

THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

OCTOBER 2017
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 10

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Little Miss Pumpkin!

Pet Poisons

The Spookiest Part of Halloween

Pumpkin Lasagna?

Who Would Have Thought!

Does Your Child Put Others First?

Teaching Our Kids Humility

Crazy for Coconut Oil

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On The Cover



Ariya was full of fun and full of twirls - just right for a tutu shot! She's always on the move, and the last place she wanted to stay was right in front of our photographer's camera. Thank you to Little Labels Boutique for our cover kid's cute outfit.

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If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at 519.652.9226 or at editor@themomandcaregiver.com.

THE MOM & CAREGIVER is published by Anibas Productions Limited, Publications Mail, Agreement Number 40834037 PO Box 29118, London, ON N6K 4L9 - www.themomandcaregiver.com

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LOVE AND HOPE THIS THANKSGIVING



"If you want to turn your life around, try thankfulness. It will change your life mightily." **Gerald Good**

We're in my kitchen on a mild September day. The leaves are starting to tumble to the ground outside, and there's that smell of fall in the air (somehow it's a mixture of crisp air, earthy ground and apples). Our assistant editor, Melissa, is rockin' her new yellow giraffe-print apron, and is ready to make one of her family's favourite seasonal treats - pumpkin scones. They're a mixture of pumpkin, spices, flour, brown sugar, buttermilk, butter and egg, and they're drizzled with a yummy cinnamon-y glaze. We'll be sure to share the full recipe on our Facebook page this month.

But, we're always left with extra pumpkin, and a question mark in our heads about how to use it. Well, cookbook author Carolyn Hemming comes to the

rescue this October with a truly harvest-worthy dish - pumpkin lasagna. You can flip to page 22 to cook up this delicious recipe tonight!

The autumn harvest time is truly my favourite season of the year. At my house, we're excited for Thanksgiving and Halloween this month, as I'm sure all of your little turkeys and goblins are as well. We talk after-Halloween dental care with brushing and flossing tips for the kids from Dr. Agrawal of Southwood Dental on page 13.

I have to admit I had a pat-on-the-back proud parenting moment after reading Frankly Fatherhood's column about instilling our kids with a sense of humility. I was overcome with pride that we have raised our son to think of others before

himself, to be aware of others' needs and feelings, and to be grateful for what he has, at Thanksgiving, and all through the year! Give me a break - I'm trying to stay humble here guys (wink, wink).

Although October brings so much to be thankful for, from delicious and healthy food (hello spaghetti squash!) to little ones dressed in their Halloween finest, we're aware that many right now are struggling. Our hope here at *The Mom & Caregiver* magazine is that those who have suffered natural disasters or personal troubles can find hope and love this Thanksgiving season. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers, as it helps others to understand that they're not alone.



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OCTOBER EVENTS

10/2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Londonlicious Pub Edition Various locations	2 Storytime LPL, Central	3 The Preschool at Crouch LPL, Crouch	4 The Occupy Musical Wolf Performance Hall	5 Shaken Not Stirred: The Music of James Bond Grand Theatre	6 FC London Cove Road	7 The Dark Horse London Music Club
8 Imagination Station Museum London	9 Thanksgiving at the Village Fanshawe Pioneer Village	10 QUINTET Talbot Street Church Atrium	11 The Wiggles Centennial Hall	12 Thursday Evening Tour Eldon House	13 Oct. 13-15 London Comic Con Western Fair District	14 Oct. 13-29 The Midnight Village: Donnellys After Dark Fanshawe Pioneer Village
15 Oct. 13-Nov. 5 Pumpkin Fest Great Lakes Farms	16 Storytime LPL, Central	17 Oct. 17-Nov. 4 Once Grand Theatre	18 Symphonic Band - Co- lours and Contrasts Western Music Building	19 Euchre Tournament Innovation Works	20 Veterans' Classic The Raceway at Western Fair	21 Let it Be Budweiser Gardens
22 Giant Fall Book Sale Western Fair	23 Oct. 23-Nov. 4 The Daisy Theatre Grand Theatre	24 Oct. 21-30 Storyspook Village Storybook Gardens	25 Playgroup LPL, Byron	26 Oct. 26-29 Forest City Film Festival Wolf Performance Hall	27 Choral Celebrations: Celebrating 150 First St. Andrew's Church	28 Saturday Morning Walk Reservoir Park
29 Afternoon Tea The Tea Lounge	30 Storytime LPL, Central	31 Halloween Costume Party LPL, Central	For More Details and Events Visit  Your Online Parenting Resource			

