



## HOW MUCH FOOD DO WE NEED DAILY?



The amount of food we should eat daily varies from person to person, but there is one thing we do know: everyone should have the food availability to obtain the necessary vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates and fats that we need to be healthy. People may have an innate sense of what to eat for this to occur, but more and more, people are losing touch with their bodies and are not correctly interpreting their body's hunger signals. People are eating too much of the wrong foods, high in fat and sugar, and too little of healthy foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables. Young people may develop eating disorders when they cannot correctly judge what is a normal intake, and how to eat for a lifetime without dieting. What is health? they may wonder; and often they compromise their health just at the time when growth is most crucial by not eating properly and in balance.

The Canada Food Guide can help us to estimate the differences on basic intake based on age and activity levels. This guide can serve as a helpful resource for young families to estimate what each child or adult needs to eat each day. In my clinic I often use the Canada Food Guide as a backup to estimate the adequacy of a person's diet. We should also note that in order to eat that much food in a day, one should probably break it up into three meals and three snacks daily. This is absolutely necessary for children to get the nutrients they need, and make sure they are at their best. Snacks are not taboo anymore, or restricted for people on diets, but rather, people are encouraged to eat high nutrient density foods or fruits and vegetables as snacks to lose or maintain their desired weight. Some examples include: hummus and vegetables, nut butters, yogurt and fruit or whole grain products. When it's snack time and you reach for a donut and coffee you have lost a valuable opportunity to obtain the nutrients you need to charge your system for another 3 hours, raising your metabolic rate, encouraging your body to burn fat, and preparing it for the next meal.

To learn more about eating in balance throughout the day, visit our clinic and see the nutritionist!