

Health Unit Media Release

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Health Unit concerned that almost 61% of Tri-County Residents do not eat enough Vegetables and Fruit.

March is Nutrition Month. The goal of this year's campaign is to encourage people to eat more vegetables and fruit. The nutrients in vegetables and fruit can help prevent many chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer. However, the 2007/2008 Canadian Community Health Survey showed that **nearly 61% of people living in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark do not consume enough.**

This year's campaign provides practical tips about how to make vegetables and fruit part of your family's meals and snacks. **"The best way to increase your intake of vegetables and fruit is to take small, simple steps.** Try adding vegetables and fruit to the meals and snacks that your family already eats" says Dianne Oickle, a Registered Dietitian at the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. **"When looking at your lunch or dinner plate, half of your plate should be covered with vegetables"** suggests Oickle.

Eating vegetables and fruit can be done on a budget. "Buying produce in season or frozen can help you save money" explains Oickle. Growing your own vegetables and fruit, or joining a community garden are also good options. If you have a garden, grow an extra row of vegetables and donate it to the food bank as many food banks do not have access to fresh vegetables and fruit.

If you are left wondering where to start, the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit has resources that can help. **Contact the Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian.** Visit the Health Unit website at www.healthunit.org/nutrition and find out how you can get a free grocery tote bag, quantities are limited so act now.

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