October 9
Thanksgiving at the Village
Fanshawe Pioneer Village

Oct. 13-Nov. 5
Pumpkin Fest
Great Lakes Farms

October 21
Let it Be
Budweiser Gardens

October 22
Giant Fall Book Sale
Western Fair

Oct. 21-30
Storyspook Village
Storybook Gardens

Oct. 31
Halloween Costume Party
LPL, Central

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BUILDING STRONG BRAINS

Did you know that much of who your little person is and will become stems from their brain? In fact, who you are today and what you do – your skills, how you interact in relationships, your emotional reactions, and how you experience and perceive things in your environment – stems from your brain. Your brain is a product of each and every experience you’ve had since you were born. That’s right, since birth your brain has been shaped by your experiences to become what it is today.

The brain develops from the bottom up. The lower brain, which is responsible for

keeping us alive, is the first to develop. It handles breathing, digestion, heartbeat, and safety (running away from danger, fight for our life, or freeze).

The upper brain develops last. It’s responsible for our higher functions – language, problem solving, social skills, compassion, emotional regulation, creativity, etc. At birth, an infant’s brain has over 200 billion brain cells but few connections. Connections are created by experiences. Every experience with you, their caregiver, creates a new connection in your child’s brain!

Because your baby’s upper brain has very few connections, their lower brain is in the driver’s seat. Have you stopped to think about why we instinctually pick up, rock, and sooth a crying baby? We know that babies can’t regulate themselves because it’s an upper brain function, which has not yet been developed. In fact, this part of the brain isn’t fully developed until well into our 20s! Every time you soothe your baby, synaptic connections fire in your baby’s brain and start wiring-up the upper areas of the brain responsible for regulation. Every time you help your baby with their big feelings, that connection fires again. The more times it fires, the

stronger the connection becomes. The stronger the connection, the more likely your child will develop and use that skill.

Who do you want your child to become? What skills do you want them to develop? Do you want them to be a considerate friend? To be aware of and regulate their feelings? To manage stress and challenges in the world?

Consider how much time you spend providing experiences to help create and strengthen connections in these areas in your child’s brain. Just like learning to regulate requires your help by soothing their

big feels (and yes, this includes tantrums, whining, crying, arguing, etc.), how your child learns to handle disappointment, respond to a friend’s distress, show respect to others, and learn to read and write is highly dependent on you modeling and providing those experiences.

So, take a moment, think about who you want your child to become, and then take the time to provide those experiences and start wiring a strong and healthy brain! 🧠

Rebecca Cuthbert, M.Ed Counseling Psychology, RP
Vanier Children’s Services



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Newborn - Baby - Toddler

LOTS OF KIDS GET NOSEBLEEDS

Nosebleeds are common in children. The nasal septum, which is the wall between our two nostrils, is rich in blood vessels. Local irritation or trauma can lead to nosebleeds.

Nose picking is a frequent cause. Colds and allergies can also result in nosebleeds. Excessive nose blowing or sneezing can raise the pressure in the veins within the nasal passages to the point of causing them to pop, then bleed. Other less likely causes of nosebleeds are a foreign body, nose injury, nasal polyps or a bleeding condition such as hemophilia.

Stopping nosebleeds is simple. Squeeze the two sides of the soft part of the nose above the nostrils and below the hard, bony part. Let your child sit with head tilted slightly forward to avoid blood flowing into the back of the throat. Firm pressure should be applied for a minimum of 10-15 minutes. Try to pass this time by distracting your child with television or a book. Avoid picking, sniffing or blowing the nose for the next several hours.

