

Get family involved in more home-cooked meals

You get home after a long day and stand staring at the open fridge. Even though the shelves seem full of food your mind is blank of ideas of what to make for dinner. Perhaps it is the perceived effort required to cook or it may be the growling in your stomach that turns your thoughts to frozen dinners, meal kits or ordering in.

The reality is that Canadian families are cooking less and eating more prepared foods. And who can blame us? The average work week has been steadily increasing over the past 20 years. For some, cooking has become more of a luxury saved for weekends or special occasions when the time to plan can be afforded.

With the advent of the Food Network running shows like Emeril Live and the Iron Chef, cooking is even viewed as a spectator sport. It's a wonderful treat to have others cook for us but what are we losing in the process?

Cooking less at home usually means bigger portions eating out, less



HEIDI SMITH

NUTRITION FOR THE LONG RUN

nutrients from processed foods and more unhealthy fats and salt.

Eating out once or twice a week is rarely a problem and acts as a nice treat away from home. It starts taking a toll on your health when you buy your lunch most days, eat dinner out three or four times per week and supplement with processed and pre-fab meals and snacks in between.

It's easy to fall into this pattern with a busy schedule, an overused meal repertoire and infrequent trips

to the grocery store.

It all starts with the food you have in the house and the meals you plan to make. Here's three easy steps to get organized, pump up your creativity and make meal preparation easier:

1. Begin by making a list of all the meals you eat. This list will come in handy when choosing meals and deciding what to buy at the grocery store. Group the meals by the main protein ingredient since most meals are based around protein. For example, list all your meals with poultry, meat, seafood or vegetarian protein sources (ie: legumes, soy). In this format it's easy to see where you might need to augment your meals repertoire.

You may want to type this out and leave room to add new additions. Keep the list on your fridge or in an easily accessible location so you can continue to add new meal ideas and forgotten favorites. Highlight the fast meals that can be made in less than 30 minutes.

It's a great motivator when you get home late and can't think of what to make.

2. Choose three or four meals to prepare before going to the grocery store. It helps to look at your calendar for the upcoming week to see what kind of meals you'll have time to prepare. Be sure to choose different proteins to add variety such as one chicken meal, one meal with beans and one fish meal. Also consider your leftovers that can be used for lunches and fill in dinners for the rest of the days.

3. Make a grocery list based on your meal selections. You'll save time and money in the grocery store because you are buying for specific meals. Remember to include vegetable side dishes and buy staples for snacks, breakfasts and lunches.

The few minutes you take to think ahead each week will save you hours of meal preparation, hundreds of dollars in prepared food and several inches off

your waist. If you have an idea of what you can make for dinner before you get home it's much easier to avoid the drive-through and leave the "emergency" frozen pizza for another night.

If you have kids, get them involved in the meal preparation. Cooking is skill that not only needs fostering in adults but also in children. It may take you a little longer to supervise your kids chopping the veggies or cleaning up the spill they made on the floor, but think of it as an investment in their future.

Home cooked meals can easily fit into your schedule with a little planning. And as a bonus, your kids will leave "the nest" knowing more than how to "remove the plastic wrapping" or "simply add water".

Heidi Smith is a registered dietitian from the Health and Performance Centre at the University of Guelph. For some quick recipes visit her website at www.heidismithnutrition.com.



NEW ADVENTURE BOOK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Jonathan Stroud, author of 'The Amulet of Samarkand,' signs a copy of his book for Sarah Yockey, left, and her sister Kate, in Naperville, Ill. Stroud's book, the first instalment in what he calls The Bartimaeus Trilogy, appeals to a similar audience as the Harry Potter books.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Men should do a self-check for cancer

For years we've stressed to women the importance of an annual breast examination for the detection of cancer. Yet today little attention is paid to examination of the male testicles. It's time for women to remind their mates that what is good medicine for the goose is also good medicine for the gander. Routine testicular self-examination (TSE) is the answer.

Dr. Joel Brenner, assistant professor of sports medicine at the University of Georgia, says, "There is a taboo about talking about the testicles unlike breasts and mammograms that are discussed on prime-time television."

Yet cancer of the testicles is one of the most treatable cancers. The case of Lance Armstrong is the best example. In 1996 this world class athlete and five time winner of the Tour de France ignored early symptoms of groin soreness. Later he began to suffer from headaches and blurry vision. The diagnosis? Testicular cancer that had spread to many parts of his body.

Armstrong decided to fight his malignancy and underwent an aggressive course of treatment. Surgeons removed the cancerous testicle followed by chemotherapy. Just one year later Armstrong was pronounced free of cancer.

Dr. Brenner says that testicular cancer rates have been rising, 42 per cent in the past 25 years. Currently it's the most common malignancy in males between 15 to 35 years of age accounting for 20 per cent of cancers in this age group.

