

# ManChef.ca



In addition to teaching cooking technique, empowers people with the knowledge to make better choices when it comes to buying and preparing food. I believe that a lack of awareness about our industrial food supply has contributed to the increase in modern diseases such as obesity, cancers and food allergies

It's tear-jerkingly hilarious that we've reached a point where cooking could be considered "radical." It used to be the exact opposite; mundane, conventional, banal. Everyone did it because few people had the choice not to. Now that it's not only conceivable but common to avoid cooking, it feels all-too normal to leave our food choices — and by extension our health — in the hands of restaurants, fast food places, and big food companies, fad diet evangelists, etc. Cooking real food is the most radical thing that we can do for our diets because it does more to improve and sustain health than any trendy diet ever could and because it allows people to find answers about their diets in their own kitchens. It also takes power away from the giant food corporations and restaurant chains that have so much of it, and puts us back in control over what goes into our bodies. When you think of it that way, it sounds like an honest to goodness coup. try ERF: Eat Real Food.

Anything that you do that's not fast food is terrific; cooking once a week is far better than not cooking at all." "It's the same argument as exercise: more is better than less and some is a lot better than none."

Furthermore, the engineering behind hyper processed food makes it virtually addictive.

A study by the Scripps Research Institute indicates that overconsumption of fast food "triggers addiction-like neuroaddictive responses" in the brain, making it harder to trigger the release of dopamine. In other words the more fast food we eat, the more we need to give us pleasure; thus the report suggests that the same mechanisms underlie drug addiction and obesity.

This addiction to processed food is the result of decades of vision and hard work by the industry. For 50 years companies strove to create food that was “energy-dense, highly stimulating, and went down easy. They put it on every street corner and made it mobile, and they made it socially acceptable to eat anytime and anyplace. They created a food carnival, and that’s where we live. And if you’re used to self-stimulation every 15 minutes, well, you can’t run into the kitchen to satisfy that urge.

Real cultural changes are needed to turn this around. Somehow, no-nonsense cooking and eating — roasting a chicken, making a grilled cheese sandwich, scrambling an egg, tossing a salad —. The smart campaign is not to get McDonald’s to serve better food but to get people to see cooking as a joy rather than a burden, or at least as part of a normal life.

As with any addictive behavior, this one is most easily countered by educating children about the better way. Children, after all, are born without bad habits. And yet it’s adults who must begin to tear down the food carnival.

But the food movement is still at the infant stage, and we need a massive social shift to convince people to consider healthier options.”

Obviously, in an atmosphere where any regulation is immediately labeled “nanny statism,” changing “the environment” is difficult. But we’ve done this before, with tobacco. The 1998 tobacco settlement limited cigarette marketing and forced manufacturers to finance anti-smoking campaigns — a negotiated change that led to an environmental one that in turn led to a cultural one, after which kids said to their parents, “I wish you didn’t smoke.” Smoking had to be converted from a cool habit into one practiced by pariahs.

A similar victory in the food world is symbolized by the stories parents tell me of their kids booing as they drive by McDonald’s.

To make changes like this more widespread we need action both cultural and political. The cultural lies in celebrating real food; raising our children in homes that don’t program them for fast-produced, eaten-on-the-run, high-calorie, low-nutrition junk; giving them the gift of appreciating the pleasures of nourishing one another and enjoying that nourishment together.

I could go on for ages about the importance of making your own food. Cooking not only benefits your health, your wallet, and the planet, but also makes you a much more conscious participant in the food system. When you’re making choices every day about where to shop, what to buy, and what to cook, you become automatically attuned to all sorts of critical issues related to food: where it comes from, how it’s produced, what’s in it, how much it costs, how it tastes. The more active cooks (as opposed to passive eaters) we have, the better off we’ll be.

While health practitioners are decrying the massive jump in obesity among Canadians — one in four, or about 6.3 million adults, was obese in 2011-12 — instead, it’s a tool designed to help people meet their nutritional needs and reduce their risks for obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis. Prevention, yes — treatment for a country desperate to slim down, no.

