



# Taking Care of Our Health: Preventing Cancer and Chronic Conditions, and Navigating the Medical System

**Rob Rutledge, MD and Gabriela Ilie, PhD**  
Associate Professors



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Newfoundland Indigenous Peoples Alliance and CAP



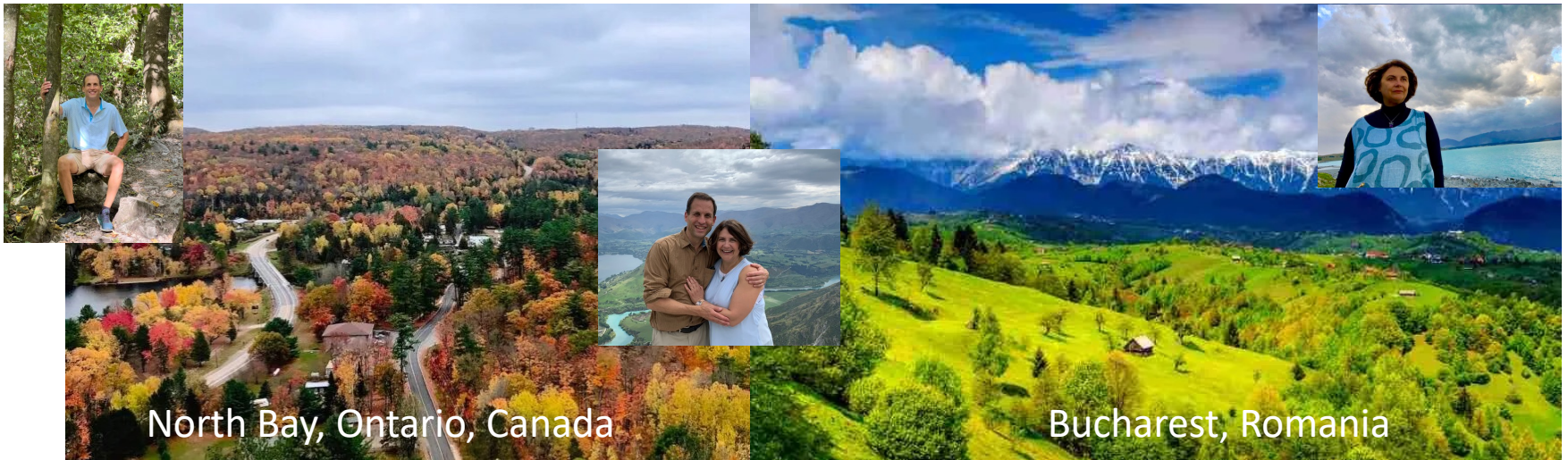


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# Rob and Gabriela



North Bay, Ontario, Canada

Bucharest, Romania

Newfoundland Indigenous Peoples Alliance and CAP





# Agenda



1. Medical System – how to get the best care
2. PEP! Personal/Patient Empower Programs
3. Healthy Habit Hacks
4. Practical Dietary Advice
5. Q+A during and after

Newfoundland Indigenous Peoples Alliance and CAP

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# Complete Cancer Care



- **Understanding what's happening to you**
- **Getting the best from the medical system**
- **Empowering yourself with healthy lifestyle**
  - Exercise, diet, sleep, relaxation techniques
- **Healing the mind**
- **Connecting with community**
- **Remembering spirit**



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## How to get the Best Care from the Medical System



- The Medical System is a human institution – and the providers are human
  - Expressing respect and gratitude usually is helpful
- You can learn set of skills, knowledge, and attitude which will maximize the quality of care you receive
- Each of us are different as are our providers
  - Adapt your approach
- Use what works for you
  - Include your rational mind and your intuition



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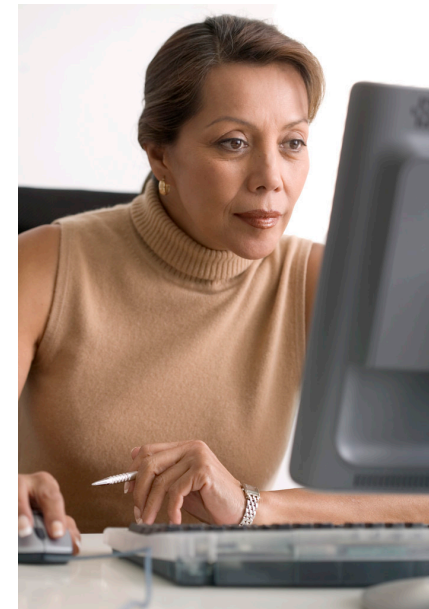
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# Purpose of Information



- Learn to speak the language of the medical system
- Increase your sense of control and well-being
- Help you make the best medical decisions
- Too much information?
  - If information gathering is making you tired
  - If you find conflicting information
- Sources of reliable information – Not for Profits
- You are preparing for your appointments with your physician – to understand and for shared decisions



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# Learn to Advocate for Yourself



- Preparing for each doctor's visit
- Contacting your doctor/nurse if you have questions or concerns
- Drawing on extra services if needed
- Asking for a second opinion if needed



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## Bringing support is a strength, not a weakness



- Bring a trusted person (family member, friend, Elder)
- Their role can include:
  - Taking notes
  - Asking questions when you feel overwhelmed
  - Speaking up if you are dismissed or interrupted
- Let staff know who this person is to you
- You have the right to have someone with you unless there is a clear safety reason not to



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# Before your Doctor's Visit



- Create a concise summary of symptoms
- Bring a list of current medications and allergies
- Write down your questions before the visit
- Someone should accompany you
  - Decide who will make record of the visit
- You may create a file with all your test results
  - You can get a copy by visiting medical records



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# Ask for Clear Explanations



**It is okay to say:**

“I don’t understand—can you explain that differently?”

