

## **Take the Fight out of Food! Spot the problem. Get the facts. Seek support.**

Eating should be enjoyable, but sometimes it becomes frustrating and confusing with all of the mixed messages we receive daily from the Internet, social media, and blogs. Many Canadians (49%) get their food and nutrition information online. Unfortunately, not all advice found online is accurate. You may feel like you are fighting with food as you try to sort out the best foods to buy, prepare, serve or eat for you and your family.

With accurate information and a good support system, Canadians will be better equipped to make decisions about food, and minimize their nutrition-related struggles with food.

The Nutrition Month 2017 campaign is about a three step approach to help Canadians Take the Fight out of Food! This approach will help improve the relationship with food, no matter what the struggle.

Try this three step approach:

### **1. *Spot the problem.***

Think about what is causing your fight with food first. It may be that there is so much nutrition information no matter where you turn and it is hard to know what to believe. It may be difficult to figure out which online nutrition information is credible and which is not. You may also be struggling with planning and preparing family meals that should be pleasurable times, but they are not.

### **2. *Get the facts.***

Use facts from credible sources to decide what needs to be done to solve the problem. There are many false recommendations that promise wellness such as detox cleanses, miracle supplements and fad diets. These are often expensive and are not evidence-based. You can evaluate online nutrition advice by asking these questions:

- Who runs the website? Can you trust them?
- Is it selling something? Who pays for the website?
- What does the site say – does it sound too good to be true?
- Where does the information come from? Is it based on more than one clinical study? Was the study done in humans or animals? Is it up to date?
- Is the information reviewed? Is there an editorial board?

Mealtime tension can be eased when parents and caregivers are positive role models and by following these guidelines:

- Adults decide what, when, and where to feed the children
- Children decide how much and whether to eat

Children take their nutrition cues from their parents and caregivers, so it's vital to set a good example. Parents and caregivers can be good role models by teaching children how to grocery shop and prepare healthy meals, and by eating the foods they hope their children will eat, such as vegetables and fruit. If their children establish healthy eating habits at an early age, they will

contribute to the developing lifelong healthy eating habits. It's never too late to start! If you have older children or teens, get them involved with the planning and preparation of meals.

### 3. ***Seek support.***

Put the plan into action with support from a dietitian, family and friends. Because the use of the Internet, social media or blogs is on the rise, it seems there is a decrease in the number of people who ask health professionals, such as dietitians or physicians or for advice. When making decisions about your health, it is important not to rely on online information alone. Dietitians are the leading credible source for food and nutrition information. Dietitians specialize in working with individuals and groups to improve eating habits and improve health outcomes. Find information from trusted, credible and reputable websites including Dietitians of Canada:

- [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

For more on Nutrition Month:

- <http://www.nutritionmonth2017.ca/>

Get inspiring meal and snack ideas using the free smartphone app

- <http://www.cookspiration.com/>

Learn more about healthy eating programs and resources at Western Health:

For Prenatal- School Age:

- <http://www.westernhealth.nl.ca/home/health-topics-main/nutrition-services/>

For Post-Secondary-Seniors:

- <http://www.westernhealth.nl.ca/home/health-topics-main/adults-and-seniors/>

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