It's not known why this malignancy is on the rise. But we do know that testicles that remain after birth in the ab-



DR. W. GIFFORD-JONES

THE DOCTOR GAME

domen and fail to descend into the scrotum are at high risk. White males have five times the risk of black males. And if there's a family history of this malignancy the risk is increased.

Like cancer of the breast early testicular malignancy has no symptoms. This may even be the case when cancer has totally replaced the testicle. But as the cancer increases patients may complain of weight or a pulling sensation in the scrotal area. Pain may also be caused by bleeding into the tumour or a blockage of blood in the testicle.

It's not easy to make an early diagnosis of breast cancer. If it were easy, fewer women would die from this disease. Diagnosis is difficult because many breasts have small cystic areas making it hard to separate benign from malignant lumps even with the help of mammography.

This isn't the case with egg-shaped testicles that secrete hormones and produce sperm. They should feel as smooth and firm as a hard-boiled egg without a shell, making it easier to detect small lumps by TSE.

The prime time for TSE is while tak-

ing a warm bath or shower. By gently picking up each testicle between the thumb and fingers the surfaces can be explored for lumps. And any lump or irregularity should be reported to the doctor. But even though testicles are easy to feel, most men have little or no knowledge of their anatomy. There can be confusion unless they know testicles consist of two parts, the testicle itself and the epididymis.

The epididymis is the soft tube-like structure situated at the rear of the testicle. It's the part that accumulates sperm and carries it to the outside.

Lumps in the epididymis are quite common. They may be the size of a pea or larger but usually of little importance. Lumps in the testicle are more serious.

The most common form of testicular cancer called a seminoma accounts for 50 per cent of cases. It spreads slowly and is easy to cure by surgery if diagnosed early. Slow growing seminomas also respond well to radiation if they have spread to lymph nodes.

Prior to treating a young man for testicular cancer he is usually advised to bank his sperm. These frozen sperm can then be used at a later time if he becomes infertile.

Testicular cancer is devastating news to men in the prime of life. But TSE can save their lives. And if women can submit to annual pelvic examinations is it asking too much of males to feel their own testicles?

Dr. Gifford-Jones' column usually runs on Thursdays.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Use the early part of the day for yourself. Don't let an obstacle stop you in your tracks. Others act in a most unpredictable manner. Know what you want. Tonight: Take a night off.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

Others might not agree with you, and they let you know in no uncertain terms. Just keep a tight hold on your finances, and don't let anyone convince you to spend. Also, be very careful with your wallet. Tonight: Party the night away.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Detach while others trigger today. You see solutions, but no one listens until late afternoon. Once others see your logic, calm will be restored. Handle a boss with kid gloves, as he or she could be difficult. Tonight: Leader of the gang.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

A partner plays a significant role if you let him or her. This person can give you another perspective, though you might not want to hear it. Follow your instincts. Tonight: Split town as fast as possible.

BORN TODAY

Baseball player Ken Griffey Jr. (1969), artist Rene Magritte (1898), philosopher Voltaire (1694)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

GUELPH

Music and art combine in performance Friday

University of Guelph visual art students will be given a rare chance to "perform" on Friday in an innovative show at the George Luscombe theatre.

Printmaking students will be joining with the university's Contemporary Music Ensemble for a 40-minute performance entitled Atmospheric.

According to printmaking professor John Graham, the idea is for the musicians to play as two visual arts student slowly raise a black curtain to reveal a quilt made up of 20 intaglio prints, meant to act as a visual counterpart to the music.

The performance starts at 8 p.m. at the theatre. It is free and open to the public.

ELORA

'My Elora' photo exhibit opens Friday at new centre

My Elora - The Grace of Belonging, a solo exhibition of photographs by Sophie Hogan, opens at the Elora Centre for the Arts on Friday at 8 p.m.

It features 30 black and white por-

traits of Hogan's intimate friends, casual acquaintances and a few of Elora's local characters.

Each photograph is accompanied by something the subject has written in response to the question "How do you feel about community?"

The exhibit is a fascinating look at Elora and its people. It continues until Jan 4.

The Elora Centre for the Arts is located at the corner of Melville Street and Mill Street East. Gallery hours are Thursday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

GUELPH

'Spark of Brilliance' exhibit opens Sunday

The Bookshelf Cafe, Quebec Street will be holding a gala reception on Sunday at 8 p.m. to open the art exhibition 'Spark of Brilliance'.

Photographer John Haney spent much time with the members of Spark of Brilliance in the willow groves, during the design and initial phase of The Living Village at Ignatius Farms.

The exhibit is a record of what can be accomplished when all work together for a common purpose.

Mercury news sources

Man doesn't want involvement because of job's unsure future

Q: I've been dating a man six months, we have a great relationship. There's always a threat he's going to move away for work, so it's hard to talk about the future. He's recently made it clear that when he goes home for the holidays, he has no intention of bringing me to meet his family. I'm hurt. I introduced him to my family, I've made a point of including him in my life. Am I overreacting? - Upset

A: This "threat" of here today/ gone tomorrow defines your current relationship. He's been more than clear that he's holding you at arm's length. He may be trying not to get too close because he fears you'll have to separate anyway, or he doesn't want to make a commitment, period.