When is a nosebleed concerning? If bleeding doesn't stop in 20 minutes, you should seek medical attention, as further treatment might be required. Nosebleeds can be recurrent too. If your child has many severe nosebleeds, bleeding from other places, or easy bruising, speak to your child's doctor. The nosebleeds may signify an underlying medical condition.

Nosebleeds can seem scary but are generally harmless. The blood lost usually appears much more than in reality. Ensuring the nasal septum is moistened can prevent most nosebleeds. Using lubricating creams or ointments can help too. A humidifier can be used if the environment in your home is very dry. Nosebleeds tend to occur less frequently as your child gets older. 🧡

Becky Biqi Chen was a resident in general pediatrics for three years at the Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre. She is currently specializing in pediatric gastroenterology during her fellowship at the British Columbia Children's Hospital.

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PUBERTY IN BOYS

Every stage of growth and development has challenges and rewards. Puberty is one stage of development that’s often more maligned than celebrated. Puberty in boys is often given much less attention than puberty in girls.

Puberty is the transition from being a child to a teenager and then to an adult. It may take several years to complete and involves a number of physical and emotional changes. The Canadian Pediatric Society (www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/information_for_boys_about_puberty) offers the following talking points to share with your son about what to expect during puberty:



- Your body shape may start to change as more muscle tissue forms.
- You will become taller, develop more muscles and your shoulders will get broader. Boys can grow anywhere from two to eight inches (five to 20 centimetres) in one year. Boys often have their growth spurt later than girls.
- Hair begins to grow around your genitals and your scrotum (the soft pouch underneath your penis that holds your testicles). It will also grow on your chest, arms, legs, armpits and face.
- Your testicles will start to make tiny cells called sperm. The sperm is the male reproductive cell. If a sperm joins an egg from the female after sexual intercourse, a pregnancy can happen.
- Semen is a mix of sperm and other fluids that leave your penis when you ejaculate. Likely, the first time you ejaculate you will be sleeping. When you are dreaming you will have an erection (your penis becomes hard) and you will ejaculate. This is called a “wet dream.”
- In the last phase of puberty, your growth spurt will slow down. You will reach your adult height, your genitals will reach their adult size and you may develop more body hair.
- More sweat. Since sweat can cause body odour, it helps to take a bath or shower every day.
- Some boys develop acne (pimples). Washing your face in the morning and at night with regular fragrance-free soap and water is important. If you do get pimples, acne lotions, creams and special soaps may help. If they don’t work, talk to your doctor about other treatments.

• Your voice will change. Sometimes it cracks as it gets lower. This is because your larynx (voice box) is growing.

• Attractions. Many people start to be attracted to and think romantically about others during this time.

These changes can be confusing. Open communication can make a difference to making the transition a smooth one. 🗨️

Dr. Bhooma Bhayana is a family physician in London and the mother of two young men and grandmother of one lovely princess! She continues to find wonder and enjoyment in family practice despite more than 30 years on the job!

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TEACHING OUR KIDS HUMILITY

A few weeks ago, I overheard a mom encouraging her son at the sidelines of the soccer pitch. She said he was the best soccer player on the field and that he should be dominating the ball at all times. The cheering that followed was riddled with high praise and tips on how to conquer the game ... and it worked! Her son played aggressively and scored more than the other kids. I held my tongue and willed for her to consider that the kids playing were only three to five years old.

It dawned on me that, in recent decades, much of our parenting focus has been on boosting our children's self-esteem – and rightfully so! Kids with a healthy sense of self-esteem are better equipped in dealing with life's roller coaster of emotions. They feel valued and important, and are willing to take risks. They are able to face new challenges, cope with mistakes and frustration, and take pride in their accomplishments. But, how much praise is too much? At what point does a healthy self-esteem turn into self-centredness, and a sense of superiority?

I believe it's equally important that we instil our kids with a sense of humility. Humility is simply teaching our kids to think of others ahead of themselves. Humble kids are more aware of others' needs and feelings, are grateful to those around them, and encourage others to succeed alongside them.

If we want our kids to do well in life, I think it's important for them to recognize their own strengths and use those strengths to help others around them. It's the basis for true

leadership, for being part of a team, and for working collaboratively. These skills are highly valued in today's workforce.

