

Recovering from the holiday dinner table



Amber Simpson, Judy Emery, Linda Van der Bos, Joanne Reynolds, Maureen Reynolds and Tom Feenstra check out the snacks they've just prepared. TONY PEARSON Special to This Week

By Tony Pearson

Now that you've had more than your fill of holiday treats, you're no doubt thinking about New Year's resolutions. Well, Nadine Campeau is ready to help you.

Nadine is a dietitian with the North Hastings Family Health Team, and she knows a lot about eating healthy. She runs a monthly cooking class at Heart of the Park, where participants learn how to cook meals that are good for your heart and your bones, and which will allow you to lose weight.

In fact, the next lesson, scheduled for Friday, Jan. 8, is entitled "Eat more, weigh less" ? how to take in more nutritious food without taking in more calories. It's all part of the North Hastings Family Health Team's "Healthier You" program.

As advice for daily eating habits in 2016, Campeau recommends that people eat "as close to the farm as possible" ? avoiding heavily processed, store-bought food, and making the meal as much as possible "from scratch." She also suggests the use of herbs and spices in place of salt, to reduce levels of sodium.

In her pre-Christmas cooking class on holiday snack ideas, her class prepared flavoured popcorn with roasted chickpeas, baked kale chips, Tex-Mex bean bites, vegetable bars, and cinnamon crisps with strawberry-apple salsa. In lieu of pop, they enjoyed various flavoured waters.

She advocates that people have three meals a day, and in particular, eat breakfast. Skipped meals tend to lead to snacking, and to over-large portions at dinner. If you feel the need to snack, Campeau advises, eat fruit or yogurt or veggies in a homemade dip. She also suggests fruit as an alternative to dessert.

As for liquids, she suggests that to reduce the pounds/kilos, you should drink more water. And she reminds us that alcohol has lots of calories. As well, she notes that drinking more than four cups of coffee a day increases your risk of developing heart problems. ("By the way," she adds, "mugs are a lot bigger than cups ? so over two mugs daily can also create heart problems.")

As for other healthy habits for the new year, Campeau states: "It's what you'd expect ? make sure to exercise. And if you have a lot of stress in your life, you have to deal with that."

Physical activity helps, Campeau notes, as does meditation, music, or even just a hot bath ? along with lots of sleep. Calming herbal remedies are a mixed bag as they don't always work for everyone but experimenting a little with valerian root or Vibes CBD (<https://vibescbd.co.uk/>) to see if one helps you unwind is often worth a try.

Of course, we can start out with the best of intentions, and yet end up exactly where we started; the vast majority of New Year's resolutions are broken, normally before the end of January. That's why Campeau suggests "one step at a time."

"Don't make a slew of resolutions; that's too difficult and will tend to discourage you. Start with one resolution that's achievable. Work on it for a month and incorporate it into your lifestyle. Then plan another change and work on that. For example, you don't

have to say you'll start jogging. You can simply promise yourself to go for a 10-minute walk three times a week. Once you're doing that regularly and without mentally griping, you can up it gradually in time and frequency."

Furthermore, she suggests, if you break a resolution, don't give up on it entirely. Start again the next week or month, again with achievable goals.

Incidentally, if you're interested in her cooking classes, you can contact Nadine at the North Hastings Family Health Team at 613-332-5692 (extension 224).