



Weekly Tip:

Many people believe that they are making 'healthy' choices while dining out but are you really sure?

Unless you know exactly how an item is prepared in the kitchen, you could be choosing meals that are actually higher in fat and sodium than you think.

Most items in a restaurant that are 'Grilled' are actually grilled in oil and/or lard. Steaks and fish are routinely bathed in butter in order to keep them tender and moist, cream sauces, soups and gravies are thickened with Rue—a combination of flour and oil.

If you regularly eat out or are trying very hard to be conscious of what you are putting in your body your best choice in a restaurant is in the restaurant itself.

Choose a location here the serving staff can tell you how an item is prepared and ask! Or better yet, choose a restaurant with an open-style kitchen so you can see for yourself!

At least we aren't 'that' bad!

Like alcoholics comparing their drinking problems to the homeless man on the corner holding out a tin cup and sneaking sips from a brown paper bag, Canadians can rest easy knowing that we are not among the top 10 fattest countries in the world. Or can we?

The World Health Organization as reported by Forbes conducted a 10 year survey in 2010 to determine the obesity rates throughout the world and surprisingly, Canada for once did not make the top 10 and is actually listed as #35. What exactly does that mean? Not much.

The WHO uses the BMI to determine over-weight population groups and according to this measurement, 61.1% of all Canadians over the age of 15 are considered overweight. Now remember that BMI doesn't consider body fat or body composition but is just a general measurement. Are you astounded by this number or are you pleased that we have 34 other nations we can point at to deflect our own responsibility before working on changing the lifestyle of our own country?

If you chose the latter, you may be shocked to know that the #1 country Nauru has a population that is 94.5% overweight and the US which is listed at #9 has a population that is 74.1% overweight. Still feeling smug at 61% well maybe you shouldn't be considering that only the top 11 fattest countries in the world have rates above 70% and the 12-43 listed countries are all sitting with us in the 60% range. Not very encouraging. The interesting fact is that the Top 8 countries are mostly South Pacific and Arabic Countries who's obesity levels have increased substantially over the past decade only AFTER North American culture has leached its way into their society providing American fast-food chains at almost every corner. The US may be #9 and we may be #35 but our North American culture is mostly responsible for the increased obesity in the rest of the world. Still proud? I am not.

While Canadian government has provided us with protection against the obesity rates seen in the US, I wonder how long that will last as we seem to be taking on a more American attitude towards personal rights superseding the good of the nation.

In the US you can feed a family of 4 at a fast food restaurant for under \$14. In Canada, our taxes on non-essentials don't allow us to do that, making the cost of convenience much higher than preparing our own food bought from a grocery store. Although many disagree with that statement, I have proven it time and time again.

Our health care system spends millions on education and prevention here in Canada so that daily we are bombarded with government sponsored advertisements for healthy living, foods and exercise. Our US counterparts do not have the luxury and are bombarded instead with big-money advertisements for all things unhealthy.

Yes, we can look at the US and the other 34 countries fatter than Canada and say, 'At least we aren't THAT bad!' but unless we continue to battle the infiltration of American culture and attitude into our society and continue to fight against things such as 'fat taxes', healthy food policies in schools and advertising restrictions, will we still be able to say that in another 10 years?

Recipe Corner

Delicious and nutritious snack and meal ideas that are perfect for the whole family!
Straight from Michelle's kitchen!

Squash Risotto

Risotto is a family favourite of ours! There are so many ways to prepare it and it can be the main course or a very welcome side! You can also use pre-cooked rice as a great way to spice up your leftovers!



- 1 whole butternut squash, peeled, diced
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 3 Tbsp. (45 mL) olive oil
- 1 3/4 cup (430 mL) whole grain rice (uncooked)
- 5 cups (1 250 mL) beef broth, boiling

Put squash in a large heavy pan with garlic and oil. Sauté over medium heat 8 minutes, stirring constantly. Add rice, cook 2 minutes, stirring to coat the rice thoroughly. Add a ladle of broth. Cook, stirring until the rice has absorbed the broth. Continue cooking, adding a ladle of broth at a time, stirring after each addition until rice is cooked, about 15 to 18 minutes. Serve hot.

If using pre-cooked or leftover rice—there is no need to use more than 1 cup of broth. Add that broth to the squash after it has softened through sautéing. Make sure the squash is cooked thoroughly before adding the rice. Season to taste!

Michelle's Blog:

www.butterflyconsultations.com/blog

Are you getting enough?

Ok—get your mind out of the gutter! When I ask if you are getting enough—of course I am asking about, EXERCISE! Adults require at least 150 minutes of aerobic activity a week. Yes that is 150 minutes and yes that is a week. That is 150 minutes of moderate-vigorous activity in bouts of at least 10 minutes or more! That is the equivalent of 3 hours at the gym, fitness class or pool every single week. And when I say aerobic activity—I mean the kind of movement that gets your heart rate up and makes you breath hard—not so hard that you are gasping for air but hard enough that singing the ABCs is not possible without stopping every 5 or 6 letters for a deep breath.

So - are you getting enough? I didn't think so because over 70% of Canadians aren't! These guidelines are for ages 18 and UP so age is no excuse!

What can you do to get enough? Well the first step is to make your health a priority and make time to exercise. Schedule it in if you have to—but your health is much more important than an episode of American idol and exercise can't be PVR'd!

Once you have made the time and commitment to lead a healthier, more active lifestyle you have to decide what exactly it is that you want to do with that time. Do you want to join a fitness class? If so—what class is best for you? Call your local studio or gym and talk to a certified instructor who is qualified to help you make that decision. Is a gym or group class not what works for you? What about a personal trainer? They are very effective and can work with you once a week giving you 'homework' to do on your own the rest of the time. Is a personal trainer out of your budget or just not exciting? That's OK too! Regular, beneficial exercise doesn't have to cost you a lot—or anything for that matter!

As long as you are motivated and dedicated to getting your 150 minutes a week you can do it on your own or with a friend! Brisk walks (not casual strolls), bike riding, at-home aerobics, lap swimming, bike riding, - whatever turns your crank and gets your heart pounding is the right exercise for you!

Just remember that with any exercise program it is best to check with your doctor before starting and to do it properly! Don't expect to jump on the treadmill and go for a 30 minute jog the first day you start. Build gradually and increase your speed and intensity as your body is able to handle it!

Remember that the best rule of thumb to how hard you are working is the ABC test. Some days it will take more to get you breathless and other days just getting off the couch can make your heart race—but rest assured that regular and continual activity will get you where you need to be and help you live longer stronger!

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