



Healthy4life.ca Newsletter - June 2022 No. 2

Holistic nutrition includes body, mind and spirit. Articles will address each area.

Preserving the Harvest

After growing or purchasing healthy, local, organic foods you will want to preserve them for later use if you have more than you can immediately consume. Many fruits and vegetables do well with any method, boiling water bath canning, freezing, dehydrating or freeze drying. Low acid fruits, vegetables, bone broth, meats and meat products must be pressure canned to be safe. The only exception for meats and fish is dehydrated jerky. If you do not have freezer space, you can do a lot with canning, dehydrating and fermenting. You mind/spirit are in tune with your food.

There are many books, podcasts and videos online to suit every culture and taste.



Boiling Water Bath Canning

This is the most common canning method. It involves packing food in heat proof canning jars, placing the jars in a large pot called a canning kettle with the water level above the jars by at least an inch or 25 mm and then boiling the jars of food for a specific time based on what the food is, the size of the canning jar and the altitude where you live. Checking the seals after the process is finished and then storing the jars in a cool, dark place. There are both hot pack and cold pack recipes.

Pressure Canning

A pressure canner is NOT the same thing as a pressure cooker.

You cannot use a pressure cooker for pressure canning. Pressure canning is the only way to get meat, fish and other low acid foods up to a high enough temperature, for a long enough period of time to make the food safe for storage. 95% of the people I have talked to prefer the All American Pressure Canners. They are however the most expensive.



Dehydrating

This is a method of food preservation that literally dries out the food with minimal heat and air movement through the appliance. Dehydrating inhibits the growth of bacteria, yeasts and mold by removing the water. This is my preferred method for most of my herbs and vegetables. Useful accessories include mesh screen trays and jerky trays.

Fermenting

An ancient method for preserving food, fermenting is a process where microorganisms such as yeast and bacteria convert carbohydrate (starch or sugar) into alcohol or acids which act as a natural preservative. It promotes the growth of probiotic (gut friendly bacteria). I use crocks, pickle pipes, a kraut pounder, various pickle presses and just plain glass canning jars in many sizes depending on the food. You can ferment in jars right on you kitchen counter. This is how you make sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, kombucha, kefir, yogurt and many other items.



Freeze Drying

When you want shelf stable preserved food, freeze drying preserves taste, texture and nutrients better than other methods. Unfortunately the current cost in Canadian dollars for a small home freeze dryer is between \$4000 and \$5000. It is a long term investment.

Freezing

To blanch or not to blanch. Different books and websites make different recommendations for the same foods. Theoretically blanching is to kill enzymes that could affect food quality, taste or texture. Being frugal with my time, I prefer not to blanch unless absolutely necessary. Most fruits and vegetables have turned out fine for me without blanching. You have to be your own guide.



The key step is to freeze foods on a flat sheet pan and transfer it to freezer proof storage bags or containers after the food is totally frozen.



Canning jars come in many sizes. I prefer the wide mouth version for filling, removing food and cleaning. The sizes I use most are 125 ml, 250 ml, 500 ml, 1 l and 1.9 l.

Many past newsletters are available at [2022](#), [2021](#) & [2020](#), [2018](#) & [2019](#) and [2017](#).

**Be healthy 4 lffe,
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