So how do we teach our kids to be humble? A quick google search helped me put together a few points:

- Consistent modeling – after all, we are their first teachers
- Focus on effort rather than accomplishment
- Value your kids for all things not just achievements, looks and abilities
- Volunteer with them
- Teach them to serve others before themselves
- Teach them to give thanks and to apologize
- Teach them how to compliment others for their achievements

As my attention focused back on the soccer field, I could tell my son was trying his best and getting frustrated. After the game, I told him of how well he played and that scoring goals isn't the only thing that makes you a good soccer player. We talked about how practice and hard work are what makes you better. His response was, "I'm going to practice more so I can beat that boy at soccer."

Sigh, I never said this would be easy! 🌀

Frank Emanuele is a proud father of two sons and special education teacher for the local public school board. When not parenting or educating, Frank enjoys cooking, photography, movies and video games.

It's not always easy to teach kids how to brush and floss properly. Here are a few things you can do to encourage kids to want to brush and how to teach them to do it properly.

Teach them the "why"

As any parent knows "because I said so" is rarely a compelling reason for a kid to want to do something. Instead, teach them why it's important to keep their teeth clean. Keep it simple. Tell them how "sugar bugs" will make holes in their teeth if they don't brush them off.

Set a good example

Kids model parents' behaviour. If you want your kids to make brushing a regular habit, be sure you're doing so yourself – and let them see you.

Round and round they go

Teach your child the proper brushing motion by telling them to brush in a circular motion, like the wheels of a car, rather than scrubbing bath and forth.

Inspire healthy competition!

Kids love competitions. Inspire them to brush well by encouraging them to try to make more bubbles than you with their toothpaste!

Get them involved

Allow your child to choose his own toothbrush and toothpaste. Being a part of the process will encourage your child to brush regularly.

These tips will help you to encourage your child to brush regularly, developing good habits to last a lifetime. And don't forget to praise for a job well done! 🌀

Dr. Sanjay Agrawal and his team strive to provide compassionate, comprehensive and comfortable dental care to all of their patients, especially the kids.



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An open letter from Myra Hueniken.

With over 1,600 realtors in the London area, how do you get the right ones helping you? While there are lots of opinions, what's important is the experience you'll be part of.

Most of our clients have already worked with us before, or are a friend of someone who has. Year after year, 85 per cent of our business is from return clients and referrals from people we know.

We care about our clients' well-being and real estate success just as we would for a member of the family. As realtors, we do for you everything we would do for ourselves or someone we love. And, we don't do anything we wouldn't do for ourselves or someone we love.

So, you will never get the sense that we want the sale to go through more than you do – it must be right for you.

We care and know about the things that are important to our clients – from neighbourhoods to negotiations. We apply our knowledge and experience, attention to detail, creativity, and problem-solving skills uniquely for each client. Oh, and we also have fun!

Christine and I communicate regularly. We talk about better ways to serve our clients and share new ideas and information that one of us has come across. Our business has evolved over the years by both anticipating change and responding to it. This, and the wonderful people we meet, continue to make our business an enjoyable and engaging experience. We have earned a very positive reputation in the industry, and you can be sure this helps our clients in many practical and meaningful ways.

We both chose this career. We are in it for the long term and we are in it with excellence always in mind. Christine's 31 years of full-time experience, my 23 years of full time experience, and our 20-year partnership are here to help you. Yes, we both win Re/Max awards but that's not how we measure success. We measure it through the relationships we build and the kind words of our clients.

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The Arctic in Ottawa at the Canadian Museum of Nature

The True North Strong and Free has new meaning, or it should after a visit to the Canadian Museum of Nature's newest permanent exhibit, Arctique, in the Canada Goose Arctic Gallery in Ottawa. "What happens here, doesn't stay here" is the show's theme. While the uninformed deny the impact of global climate change, the Arctic is showing signs of stress. This exhibit shows visitors, up close and personal, what there is to lose.

