

Eating healthy and fresh during COVID-19 isolation

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Technology has changed everyone's life but when it comes to food, the basics still hold.

Given the fact commercial refrigerators were not available for home purchase until 1913, families were careful to stock items that would weather the winter.

With today's families having to make sure they have what they need to cover a two-week home isolation, the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit has some helpful tips.

"First off, it's important to prepare during COVID-19, but not to panic buy or hoard more than you need when grocery shopping. This ensures everyone has all the supplies they need," says health unit communications officer Chandra Tremblay.

When it comes to 'essentials' to have on hand if self-isolating for 14 days, there are a variety of nutritious items available that also come with a longer shelf-life, she continues.

When it comes to vegetables, beets, carrots, parsnips, turnip, potatoes, yams, cabbage squash and onions tend to last the longest.

Fruits such as apples, melons, oranges and grapefruit likewise have a longer shelf-life.

Another option is to freeze fresh fruits and vegetables, blanching them first in boiling water for a few minutes then flash cooling them in ice water. Make sure to store in tightly sealed containers such as zip lock freezer bags.

Whole grains like rice, couscous, quinoa, dry pasta, noodles and granola are very versatile and, when stored in air-tight containers, can last quite a long time.

Freezing enough meat for two weeks is not an option for everyone and it can also be quite expensive. Tremblay suggests complimenting this with a wide range of other protein choices such as tinned fish, low-sodium canned stews, yogurt, eggs, cheese, plant-based beverages, canned and dried beans, chickpeas, lentils, nuts, seeds and nut butters.

Of course, there is always the good, old standard - the humble potato.

Potatoes have the best bang for the buck as they can be baked, boiled, roasted or grilled, added to soups and casseroles or turned into potato salad or fries. If stored properly, they can keep for up to four months.

Those seeking information on how to eat well on a budget should check out

www.unlockfood.ca.

The site – formerly EatRightOntario.ca – offers information on nutrition, food and healthy eating written and reviewed by Canadian dietitians, as well as recipes, videos and interactive healthy eating tools.