

Spring/  
Summer  
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Issue 4



## The APrON Leaflet

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### APrON's Edmonton office makes a move...



APrON Edmonton has moved to a brand new facility on the University of Alberta campus. You can now find us in the Clinical Research Unit, **Room 2-004 of the Li Ka Shing Centre for Health Research Innovation**. All Edmonton appointments from now on will be

held at this new location. If you have any questions, you may reach a member of the Edmonton APrON team at 780-492-4667.

### Join APrON on Facebook and Twitter

Do you have Facebook or Twitter? **Join the APrON study on Facebook and Twitter today** and stay up to date on recent happenings, learn new things about pregnancy on Factual Friday's, and connect with other APrON moms. To find us please follow the directions below:

- To join APrON's Facebook group, search "Alberta\_pregnancy"
- To follow APrON on Twitter, search "@APrON\_Research"



## Eating well before pregnancy: Results from one of APrON's pilot studies

If you think back to when you first joined the APrON study, you may remember having to fill out a long diet history questionnaire. You know, the one that took a couple hours to complete? For those of you who don't remember, the questionnaire asked about the types of food you ate in the 12 months before you knew you were pregnant. Stephanie Thomas, a Master's student at the University of Alberta, has investigated just that - what women were eating in the year before they became pregnant. Stephanie had 98 pregnant women from Alberta, who were not a part of the APrON study, fill out the diet history questionnaire. She found that, on average, women met the recommendations for energy, carbohydrate, protein, and fat. They also met the recommendations for most of the vitamin and minerals looked at, including: folate, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, calcium and iron. These women did not, however, meet recommendations for vitamin D. Vitamin D is important to help the body absorb calcium and phosphorus to maintain strong bones. Please keep in mind that this study looked at nutrient intake from food only; intake from vitamin and mineral supplements was not included. It also looked only at average intake for the group, not for individuals.

Vitamin D, often called the 'sunshine' vitamin, is a very unique vitamin. Not only do you find it in foods such as salmon, egg yolks, and milk - your body can also make vitamin D from the sun. Most people meet at least some of their vitamin D needs this way. Cloud coverage, shade, having dark-colored skin, living at a northern latitude, older age, clothing, and sunscreen are just some factors that decrease the amount of vitamin D you make. As little as 10 to 15 minutes of unprotected sun exposure can meet your vitamin D needs, and you will never make too much vitamin D from the sun because your body stops making it once you've gotten enough. In Canada, the only two foods that are fortified by law with vitamin D are milk (fluid, evaporated powdered and soy beverage) and margarine; yogurt and cheese fortification is not mandatory.

We know that the food you eat while you are pregnant may affect the health of your baby. It is also thought that your health before pregnancy, including the food you eat, could also affect the health of your baby. We hope that the answers you provided in that long, tedious diet history questionnaire will help us better understand the diet of Albertan women before pregnancy, and help us learn how diet may contribute to the health of moms and their babies.

Sources: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/vitamin/vita-d-eng.php>;  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0003057/>; <http://www.ajcn.org/content/80/6/1710S.full>

*May 8th - Wishing  
all of our APrON  
moms a  
Happy Mother's  
Day!*



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APrON now has over **1600 participants!** Did you know that you can join the APrON study for a **second time?** Please contact your local APrON representative for more details.

## Demographic information for the first 600 APrON participants

The following table summarizes some of the demographic information for the first 600 APrON participants, also known as APrON's first cohort. This type of information is important in a study, as it will influence the information we collect as well as the application of this information. APrON is making an effort to include women from all backgrounds but it has been difficult. In looking at the table below, you will notice that most of our APrON women are having their first child, are married, have some post secondary education, and have a family income of more than 100K per year.

Maternal Characteristics of APrON's first cohort (n=600)	Value
Maternal Age (600)	31.6±4.4
Number of times given birth (574)	Never 58.4% Once 31.7% More than once 9.9%
Marital Status (562)	Married 85.4% Other 14.6 %
Maternal Education (559)	≤ High school diploma 9.8% Trade 20.8% University Degree/Post Grad 69.4%
Family Income (552)	20-69K 19.4% 70-99K 25.4% ≥100K 55.2%

### Food safety for BBQ season

With summer fast approaching, most of us are dusting off our barbeques in preparation for some sunny weather. But did you know that your risk of developing foodborne illness increases in the summer months? Higher temperatures, humidity, and a spike in the number of outdoor activities create an optimal environment for bacteria, such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli*, to flourish. You can help minimize your family's risk of developing foodborne illness by following these four simple steps:

**Separate:** Make sure to always separate your raw foods, such as meat and eggs, from cooked foods, fruits, and vegetables to avoid cross-contamination.

**Clean:** Wash your hands, kitchen surfaces, utensils, and reusable shopping bags often with warm, soapy water to eliminate bacteria.

**Chill:** Always refrigerate food and leftovers promptly at 4°C or below.

**Cook:** Always cook food to the safe internal temperatures. Health Canada recommends that you check this by using a digital food thermometer. Cooked foods are safe to eat when internal temperatures are:

- 71°C (160°F) for ground meat (beef, veal, lamb and pork)
- 74°C (165°F) for leftover food and boned and deboned poultry parts
- 85°C (185°F) for whole poultry

Source: Health Canada (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/food-aliment/pregnant-enceintes-eng.php>)



## Jack's Special Veggie Bread

In celebration of National Nutrition Month, EatRight Ontario and Dietitians of Canada announced the winners of the 2011 Ontario Kids Recipe Challenge. The contest encouraged children to get excited about healthy eating and being creative in the kitchen. Young chefs from all over Ontario submitted their favorite recipes in two categories: school day lunches and after school snacks. "Jack's Special Veggie Bread" was one of the winning recipes for school day lunches, grades 1-3.

**Preparation time:** 30 minutes

**Cook time:** 50 minutes

**Makes:** 16 slices

### Ingredients:

- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 large carrots, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp dried thyme leaves
- 1 bag (680g) whole wheat pizza dough
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

### Directions:

1. Combine peppers and carrots in bowl. Drizzle oil and thyme; stir to coat well.
2. Spread veggies onto a baking sheet and roast in oven at 425°F (220°C) for 20 minutes or until tender and golden.
3. Roll out dough onto lightly floured surface into a 40 x 25cm (16 x 10 inch) rectangle.
4. Spread roasted veggies onto dough, leaving 2.5cm (1 inch) border on one long edge.
5. Sprinkle shredded cheese on top and roll dough, pinching ends to seal seam.
6. Place seam side down on lined baking sheet and bake at 400°F (200°C) in oven for 30 minutes or until crust is golden.
7. Let cool; slice and serve.

\* Frozen or fresh whole wheat pizza dough can be found in the baker section of the grocery store  
Source: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/>

## What would you like to see in future newsletters?

If you have a **suggestion, question** or **comment**, please send them in.  
We appreciate any and all feedback!

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