



Nutrition Bits and Bites!

Healthy Eating Starts with Parent Role Models

Parents are role models and the most important influence in their children's lives.

Children won't perceive healthy eating as important if they don't see their caregivers doing so. Children watch and imitate adults and look to them in learning everything from saying please and thank-you, to physical activity and nutrition behavior. The way parents talk about food, cook meals and eat are the most important influence in helping their child develop healthy eating habits. Ask yourself the following questions to find out if you are setting a good example for the children in your life:

- Do you skip breakfast?
- Do you drink sodas or sweetened beverages more often than milk or water with your meals?
- Do you diet all the time and have a fear of (or talk about) eating "bad" food?
- Do you snack all day long?
- Do you eat in front of the TV?
- Do you eat when you are bored or under stress?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, you might be sending unhealthy messages to your child about food.



Teaching Healthy Habits at Mealtime

- Eat the way you want your child to eat – try new foods together, but don't force your child to try them.
- Avoid labeling food as "good" and "bad" – teach your children that they need to balance nutritious foods with fun snacks.
- Cook meals from scratch and eat together at home as often as possible.
- Look for ways to manage stress and boredom that do not involve food.
- Encourage your kids to help prepare meals, set the table and help with dishes.
- Enjoy your meals – positive attitudes are contagious!

Benefits of Family Meals

Eating meals together as a family plays a key role in raising healthy and well-adjusted children.

Improved Academic Achievement

- Studies show that children who have frequent family meals at home are more successful in school.

Better Nutrition

- Children who regularly eat home-cooked meals with their family are less likely to become deficient in many important nutrients.

Higher Self-Esteem

- Mealtime conversation brings the family together, promotes self-esteem in children and encourages a healthy and lasting relationship with food.

Make mealtime family time! Eat together whenever possible and limit distractions by turning off the TV and not allowing cell phones/tablets at the table. Encourage table manners and give all family members a chance to talk.

Sweet Potato & Bean Wraps

This colorful recipe is a quick, tasty and filling last-minute lunch or supper.

Makes 6 Servings

1	Sweet potato
6	10- inch (25 cm) flour tortillas
1	Can (14 oz/398 mL) low-fat refried beans
2 cups (500 ml)	Lightly packed spinach leaves
1	Avocado, sliced



1. Pierce sweet potato with a fork. Microwave on high for 5 minutes or until tender. Slice lengthwise, scoop out flesh and mash in a bowl.
2. On the bottom third of each tortilla, place one-sixth of each of the sweet potato, refried beans, spinach and avocado. Fold in the 2 sides, then fold the bottom of the wrap up over the filling and roll until tight.
3. Microwave wraps on high for 45 seconds or until heated through.

Tip: Serve with salsa and low-fat yogurt or sour cream.

Source: Dietitians of Canada, *Simply Great Food*

** Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution ideas.

For more information on nutrition and healthy eating, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/finding-care/health-info-for-you/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/>

To access previous school nutrition newsletters, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/whats-happening/nutritional-newsletters/>

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