First visitors walk through Beyond Ice, a multi-media 'ice' and cold air experience – film images are projected on triangular-shaped pieces introducing us to a landscape few have experienced personally. Then, we're hit with the familiar: life-sized stuffed polar bear, caribou, muskox and a beluga whale. Touch real fur of seals and polar bear and see

products made from the Arctic's natural resources. Through video, meet the people of the North, their industries, lifestyle and clothing.

Birds, plants and even aquariums filled with living fish, including Arctic Cod from the Vancouver Aquarium, offer a glimpse into biodiversity. Kids can fold paper boats at the activity centre surrounded by artifacts from the failed Sir John Franklin expedition 170 years ago.

But if you're looking for something creepier, especially in October, head two floors down to the Nature Live exhibit and get nose to nose with giant beetles, fist-sized snails, tarantulas and, my favourite, hissing cockroaches. Small terrariums let you warm up to these tropical crawlers after a visit to the frozen tundra. (www.nature.ca)



Sherri Telenko is a freelance writer and blogger living in Southern Ontario. Sign up for travel and trail riding ideas at www.horsetrotting.net or follow her on twitter @SherriTelenko.

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In October, we celebrate National Foster Family Week. We'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the enormous contribution that families who foster children make to our community and the positive impact they have on the lives of children and families.

Thank you for leading with your heart. Thank for your flexibility. Thank you for understanding that parenting within a 'system' is hard for everyone and is sometimes very frustrating.

Thank you for transitioning our children into your home and treating them like your own, while also understanding that their life story means they will have many unique needs and reactions, and being a child in care also means we will have higher expectations of you.

Thank you for supporting the children who leave your home. For letting them know they will be missed and remembered and how sad you are to see them go – how saying good-bye is hard – while also giving permission for them to be very excited to go home.

Being a Caregiver for our children in care is complicated. Our children are complicated, our system is complicated, and your emotions will be complicated.

The one thing that is not complicated is that, by leading with your heart, and taking the risk to love our children and honour their family, you will be giving each child a life experience that will be part of them forever.

You and your family will have experiences that will change you forever as well. Your heart will break and stretch and grow, and you will learn much more than you thought possible. You will be exhausted and you will be invigorated. You will be challenged and you will challenge. You will make a difference. 🐾

Sincerely,
Children's Aid Society of London & Middlesex

If you are a family that fosters we owe you our gratitude. If you know a family that fosters give them some thanks. If you are considering fostering, give us a call at 519-455-9000 x2777 or send an email to info@caslondon.on.ca

Pet Therapy Helps Emotional and Physical Healing

The magical bond between humans and animals is a healing one. Animals are a source of protection and companionship, and become family. Animals also force us to become self-aware in regards to our tone and body language.

Who benefits from pet therapy?

Pet therapy can be useful in treating adults and children with depression, anxiety, panic disorder or social phobias. The touch and comfort of a dog can let them feel safe to talk about their emotions.

What are the benefits?

Physical: Studies have shown that therapeutic contact with animals lowers blood pressure and reduces heart rate.

Emotional: Researchers discovered that people who engage in positive interactions with animals have higher levels of the "feel good" chemicals dopamine and serotonin, which regulate mood, combat depression, reduce anxiety and allow us to remain calm in stressful situations.

Social: Pet therapy can bring people out of their shell. Animals provide a safe avenue for people to explore the basic human need for touch. Petting a dog can be both comforting and calming. Animals are non-judgmental and affectionate.

Cognitive: It helps reduce stress and anxiety, which have positive effects on our decision making. This allows you to make a calm, carefully measured and rational decision instead of panicking and reacting to stressful events. Dogs improve our self-awareness because they instantly react to our moods and give immediate feedback. Learning to connect with a dog using an approach other than intimidation and violence is rewarded with the animal's trust and loyalty.

Work site puppy love

I breed mental health dogs and, as part of their training, we often bring them to work sites. This allows the dogs to be touched and feel good in public with different people. For employees, it gives them a break and often facilitates a sense of community to enhance team building and resolve interpersonal conflicts that interfere with productivity.