Hammond and others agree the Food Guide needs to “hammer home” fundamental messages in an environment where the worst choice is often the easiest one, and where a billion-dollar food industry has done a masterful job in designing foods that are optimally seductive

In the past, those foods might have been rare alternatives to meals made from raw materials. But today, Canadians are among the world’s top consumers of mass-produced, ultra-processed food.

I think it’s tough for us to say, slow down, don’t make your life so busy, try and set more time aside for eating,”. “Those things are tricky and we’re going to have a hard time reversing those social patterns.”

“But I certainly think that we can give people some discreet, actionable messages,” he adds, pointing to the new rules from Brazil: Eat fresh, minimize pre-packaged foods and make it yourself if you can.

There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence to suggest that cooking at home is better for our health. It’s also well known that eating convenience food is associated with poorer nutrition, obesity, and other metabolic diseases. Food experts, , have long argued that homemade meals belong at the center of a healthy diet.

Yet little research to date has focused on the relationship between how often people cook at home and the quality of their diets. A new study presented today at the American Public Health Association annual meeting and published in the journal *Public Health Nutrition* provides strong evidence to support the connection.

“If a person—or someone in their household—cooks dinner frequently, regardless of whether or not they are trying to lose weight, diet quality improves,” Health. “This is likely due to the relatively lower energy, fat, and sugar contents in foods cooked at home compared with convenience foods or foods consumed away from home..

. Researchers found that households that reported cooking dinner at home most frequently (6 to 7 times a week) consumed “significantly fewer” calories and ate better than those who relied more heavily on restaurant meals and frozen foods.

“From first-hand knowledge, we know how much fat and salt can be in restaurant food, whether it’s fine dining or fast food,”. “The food is formulated for flavour, so health is not at the top of a list of concern.”

The same is often true for processed and pre-packaged meals, as “Corporations cook very differently from how people do...” and “tend to use much more sugar, fat, and salt than people cooking for people do,”.

What the study doesn’t reveal, is what people mean by “cooking.” While the questions about frozen meals, including pizza, it doesn’t ask about other prepared ingredients, including those now available in most major supermarkets.

The researchers also found no significant relationship between cooking frequency and body weight. As they note, “not all cooking is healthy.” Additional questions remain about what obstacles might be keeping some cooks from cooking with fresh, whole ingredients.

Some follow-up research suggesting that when it comes to cooking with fresh fruit and vegetables, income is a significant piece of the puzzle. Their research to date shows that people of lower income are buying and eating less fresh produce regardless of how often they cook at home.

While these findings are not necessarily surprising, the data will be important in improving “access to high quality ingredients and circumstances that allow people to cook,” and to how cooking is used as a strategy in combating obesity,

Health promotion is an important activity throughout the life span. Older adults are not too old to stop smoking, start exercising, or change their diets. One of the greatest challenges is to dispel misconceptions about health promotion among older adults.

We all remember being told to eat our vegetables when we were children. But is eating well still important as you age?

The answer is yes. Giving your body the right nutrients and maintaining a healthy weight can help you stay active and independent. You’ll also spend less time and money at the doctor. This is especially true if you have a chronic condition, such as diabetes or heart disease.

The definition of healthy eating does change a little as you age. For example, as you grow older, your metabolism slows down, so you need fewer calories than before. Your body also needs more of certain nutrients. That means it’s more important than ever to choose foods that give you the best nutritional value.

For example, fibre becomes even more important as your Metabolism slows down, to keep your bowels healthy and regular. You also need more of some vitamins and minerals for energy and strong bones.

Stay hydrated.

Water is an important nutrient too! Don’t let yourself get dehydrated—drink small amounts of fluids consistently throughout the day. Tea, coffee, and water are your best choices. Keep fluids with sugar and salt at a minimum, unless your doctor has suggested otherwise.

How can I set goals that I can actually meet?

The easiest way to move towards healthy eating every day is to set goals that you really can meet. For example, say to yourself:

- I will eat one more fruit and one more vegetable today.
- I will try a fruit or vegetable this week that I have never tried before.
- I will eat fish once this week.
- I will choose whole grain bread for my sandwich.

- I will drink one more glass of water each day.
  - I will be more active today.
  - I will do most of my shopping around the outer edges of the grocery store, because that's where the fresh foods are.
- A few small changes can mount up to a very big difference to your health – before you even know it's happening!