



Hamilton

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As a role model for active children in Hamilton, I am pleased to announce that the City of Hamilton has online resources to support the healthy eating efforts of active Hamilton children and their families.

Young children need a variety of nutrients to be active. They need:

- Enough water for body function and to prevent dehydration;
- Sufficient food energy (calories) for exercise, growth, and maintenance of a healthy body;
- Carbohydrate as the main fuel source;
- Protein for growth, and to build and repair body tissues;
- Vitamins and minerals for energy production, bone health, immune function, muscle development and repair, and protection from oxidative damage.

Often, the snacks sold or given out at sporting events are highly processed foods that lack a variety of nutrients and have too much sugar, sodium or saturated fat. Sport snacks should emphasize vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and protein foods with healthy fats. These wholesome foods that align with Canada's Food Guide give children the nutrients they need to grow well, play for longer, stay more alert, recover more quickly from physical activity, and develop healthy eating behaviours that will last a lifetime.

Children learn about healthy eating at home and at school. Offering water and healthy foods at community sport events gives adults the chance to role model healthy eating for sport and reinforces home and school lessons.

For these reasons and more, I encourage all coaches and parents of children in community sport in Hamilton to use the online resources to create a healthy eating culture within your team or league. Visit www.hamilton.ca/allstarsnacks to learn more.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health