If you want to give pet therapy a try, my therapy dog Boomer is always there to make you feel safe exploring your emotional world. 🐾

Emily Beeckmans is educated as a social worker and is a trauma specialist. As a private practitioner, she strives to educate clients and the public about the importance of emotional health and well-being. Emily offers you a safe place to dig into your thoughts, feelings and life choices.



**Foster Dreams,
Adopt Hope**

To learn more about fostering and adoption,
call **519 455 9000, x2777**, or visit www.caslondon.on.ca

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La Société d'aide à l'enfance
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Making Your House A Home

Pet Poisons: The Spookiest Part of Halloween



Whether an athlete, superhero, or pumpkin, the best part of autumn is seeing our furry friends dressed up in pet costumes! Pet owners know their dogs and cats are members of their families, so it only make sense to also include them in our fall activities, such as trick-or-treating. While autumn brings many opportunities to celebrate with our furry family members, there are also dangers that arise at this time of year.

The biggest risk surrounding Halloween is chocolate ingestion. Chocolate is toxic because neither dogs nor cats can metabolize the chemicals or caffeine in its ingredients. Dark chocolate is most potent, but even a small amount of any chocolate can quickly cause illness. Dogs, in particular, seem to love sweet treats and would happily enjoy your child's Halloween haul. Children who aren't aware of the risk may

unknowingly leave candy and wrappers in accessible areas, or may even feel generous enough to share!

However, chocolate isn't the only pet poison common in the fall; many dangerous foods can also be found at the Thanksgiving table. Your dog or cat may be eager to get a helping of leftovers, but common ingredients like onions, garlic, and raisins have toxic effects, while dairy products and fatty foods do not agree with their tummies (often leading to "explosive" consequences!). Bones and corn cobs are the biggest dangers. These items are often given as chew toys but often lead to foreign body surgeries. This happens when a piece of the item breaks off, is ingested, and becomes stuck inside the digestive tract. No yummy treat is worth that amount of damage!

Year round, there are other common culprits of toxicity in pets. The ingestion of human drugs (including, frequently, marijuana) or improper administration of veterinary medication can have a wide range of symptoms and can be particularly dangerous. If your pet ingests anything risky, seek veterinary advice immediately before the item has a chance to digest.

Storing these items properly and getting the whole family involved are the best ways to reduce risk. With everyone's help, your furry family member can still come trick-or-treating door-to-door, but the veterinarian will be one stop you won't have to make! 🐾

Dr. I. Wonder is here to answer your questions regarding your furry family members. If you have a question, email it to us at brent@NeighbourhoodPetClinic.com. Our team at Neighbourhood Pet Clinic will tap into their collective experience to answer your questions.



Crazy for Coconut Oil

Beauty and Wellness

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Coconut oil is not only delicious, it's a secret beauty elixir with many uses! With transformative properties that provide protective, reparative, anti-aging, anti-bacterial, hydrating and energy boosting benefits, coconut oil is a must-have in every household. It's also inexpensive and long-lasting. Perfect for those who want to enjoy beauty on a budget!

In the kitchen

Coconut oil is a healthier and tastier choice to cook and bake with, and provides incredible benefits to your health and well-being. Try adding a tablespoon to your coffee or smoothie to support your digestive system, transform fat into energy, and boost your immune system.

Exfoliate

Keep your skin looking refreshed and renewed with a quick exfoliation cocktail using brown sugar and coconut oil. Apply to dry skin, rinse with warm water and pat dry to preserve moisture. Use this yummy treatment once or twice per week to get rid of dead skin cells and add an instant glow from head to toe.

Skin conditioner

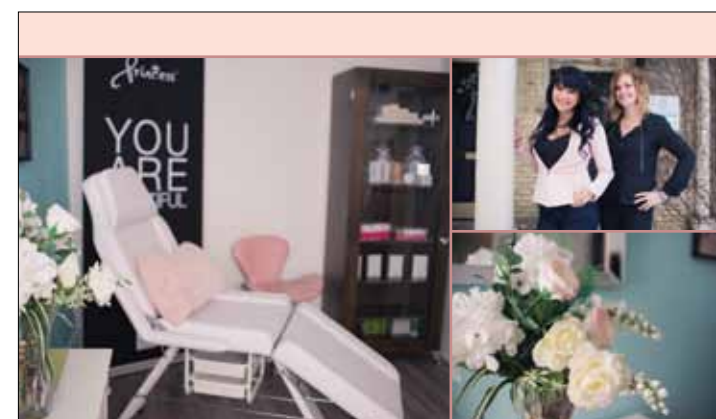
Coconut oil is an amazing face and body moisturizer and has a unique way of hydrating and protecting the skin. A little goes a long way, and because of its natural properties, our skin can absorb the benefits and take what it needs without leaving a heavy residue.