This is a dating phase in which you get to know each other better. If you care a lot, watch for more signals. Your own level of upset will tell you when it's time to ask what the dating is about if these No-Fly zones continue to be created.

Q: My wife just left me without warning, not that it surprised me, but the reason she gave really shocked me. In less than a month, I met someone else who's completely different from her, so far. However, she seems obsessed with appearances. She claims you must look good always and has a ton of rules about appearances. I think I might not be able to live up to her expectations, and I really do like her. How do I deal with this? - Dumpee

A: You sure recover from shock quickly! Exit wife; mope three weeks; bring on the Image Diva. Choosing someone so high maintenance, with little time to get to know her other facets (has she any?), has me thinking you'll be dealing with more shocks in the future.

But if you want a lasting relation-



ELLIE

ADVICE

ship with someone, I recommend you take a pause to look inside yourself instead of in the mirror. Think about what went wrong in your marriage that was "no surprise." Remind yourself about what you seek in a partner beyond the initial attraction. Your decision with this woman is whether you can live with her superficial demands, not whether you can live up to them.

Q: While opening my wedding RSVP cards, I discovered some people invited extra guests or their children who clearly weren't invited. It's not about budget; we don't want people we don't know, or children, attending. Do we just stay quiet and let them come? - Bothered Bride

A: Weigh each case. Call the guest, saying you wonder if they misread the invitation envelope. Since money's not the issue, for a close person with solid reasons - such as, there was no choice but to bring a child from out of town; or there's a new, serious partner - let it be. If the guest isn't close, and false assumptions were made, set the record straight by saying who isn't invited.

Tip of the Day: Rushing from a split into another relationship is like moving from frypan to fire: sure to burn.

You can write to Ellie Teshler c/o The Guelph Mercury, 8-14 Macdonell St., Guelph, N1H 6P7 or e-mail ellie@thes-tar.ca

Horoscope

Forecast for Friday, November 21, 2003

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

FRIDAY BIRTHDAY

Others sometimes find you bit touchy about your personal life. You like to keep certain matters hush-hush, if possible. You get very upset if anyone interferes with your need for privacy. Sometimes you might be best off keeping a secret just that, and not sharing it with anyone. Your charisma will be unusually strong this year.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)
Hold on to your hat, with all the conflicting thoughts and vibes around you. Much could involve your perceptions. Work on an individual basis. Tonight: Be with the apple of your eye.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)
Despite a challenge or two in the morning, you end this day on a great note. Don't push an associate, or you might not get what you want. Tonight: Sort through your many invitations, then choose.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)
You might be romantic, but clearly someone else isn't. Don't push your luck

after breakfast. Emphasize your work and projects that need to be completed. Tonight: Play it low-key.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

Getting to work might take a lot more effort than actually working. As the day gets later, you feel as if you are on cruise control. Let your ingenuity speak, and you'll find shortcuts and easier solutions. Tonight: Give in. Be a wild thing!

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

Others don't seem to get the message, or you might this morning. Do things that work for you: Catch up on e-mail, clear your desk and get ready for the weekend. Tonight: Consider heading home.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

A partner might upset you. Consider your options, but choose not to take one. Hang in there. By late afternoon, what has been a problem no longer will be. Tonight: At a favorite spot.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

You might feel great, but a risk could backfire today. Play it as conservatively as possible. Focus on work and enhancing your budget. The holidays are coming. Tonight: Order in.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Though you could run into an obstacle head-on, you still work through it, given time. Let your creativity work toward problem-solving. Tonight: What do you really want?

SILENT BUT DEADLY

Carbon monoxide is invisible and odourless and can kill you in no time at all. Only a carbon monoxide detector can alert you to this deadly gas. Install one today.

TONIGHT! RCMPi presents THE KING & I 8:00 pm - November 20, 21, 22
2:00 pm - November 22, 23
Adult \$26 / Student & Senior \$21 - Main Stage

REBECCA RUBONG 8:00 pm - November 22
African Music and Dance
Adult \$25 / Student & Senior \$22 - Co-operators Hall

THE NUTCRACKER 7:30 pm - December 2 & 3
Celebrate the Season with Ballet Jorgen
Adult \$37.50/\$34 / Senior \$35.50/\$32 / Student \$25/\$21 / eyeGO - Main Stage

COURT OF MIRACLES
Presented by Dance Theatre David Earle
8:00 pm - December 10-13, 2:00 & 8:00 pm - December 13
Adult \$26 / Student & Senior \$18 / eyeGO

Tickets: 519.763.3000 or www.riverrun.guelph.on.ca

River Run Centre