

## **March is Nutrition Month: Simply Cook and Enjoy!**

“...no one is born a great cook, one learns by doing... This is my invariable advice to people: Learn how to cook- try new recipes, learn from your mistakes, be fearless, and above all have fun!”

— Julia Child, *My Life in France*

If time constraints, cost, reliance on convenience meals, and unfamiliarity with cooking skills are some of the barriers you face to home cooking, you're in luck! This year's Nutrition Month campaign from Dietitians of Canada, Simply Cook and Enjoy, seeks to inspire Canadians to get back to cooking basics and to involve children and youth in food preparation. The campaign highlights 31 cooking tips that can be found on the Nutrition Month website [www.dietitians.ca/nutritionmonth](http://www.dietitians.ca/nutritionmonth), or you can follow @NLnutrition2014 on Twitter for daily morsels. New this year is also the Cookspiration app which suggests recipes based on what you feel like eating (free for download at [ww.cookspiration.com](http://ww.cookspiration.com)).

To get you started on eating healthy with your family try cooking with kids. It can take a little more time, but it's worth it! Learning how to cook helps kids develop healthy eating habits, increases self-confidence and teaches life skills. Here are a few tips to keep cooking with kids relaxed:

- Give kids easy tasks, such as stirring, when you're in a hurry
- Cook on weekends, when you can take more time to teach skills
- Choose easy-to-follow recipes with lots of tasks kids can help with
- Prepare some ingredients before you start cooking

You don't need a long list of ingredients to make a healthy, delicious meal. Get inspired with these ideas, which use just six main ingredients:

- Cheesy Frittata – eggs, spinach, diced potato, red onion, milk and old cheddar cheese baked together into a fabulous frittata
- Lemony Pasta – whole grain pasta tossed with grilled zucchini, cherry tomatoes, roasted garlic, chickpeas and freshly squeezed lemon juice
- Loaded Sweet Potato – baked sweet potato topped with black beans, green onion, tomato, cilantro and a spoonful of plain yogurt

Cooking together is a great way to connect with your family, especially when there's a friendly competition involved! Have fun with this challenge. Do it over a weekend or a month. Here's how:

- Choose a cookbook, food magazine or website. Each family member picks one recipe to try.
- Each person makes his or her recipe for the family. Depending on skill level, kids might need a little help.

- When all dishes have been tasted, rate the recipes. You might discover a new family favourite!

So go out there fearless, with spatula in hand, and enjoy making discoveries in the kitchen. You never know what you will find! Also keep your eyes open throughout the western region during the month of March for Nutrition Month displays in hospitals, grocery stores and in schools.

Credit given to 2014 Nutrition Month Campaign Resource Manual for Dietitians

For further information go to; [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)  
or contact Stephanie Buckle, Regional Nutritionist, Western Health.