Hair mask

Coconut oil performs beautifully on the hair and scalp. It helps prevent damage, protect and strengthen, stimulate hair growth, and treat psoriasis. Apply on dry hair and leave on for 15 minutes. Rinse thoroughly, shampoo twice and follow with conditioner. Your hair and scalp will be purified, beautified and amplified!

Give this nutritious skin-saver a try and enjoy the many benefits of coconut oil from the inside-out! 🐾

Lisa Aquilina is a beauty and wellness professional who strives to help women take care of themselves and support their well-being.



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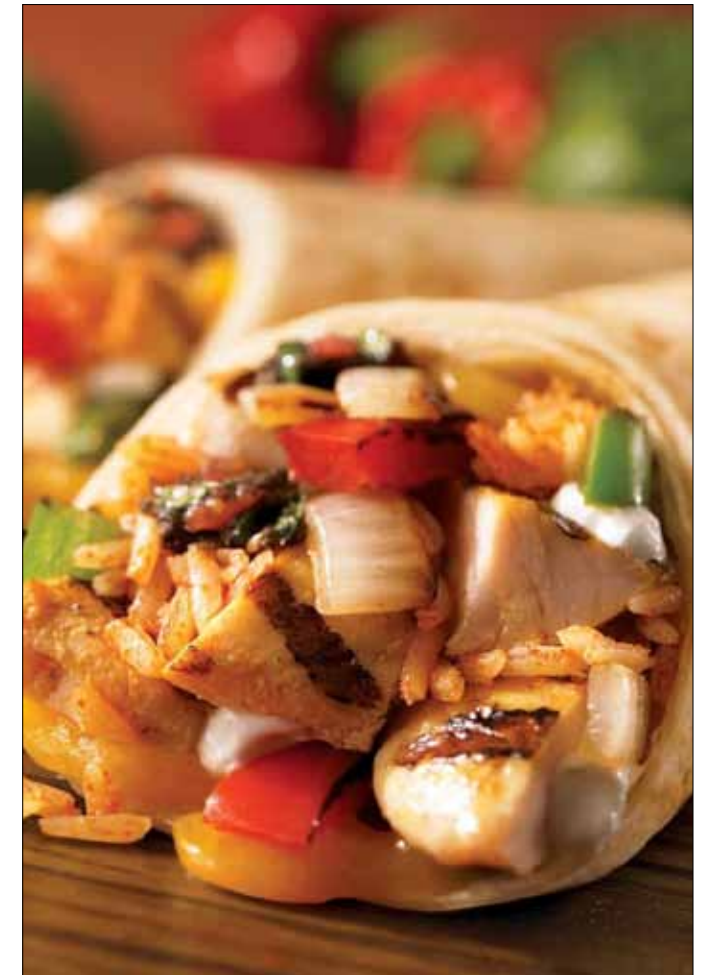
Quick and Easy Weeknight Dinners

Do you find yourself racing from one thing to the next during the week? From after school pick-up to piano lessons to gymnastics to hockey to ... insanity!! The list goes on! But wait, where's dinner?

Here are some quick and tasty tips for those times dinner is on the go – and sometimes in the car!

