



APPENDIX D GLOSSARY

Antioxidants: Antioxidants are substances that block some of the damage caused by free radicals, which are created when your body transforms food into energy. Antioxidants may also help prevent cancer and heart disease. Vitamins C and E are examples of antioxidants.

Blood sugar level: The amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood. It is also known as serum glucose or blood glucose level. You have diabetes when your blood sugar levels are higher than normal. The goal of diabetes treatment is to keep blood sugar levels within the normal range.

Body Mass Index: Measures body size using a ratio of height to weight (see Appendix C). If you have either a low or a high BMI, you may be at risk for health problems.

Calorie: A measure of the amount of energy found in food and fluids. You need a certain number of calories every day for your body to work properly. The amount of calories you take in should be balanced by the amount of calories your body uses each day. If your calories are out of balance, you will either gain or lose weight.

Cataracts: A painless, cloudy area in the lens of the eye that blocks the passage of light and usually causes vision problems.

Cholesterol: A natural waxy substance found only in animal foods. Meats, poultry, fish and dairy products contain the most. Your body needs cholesterol to work properly. But there is “good” cholesterol and “bad” cholesterol. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is “good” cholesterol. HDL carries cholesterol from your tissues to the liver. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) carries cholesterol from the liver to other tissues. It is called “bad” cholesterol because high levels of LDL can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Chronic illness: An illness that lasts a long time, for months or years or possibly for life.

Dairy products: See Milk and alternatives.

Daily Value: A phrase that appears on all Nutrition Facts labels. The Daily Value is the average amount of the vitamin or mineral that is needed to meet the nutritional requirements of a person who is at least two years old. The number shown will be the percent of the daily value that one serving of the food provides.

Diabetes: A condition where the body has trouble maintaining normal blood sugar levels.

Enriched: A food is enriched when manufacturers add vitamins and minerals to replace those that were lost during the refining process. For example, if the food originally had iron in it, but the iron was lost when the food was manufactured, the food will be enriched to add the iron back.

Fats: Dietary fat is found in food. Everyone needs to eat some fat to stay healthy – fat supplies your muscles with energy and helps build the protective coat around each cell in your body. (See Healthy and unhealthy fats.)

Food-borne illness: Occurs when a person eats food infected with tiny (too small to see without a microscope), disease-causing organisms, such as bacteria, viruses and parasites.

Fortified: A food is fortified when the manufacturer adds more vitamins or minerals than the food originally contained.

Glaucoma: A group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve, which is responsible for carrying images from the eye to the brain. It can gradually steal your sight without warning. People with high blood pressure or diabetes have a greater risk of developing glaucoma.



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Grains/whole grain/multigrain: Grains are edible plant products and include wheat, rice, barley, oats, millet and various other cereals. Whole grain refers to the entire edible part of any grain. Multigrain means that a product contains a number of grains, but they are not necessarily whole grains.

Healthy and unhealthy fats: Unhealthy fats are saturated and trans fats. Healthy fats are monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Omega 3 fatty acids are a polyunsaturated fat.

High blood pressure: When the force of blood moving through your body is too strong. Also called hypertension.

Hypertension: High blood pressure.

International units (IU): Vitamins A, D and E are measured in international units (IUs). There is no fixed definition for IU, as there is for milligrams (mgs) or micrograms (mcgs). It is based on the potency of the substance, so the IU will be different for each substance. For example, one IU of vitamin A equals 0.3 micrograms, but one IU of vitamin E equals one milligram.

Legumes: The dried seeds of plants, such as beans, lentils, peanuts, peas and soybeans. Legumes are high in protein and fibre.

Liquid nutritional supplements: Also called meal replacement drinks. These are milkshake-like drinks that can provide needed calories, protein, vitamins and minerals, but should be used as snacks, not as meals.

Mcg/mgs: Common units of measurement for minerals and some vitamins, such as vitamin C. Mgs means milligrams and mcg means micrograms. A milligram is 1/1000 of a gram and a microgram is 1/1000 of a milligram, so 1000 micrograms = 1 milligram.

Macular degeneration: An eye disease that destroys central vision.

Meal replacement drinks: See Liquid nutritional supplements.

