



Before You Begin

Program Values

A word about weight

- The main goal of this program is to encourage food skill development.
- Everyone has their own perspective on healthy eating. It is important that weight or any personal perspectives on healthy eating not be a topic of discussion.
- If participants have specific questions related to healthy eating they can and speak to a registered dietitian by calling Health Connect Ontario (dial 811).

A word about food allergies

- The Let's Get Cookin' Program cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment. Therefore, it is recommended that youth with allergies do not participate in the program. In the event that a child has an anaphylactic reaction it is important to know how to handle it.

Food products commonly associated with severe allergic reactions are: peanuts; tree nuts; sesame; wheat and triticale; eggs; milk; soy; seafood (fish, crustaceans, shellfish); sulphites and mustard. Reactions to other food products can also occur. The only way to prevent an allergic reaction is to avoid contact with allergy-causing foods.

Food allergies are triggered when a person's immune system mistakes a protein or ingredient in food for something harmful and creates antibodies. Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death.

Signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction can vary and can occur within minutes of exposure up to several hours after exposure. An anaphylactic reaction can involve any of the following symptoms, which may appear alone or in any combination:

- Skin system: hives, swelling, itching, warmth, redness, rash
- Respiratory system (breathing): coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain/tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny, itchy nose, watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing.
- Gastrointestinal system (stomach): nausea, pain/cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Cardiovascular system (heart) – pale/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizzy, lightheaded, shock
- Other: anxiety, feeling of “impending doom”, headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste

Epinephrine is the first line medication, which should be used for emergency management of a person having a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. Epinephrine often comes in the form of an auto-injector such as the EpiPen. Check with your school administration or agency administrator regarding anaphylaxis.

Let's Get Cookin'!





A word about tasting

Enjoy the food that is prepared

- Leave it up to the participants if they wish to try the food or not and how much they have.
- Youth will have different opinions about the recipes. Focus on the positive aspects of the recipes and the cooking experience.
- Discuss possible vegetable and fruit substitutions in the recipes to add variety when making at home.
- Encourage youth to make the recipes at home before the next session.

The Tasting Technique

- Ensure hand washing prior to trying the recipes.
- Cutlery that has entered the mouth should not be placed back in the food.
- Utensils should not be shared.
- If utensils are limited, a two-spoon method can be used for tasting:
 - One spoon is designated as a sampling spoon and is used to secure a sample of food from the container.
 - The second spoon is the tasting spoon and comes into contact with the mouth.
 - The sampling spoon and tasting spoon **must never come into contact with one another**. This way, food is sampled in the safest manner.

Let's Get Cookin'!