March is Nutrition Month in Canada: Nourish to Flourish

March is Nutrition Month in Canada! A time to recognize the vital role that food plays in our lives and to celebrate the work of dietitians who support individuals, families, and communities in achieving better health. It's an opportunity to shine the spotlight on how nourishing our bodies goes far beyond what's on our plates. This year's theme, **"Nourish to Flourish,"** reminds us that when we are well-nourished, we are better able to grow, thrive, and live life to the fullest.

Food is deeply personal, but it is also profoundly social. It connects us to our families, our cultures, and our communities. From shared holiday meals to school lunch programs, community feasts, and cultural celebrations, food brings people together. It tells stories, preserves traditions, and helps shape our identities. Nutrition Month invites us to reflect on these connections and consider how the foods we eat support not only our physical health, but also our emotional and social well-being.

Dietitians play a key role in helping people "nourish to flourish." As regulated health professionals, they use evidence-based nutrition knowledge to support people across the lifespan. Their work is as diverse as the communities they serve.

In community settings, dietitians help make healthy eating more accessible and inclusive. They may lead cooking programs, attend healthy baby groups, facilitate nutrition education to community groups and school nutrition initiatives. They support families in feeding infants and children, help youth build positive relationships with food, and work with older adults to maintain strength and independence through nutrition. Dietitians also collaborate with community organizations to address food insecurity and advocate for equitable access to nourishing foods. In clinical settings, dietitians assess patient's medical and nutrition needs, and provide nutrition care plans to prevent, manage and treat health conditions.

Cultural connection is another important part of nutrition. Dietitians recognize that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to healthy eating. They work to honour cultural foods and traditions while supporting health goals. Whether it's adapting recipes, planning balanced meals around traditional foods, or helping newcomers navigate nutrition information and food systems, dietitians help people stay connected to their roots while caring for their well-being.

"Nourish to Flourish" also speaks to the connection between food and mental health. Enjoying meals, cooking with others, and maintaining regular eating patterns can positively impact mood, energy, and focus. Dietitians help people cut through nutrition

misinformation and build realistic, sustainable habits that support both body and mind, without guilt or shame.

Nutrition Month is a great time for individuals and communities to get involved. This March, why not celebrate Nutrition Month by trying one of the following;

- Try cooking a new recipe that reflects your culture or heritage
- Share a meal with family, friends, or neighbours
- Learn from a dietitian through workshops or online resources
- Explore local food programs or community kitchens
- Reflect on how food supports your health and connection to others

When we think about nourishment in a broader sense (physical, emotional, cultural, and social), we begin to see how food helps us flourish in every area of life.

This March, as we celebrate Nutrition Month across Canada, let's recognize the dedication of dietitians who work every day to support healthier communities. And let's take time to appreciate the power of food, not just as fuel, but as a source of connection, culture, comfort, and growth.

Because when we nourish ourselves and one another, we all have the opportunity to flourish.

Check out UnlockFood.ca to find a new recipe to try this month.
https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Recipes.aspx.

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