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Champion COMMUNITY Page

You are what you eat

Eat Smart program offers healthy choices

By **WILMA BLOKHUIS**
 Special to The Champion

Eat smart and make healthy choices about what you eat, and where you eat it is the message being sent by the Halton Regional Health Department in its new food program.

Given that average Canadians spend more than one-third of their food budget on dining out and take-out meals, and that 85 per cent of Canadians consider nutrition an important factor in their food choices, Halton Region is launching its Eat Smart restaurant program.

First launched in Toronto with 200 participating restaurants during its Good Food Festival in May, Eat Smart is Ontario's new healthy restaurant program currently being introduced across the province. Halton is among the first municipalities to launch Eat Smart.

The goal of Eat Smart, said Dr. Robert Nosal, Halton's medical officer of health, is to contribute to the reduction of chronic disease such as heart disease and cancer, and food-borne illnesses in the region.

"With the average Canadian eating out about five times a week, restaurants are ideal places to support healthy lifestyle change by increasing access to safe, nutritious food in non-smoking environments," said Dr. Nosal.

"Halton's Eat Smart program will identify local restaurants that have done that little bit extra to support the health of their customers."

Participation by restaurants in Eat Smart is voluntary. Participating restaurants are identified by Eat Smart logo stickers on their main entrances.

More than 75 restaurant owners and chefs attended Wednesday's healthy breakfast launch of Eat Smart at the Halton Region Auditorium, where they were informed of the three criteria for this designation.

The three requirements for an Eat Smart restaurant designation are: offering healthy food choices, safety in food handling, and 15 per cent more non-smoking seating than required by local bylaws.

Local bylaws require restaurants in Oakville, Burlington and Milton to provide 70 per cent non-smoking seating — Eat Smart increases that requirement to 85 per cent. (Only in Burlington does the non-smoking seating drop to 50 per cent after 9 p.m., dropping the Eat Smart requirement to 65 per cent.)

In Halton Hills, where the non-smoking bylaw is under review, the requirement is 25 per cent non-smoking. However, under the Eat Smart criteria, non-smoking seating cannot be below 50 per cent.

"Halton's Eat Smart program will identify local restaurants that have done that little bit extra to support the health of their customers."

DR. ROBERT NOSAL



Corporate chef Chris Klugman joined Halton Regional Health Department officials and restaurant owners at the recent kick-off to Ontario's Eat Smart program.

Photo by **BARRIE ERSKINE**

In Toronto, 80 per cent of all seating in its Eat Smart restaurants is non-smoking, and several participating establishments are smoke free, according to the city's Eat Smart dining guide, the first published in Ontario.

"Non-smoking is an essential part of the Eat Smart program," said Chris Klugman, corporate chef for the Liberty Entertainment Group, which includes the Rosewater Supper Club, Left Bank, and Courthouse in Toronto. He's known for his 'fresh market' and low-fat 'enlightened' cuisine.

"I know this upsets the Ontario Restaurant Association, but not

smoking is an essential element of promoting public health," said Mr. Klugman who quit smoking about three years ago.

In a perfect world, all Eat Smart restaurants would be non-smoking, but he added, "I recognize market reality, and we've adjusted our non-smoking seating requirement to local bylaws." A few years ago, when the City of Toronto attempted to introduce a smoking ban in restaurants — which caused an uproar among restaurant operators — Mr. Klugman was chef at a restaurant which supported the ban.

• see **SMART** on page 10

Here's what's on the Eat Smart menu

For a restaurant to become an Eat Smart dining establishment, the following menu options should be available at no extra charge, according to Toronto's Eat Smart Dining Guide.

Diners can ask for:

- milk for coffee and tea instead of cream
- gravies, sauces and salad dressings served on the side whenever possible
- butter, margarine, and other spreads served on the side or not used in the foods you order
- calorie-reduced or fat-free salad dressings
- a substitute for French fries when served as part of an entrée
- vegetable sticks, salad, potato or rice instead of

French fries in a child's meal

- removal of visible fat from meat and skin of poultry
- information about recipe ingredients, whenever possible
- a menu for smaller appetites and/or half-portion of regular menu items.

In addition, food safety standards must be met, and restaurants must employ at least one employee certified in safe food handling in the kitchen.

The Halton Regional Health Department is offering four full-day Food Safety Certification Program courses next year in Oakville (Feb. 10 and Nov. 9), Milton (June 14) and Georgetown (Sept. 20), call 825-6060, ext. 7415.

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COGECO 14 Programming Schedule — November 16th - November 22nd, 1999

| Tuesday, November 23rd | Wednesday, November 24th | Thursday, November 25th | Sunday, November 28th | Monday, November 29th |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 10am, 11am, 12pm Plugged In! Encore | 10am, 11am, 12pm Plugged In! Encore | 10am, 11am, 12pm Plugged In! Encore | 4pm, 5pm, 6:30pm Plugged In - Week in Review | 10am, 11am, 12pm Plugged In! Encore |
| 5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In! | 5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In! | 5:30pm, 6:30pm, 7:30pm Plugged In! | 4:30pm The Local Scene | 5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In! |
| 6:00pm Seniors Showcase | 6:00pm Cable in the Classroom | 6:00pm The Local Scene | 5:30pm Seniors Showcase | 6:00pm We Will Remember Them |
| 7:00pm Money Week | 7:00pm Swap Talk - Live | 7:00pm The issue is.. | 6:30 pm Georgetown Santa Claus Parade | 7:00pm Living On the Edge |
| 8:00pm Halton Hills Council | 8:00pm Milton Council | 8:00pm Halton Region Council | | 8:00pm SportsZONE Live |

Feature this week: How do financial markets affect you? Watch "Money Week" - Tuesday, 7 pm.