

York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views

Well here we are with the month of July in full swing. Many of you may not know that July is **National Grilling Month**. Therefore we are going to celebrate by dedicating the July issue of the York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views to Healthy Grilling.

Our family really does enjoy grilling our meals, and many times it is the entire meal we cook on the BBQ. My husband does a great job grilling for our family. Usually we do the tag team approach and I try to do the prep work before he gets home and then once he is home from work he just fires up the grill and takes the prepped food out to the backyard to cook and relax after work. I have to admit, it is sometimes nice to give up some of the control you would have in the kitchen in order to be outside and enjoy with the family. Sometimes control is overrated anyway...

There are many ways that you can turn your BBQ into a flavourful and fun way to cook, but also a healthy way to eat. By choosing food that are low in fat, high in nutrients and full of flavor you can get great meals that are healthy. Grilling meats not only adds that delicious smoky flavor, but most times foods are cooked without adding excessive fats and oils. Think of a delicious seasoned grilled chicken breast served with a delicious summer salad!

Grilling is such a social and welcoming event. There's nothing like a good old BBQ to bring family and friends together. With a simple text message alerting friends that the coals are getting hot, you can soon have a backyard full of people relaxing and talking about their day. We celebrate all of our summer holidays out by the grill.

Food cooked on the grill doesn't have to be meat. Nowadays, there's more to barbecuing than tossing

hunks of meat on the fire. Vegetables and fruit deserve equal rights on the grill, as well as making your backyard cookout more colourful, adding produce to the menu will please vegetarians, as well as carnivores on your guest list.



There are a few basic rules for healthy outdoor grilling. Keeping your grill clean, avoid charring meats, (cooking meats at a high temperature can cause the formation of chemicals that may be linked to some cancers). Choose healthy foods and cook meats at the proper temperature. And remember that grilling doesn't need to be limited to meats – you can cook your vegetables and even some fruits on the BBQ as well.

Here are a few healthy grilling tricks and ideas:

Marinades Here are four ways marinades work their magic:

1. **They add flavor..**
2. **They add moisture.**
3. **They help tenderize**
4. **They reduce the production of potentially cancer-causing compounds in grilled meat.**

For a quick, easy and healthy marinade for beef, chicken or salmon try a good olive oil (Cold pressed) an aged balsamic vinegar, a little salt and pepper to taste. Marinade for a few hours and enjoy.

My family loves fish. An easy and healthy way to cook fish is to place a fish fillet (ie tilapia) on a large sheet of aluminum foil with herbs, a little garlic, some lemon slices or even a splash of white wine. Carefully fold the aluminum foil into a packet and place it on the grill and cook until fish is light and flakey.

Sometimes it's a great idea to Let veggies steal the spotlight.



Portobello caps make excellent mini casseroles. Top with tomato and cheese and grill to a smoky perfection. .

For a healthier version of French fries, spray the inside of an old metal cake/lasagna pan with non stick cooking spray, then scatter thinly cut wedges of raw potatoes in a the pan, brush lightly with olive oil and dust with favourite seasonings. Place the pan on the grill over a low flame and turn the potatoes occasionally until tender and golden brown.

Tomatoes are a great source of vitamins. Try grilling your tomatoes with a little olive oil. Add some parmesan cheese and balsamic vinegar to kick it up a notch.

Our family's favourite vegetable to grill is corn, and it is so easy to prepare. Remove the silk hairs from the end of the husks of corn, do not remove the husks. Soak the corn in water for at least 30 minutes. Then place corn, husks and all on the grill turning occasionally for 10 minutes. Pull back the husks and serve with a light coating of butter and a little salt.

Grill pineapple for dessert. This is so easy. You can use either fresh or canned pineapple. Cut into slices if needed. Place pineapple on med/hot grill and cook them until they are heated through, just a couple of minutes each side. Serve the pineapple rings with some frozen yogurt and a sprinkling of your favourite nuts.

Outdoor grilling can be both healthy and flavourful. But most of all it keeps us where we want to be: Outdoors! So get outside and ENJOY!

Questions or Comments anyone?

Please email me at kerribr@yorku.ca with any questions, comments or healthy recipe ideas. I think we can all work together to and learn from one another in hopes of achieving a our goals.

Kerrienne Brown

“Grilling means good times, good friends, and hopefully, great food.”

Bobby Flay, celebrity chef, restaurateur