Meat and alternatives: One of the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide. Meat is an important source of protein and iron and includes wild meat, beef, pork, lamb, chicken and turkey. Meat alternatives also provide protein. These include nut and butters, tofu and dried peas, beans and lentils.

Milk and alternatives: One of the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide. Milk and milk products, such as cheese, kefir and yogurt, provide many nutrients, especially calcium and vitamin D for strong bones and teeth. Milk alternatives include fortified soy beverages.

mL: ML means millilitres. It is a metric unit of volume equal to one thousandth of a litre. A common measurement: 1 ounce equals 30 mL.

Minerals: Substances that occur naturally in the ground. Your body needs small amounts of many different minerals.

Monounsaturated fats: Healthy fats that help lower cholesterol. They are found in nuts, seeds, olive and canola oils.

Multivitamin/mineral: A supplement that includes a variety of vitamins and minerals.

Natural food: A term that is widely used but has little meaning: all foods are natural.

Nutrient: A substance that provides nourishment essential for life and growth. Nutrients include protein, fats, carbohydrates (especially fibre), fluids, as well as certain vitamins and minerals.



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Nutrition Label: A label found on most food products that summarizes the nutritional content of a specific amount of that food.

Omega 3 fatty acids: A type of polyunsaturated fat that is essential for the brain and nervous systems. Omega 3 fatty acids are found in plant oils, such as olive, canola and soybean oil, and in flaxseed and flaxseed oil. They are also found in nuts (particularly walnuts) and fatty or oily fish such as salmon, anchovies, rainbow trout, sardines, mackerel, eulachon, char and herring. You can also find foods that have been fortified with omega 3, including eggs, yogurt and soy beverages.

Organic food: Food labeled “Certified Organic” is produced according to certain standards without using chemical pesticides or fertilizers, hormones or antibiotics.

Osteoporosis: A thinning of the bones that makes them more likely to break.

Pasteurization/pasteurized: “Pasteurization” is the process of heating food to kill harmful organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, moulds and yeasts. Store-bought milk and milk products – including most cheeses – are pasteurized.

Periodontal disease: An inflammation in the gums, bone and tissues that surround and support the teeth.

Phytochemicals: Chemical compounds produced by plants that researchers now think may protect against disease, especially cancer and possibly osteoporosis and eye disease as well. The brightest and most colourful vegetables and fruit – the dark green, orange, yellow and red ones – are packed with both essential vitamins and minerals and disease-fighting phytochemicals.

Phytosterols: Natural substances found in plants that can help to reduce cholesterol. Phytosterols can be found in vegetable oils, tofu and soy products, legumes, seeds and most vegetables and fruit.

Polyunsaturated fats: Healthy fats that help lower cholesterol. They are found mainly in plant products such as safflower, sunflower, corn and soybean oils.

Processed food: Food that has been subjected to various processes intended to improve taste, texture, appearance and shelf life.

Risk factor: Something that increases your risk of getting a particular disease or condition. For example, obesity is a risk factor for heart disease.

Saturated fats: Fats that are hard at room temperature and can increase cholesterol. They are found mostly in fatty meats, whole milk and milk products, palm and coconut oils.

Soy/soy products: Vegetarian source of protein made from soybeans. Includes soy beverages, which can replace milk for people who can't drink it, as well as tofu and tempeh.

Starch: A type of carbohydrate found in grains, breads, cereals and starchy vegetables, such as potatoes and corn.

Tempeh: A fermented soybean cake similar to tofu.

Tofu: A firm, custard-like soybean cake.

Trans fat: An unhealthy fat that is created when hydrogen is added to liquid fat to make it solid.

Triglycerides: Essentially fat in food, triglycerides provide the body with calories to burn for energy. They are also a type of fat found in your blood.



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Unsaturated fats: Fats that are liquid at room temperature and can help lower cholesterol. They are found mostly in vegetables oils, nuts and seeds.

Veggie meats: Vegetarian patties and dogs made from soybeans and/or mushrooms or a variety of other vegetables.

Vitamins: Organic nutrients that are necessary in small amounts for normal metabolism and good health.

Waist circumference measurement: Measurement used to indicate the amount of body fat around the abdomen. Excess weight around the abdomen (also described as an apple shape) is associated with greater health risk.