- Breakfast for dinner! Why not? Spread all natural nut butter on whole grain pancakes or waffles. Make a big batch on the weekends and freeze for the week. Pop them into the toaster to heat up for dinner! Pair with a fruit and low-fat Greek yogurt smoothie for a quick and easy dinner!
- What kid doesn't love food on a stick?! Try lower fat cheese veggie kabobs. Stack cherry tomatoes, cucumber slices, peppers and cubes of their favourite cheese. Pair with whole grain crackers and some unsalted nuts and you have an easy meal. This one's great for nights when dinner is on the road.
- Try a healthy hot pocket – quesadilla-style! Your kids will go crazy for them! Mash some canned beans (I like using black beans), salsa and little shredded lower-fat cheese. Spread onto half of a whole grain tortilla, fold over into a pocket and pop in the microwave to heat until cheese is melted.

While your week may be fast-paced, try to find down time over the weekend. October is a great time to take the kids to an apple orchard or pumpkin picking! Using food to connect with your family can be a powerful way to bond and foster valuable life skills.



Jenn Giurgevich is a Registered Dietitian and contract Professor at Brescia University College with a wealth of nutrition knowledge. Over the last 10 years, Jenn has paired her love for nutrition and health with her undeniable love for fitness, working as both a personal trainer and a fitness instructor.

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WHOLE HEALTH

Autumn returns, marking the time of year when we feast. The summer's hearty, fresh vegetables are again bountiful as we approach cooler weather, family celebrations, and exciting holidays. Don't let a busy schedule get in the way of spectacular family meals. If you rely on a stack of old favourite recipes, look for new ways to incorporate harvest veggies for a flavour twist or to intensify taste – like in this lasagna. Both pumpkin and red peppers are antioxidant-loaded and full of vitamin C, B6 and folate, and the peppers even have heat properties to supercharge your metabolic rate.

The delicious flavours of autumn converge into a nutritional powerhouse in this recipe. This meat-free, vegetable-packed recipe boasts herbed spinach, mushrooms and zesty roasted red pepper tomato sauce in a cheesy and rich lasagna with pumpkin ricotta filling.



Roasted Red Pepper and Pumpkin Lasagna

Serves 6 to 8

2 cups	ricotta cheese
1 can (14 oz)	pure pumpkin purée
2 large	eggs
1 tsp	minced garlic
½ tsp	salt
¼ tsp	ground black pepper
1 Tbsp	grapeseed oil or vegetable oil
1 package (¾ lb)	frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed out
1 package (1 lb)	sliced white mushrooms
1 cup	chopped yellow onion
1½ tsp	herbes de Provence
2	roasted red peppers, seeds and stem removed
1 cup	tomato sauce
1 package (12 oz)	fresh lasagna sheets or no-boil lasagna noodles
2 cups	shredded mozzarella cheese
½ cup	grated Parmesan cheese
2 tsp	chopped fresh parsley

Mix together the ricotta, pumpkin, eggs, garlic, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Set aside.

Heat a large skillet over medium-low heat. Combine the oil, spinach, mushrooms, onion and herbes de Provence in the skillet, and cook until onion is tender, 7 to 10 minutes. Set aside. Purée the roasted red peppers and tomato sauce in a blender until smooth.

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

Assemble the lasagna by placing 2 Tbsp of water in the bottom of a 13- x 9-inch (3.5 L) baking dish. Place a single layer of noodles in the bottom. Cut or break noodles where necessary. Spread half of the spinach mushroom mixture over the noodles. Spread half of the ricotta mixture next, then the roasted red pepper sauce. Repeat the layers once more. Top with the last layer of lasagna sheets and cover with the mozzarella and Parmesan cheese.

Cover with oiled foil (the side next to the cheese) and bake for 45 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for an additional 10 minutes or until the cheese is bubbling and golden. Remove from the oven and let rest before serving. Sprinkle with a touch of chopped parsley.

TIP: To make roasted red peppers, preheat oven to broil. Line a baking sheet with foil and place halved peppers cut side down. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes each side, until blackened, collapsed and wrinkly. Seal roasted peppers in a paper bag and let rest 20 to 30 minutes and easily remove skin and stem. 🌶️

Recipe from: Vegetarian Any Day (Penguin Random House)
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Carolyn Hemming (and co-author, Patricia Green) are the authors of seven bestselling cookbooks in three languages with easy recipes and accessible ingredients. Carolyn is an active mother and businesswoman who lives with her family in London.

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