Use language that allows some wiggle room; that way, if you are dining out and fruit is not a dessert option, your change will not be derailed.

Now here are some change ideas your family can choose from. Or select your own!

- **Swap the pop.** Beverages such as soda, iced tea and fruit drinks are loaded with excess sugar, but have little nutritional benefit. If sugar-sweetened beverages are a regular feature of your family's meals, try drinking water instead at one meal a day.

Or, limit pop as a special occasion treat, the way you would with cupcakes.

- **Eat together.** Children who dine with their parents tend to eat more fruits and vegetables and consumer fewer fried foods and soft drinks. Plus they have a lower risk of becoming overweight or obese. And you don't have to sit down every night to reap these benefits. Aim to gather as a family at least four nights a week.
- **Eat more whole grains.** If your starch rotation is pasta-rice-pasta-rice, mix it up with whole grains a few times a week. Choose brown rice over white rice, and opt for whole wheat pasta. Add in some quinoa, pot barley or buckwheat too. Whole grains provide satiating fibre plus health-promoting antioxidants.
- **Set snack rules.** Snacking in front of the TV or computer can lead to overeating. Make a habit of serving snacks at the dining table. And give everyone a portion in a small bowl or plate, rather than passing around a full box or bag.
- **Cook together.** If your children are old enough, get them involved in preparing a meal at least once a week. Bonus: Sharing kitchen duties provides time to talk about food likes and dislikes – great for picky eaters who may appreciate more control.
- **Try a new recipe regularly.** Scan magazines, websites and cookbooks to find recipes that appeal to everyone.

Change is achievable. With realistic goals, your family can make small changes that lead to big health rewards. And once you've mastered one change...try one more.

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Spaghetti Pie

Serves 6 | Prep Time: 20mins | Cook Time: 45mins | Total Time: 1 hour 5mins

Make this spaghetti and meat sauce dinner fun and serve it up like a pie! Serve it in wedges with a crisp green salad for a new twist on a family favourite.

Ingredients

- 250 g (8 oz) extra lean ground turkey
- 10 mL (2 tsp) canola oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 mL (1 tsp) Italian herb seasoning
- 500 mL (2 cups) chopped fresh or frozen broccoli
- 375 mL (1 1/2 cups) low fat pasta sauce
- 175 g (6 oz) whole wheat spaghetti, cooked (about 750 mL/3 cups cooked)
- 10 mL (2 tsp) soft non hydrogenated margarine
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) all purpose flour
- 250 mL (1 cup) skim milk
- 125 mL (1/2 cup) 1% cottage cheese



Directions

1. In large saucepan cook turkey for about 5 minutes or until no longer pink.
2. Drain in sieve to remove fat.
3. Return saucepan to medium heat with oil and cook onion, garlic and Italian seasoning, stirring, for about 2 minutes or until onion is softened.
4. Return turkey to saucepan and add broccoli and pasta sauce; bring to a simmer, cover and cook for 5 minutes. Set aside.
5. In another saucepan, melt margarine over medium heat.
6. Whisk in flour until smooth.
7. Whisk in milk and cook, whisking for about 5 minutes or until starting to thicken and bubble.
8. Whisk in cottage cheese and remove from heat.
9. Add spaghetti to turkey mixture and stir in 125 mL (1/2 cup) of the cheese sauce.
10. Pour into 25 cm (10 inch) deep dish pie plate; pressing down to flatten.

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11. Spread remaining cheese sauce over top and bake in 180 C (350 F) oven for about 25 minutes or until bubbly.
12. Broil about 15 cm (6 inches) away from broiler for about 2 minutes or until golden on top, if desired.
13. Let cool slightly before cutting into wedges to serve.

Tip: Make the spaghetti pie ahead of time and do not bake. Wrap and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Cover with foil and reheat in 180 C (350 F) oven for about 45 minutes.

Nutritional Info Per Serving: 274 calories; 18g protein; 8g total fat; 2g saturated fat; 5g fibre; 7g sugars; 368mg sodium

Recipe developed by Emily Richards, PH Ec.

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