



## Get the real deal on your meal The truth on food and nutrition myths

At a time when information has never been more accessible, it's easy to be confused about your nutrition and what is really needed for good health. 2012 Nutrition Month aims to help separate myth from reality. Dietitians will serve up some truth that can help you set up good practices for you and your family, and allow you to make informed decisions about meal planning.

**March is  
Nutrition Month**

### **Organic foods are the safest and healthiest choice for you.**

**THE TRUTH:** Both organic and non-organic foods are nutritious and safe to eat when you're making healthy choices based on Canada's Food Guide. Many factors affect a food's nutritional value, such as where and how it was grown, stored, shipped and even how it was cooked. So organic foods may have more, about the same, or less nutrients than non-organic foods. And both organic and non-organic foods are grown and produced under strict regulations to make sure they are safe for you to eat. Like any food purchase, buying organic food is a personal choice.



### **"Multi-grain" is the same as "whole grain."**

**THE TRUTH:** Don't be fooled by marketing. Multi-grain isn't always whole grain. Multi-grain products include different grains, but they may not be whole. You'll get the greatest health benefits from eating whole grains. To make sure a food is made with whole grains, look on the food label's ingredient list for the words "whole grain" in front of each grain name. If whole grains are the main ingredients in a food, they should appear first in the ingredient list. Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.



**Frozen and canned vegetables and fruit are not as nutritious as fresh.**

**THE TRUTH:** Nothing beats the taste of fresh produce in season. But frozen and canned produce can be just as nutritious since it's usually picked and packed at the peak of ripeness when nutrient levels are highest. Frozen or canned produce gives you benefits beyond health. It allows Canadians to enjoy a variety of vegetables and fruit year-round and is a practical choice for people living in remote areas. It's also sometimes more affordable than fresh produce. And cooking with frozen or canned produce can save you time in the kitchen! Read the labels: The healthiest choices are products that contain no added sugar, fat or salt.

**Artificial sweeteners have too many chemicals to be healthy.**

**THE TRUTH:** Artificial sweeteners can be part of healthy eating. Health Canada approves all sweeteners for safety before they can be sold in Canada. Health Canada also develops strict guidelines for how food producers can use a sweetener, as well as advice on how much is safe to eat each day. Artificial sweeteners add a sweet taste while limiting calories and can be enjoyed in moderation, as part of a healthy diet.

(Source : [www.dietetistes.ca](http://www.dietetistes.ca))

## Second-hand smoke

**Second-hand smoke** is made up of the smoke that escapes directly into the air from the end of a lit cigarette, as well as the smoke that is exhaled by a smoker into the air. Two-thirds of the smoke of a cigarette escapes into the environment without being inhaled by the smoker. Smokers are therefore not the only ones smoking their cigarettes...

Second-hand smoke can:

- irritate the eyes, nose and throat
- cause headaches, dizziness and nausea
- aggravate the symptoms and accelerate the progress of respiratory diseases
- increase the risks of respiratory infections:
  - cold
  - flu
  - bronchitis
  - pneumonia

**In Canada, approximately 1,107 non-smokers die each year due to the effects of second-hand smoke.**

(Source : [www.famillesansfume.ca](http://www.famillesansfume.ca))