“What does that mean for me?”

**Ask:**

What are my options?

What happens if I wait or choose not to do this?

What side effects should I expect?

**You can ask providers to slow down or repeat information**



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## At the Visit – You are the most important person in the room



- Be honest and open
- Wait until the summary then ask all your questions
- Take notes or record the interview
- Find out what to expect
- Know what to do for each side effect
  - When do I need to act?
  - Who you should call in case of problems?



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## After the Visit



- Keep a journal and list of results
- If need be, ask for a family conference
- You or a 'family member' may be able to do the talking
- Call to clarify information or ask for appointment
- You are entitled to a second opinion



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## Getting More Care



**Multiple services are available in medical system**

**Nutrition**

**Psychology**

**Home care nursing**

**Indigenous navigation**

**Spiritual care**

**Palliative Care Team**

**Social worker can help coordinate if needed**

**Ask your nurse or doctor**

**Talk to an expert**



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## Disrespect and dismissal are not part of care



- **If something doesn't feel right, you can say:**
  - “I feel like my concerns aren't being taken seriously”
  - “I need more time for this conversation”
- **If it feels unsafe or disrespectful:**
  - Ask to speak with a nurse, social worker, or patient advocate
- **You are allowed to ask for:**
  - A different provider
  - A second opinion



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# Prostate Cancer: PCPEP.org All Cancers: CancerPEP.com Others: PepLife.org



pcpep.org

Home Film/Documentary – EMPOWER PC-PEP Man of the Month About Us PC-PEP Canada  
 PC-PEP New Zealand PC-PEP South Africa Research & Publications Media & Public Engagement  
 Find My Community Health-Equity Initiative (PC-PEP & Movember) Contact Us  
 English (Canada)



## Prostate Cancer Patient EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM



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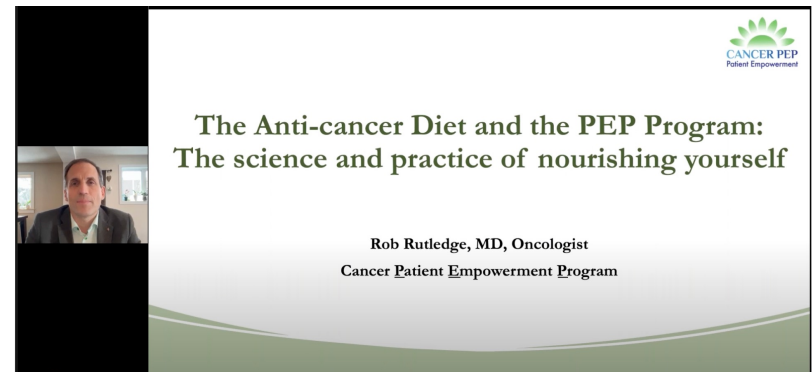
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# Education and Resources upon Sign Up

Referral to support groups and other program

Educational Videos:

- How to navigate medical system
- Overview of the Program
- Anti-cancer diet overview
- How to start an exercise program
- Supporting Men in Building Connection and Intimacy
- Opportunity to connect with Mentors or Buddies



PROSTATE CANCER - PATIENT EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

DAY 123 - WEDNESDAY ©2022



**Schedule for today:**

A. [Watch the Day 123 PEP Video](#) from Rob and Gabriela.

B. [Practice Relaxation Technique](#) for 10 minutes or more. Got to do it, do it!

C. [Pelvic Floor Muscle Training \(kegels\) exercises routine for the day.](#)

D. [Yellow and White Fruits and Vegetables Week](#) – Did you know that eating large amounts of brightly colored fruits and vegetables (yellow, orange, red, green, white, blue, purple), whole grains/cereals, and beans containing phytochemicals may decrease the risk of developing certain cancers as well as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

E. [Aerobic Activity](#)- 30+ minutes. Stand up for your health - Five minutes on the Hour.

F. [Connection](#) - Walking Wednesday. We humans are designed to walk - and connect! Why not slather on some sunscreen and take a walk? Walking, after all, can be a great way to get the daily activity your body needs to fight off cancer. Walking also can help you maintain a healthy body weight. For women, walking lowers hormone levels that increase the risk for breast and endometrial cancers.

G. [Stress Reduction](#) - If you think of all the things you can do to reduce your overall stress levels (beyond everything in this program) choose the strategies you enjoy most. For instance, if you really enjoy singing and it improves your stress level, find a way to sing once a day. In contrast, you may not like journaling so don't try to create a journaling habit even though it may be helpful.

H. [Sleep hygiene](#). Relax with a book or take a soothing bath. Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark, relaxing, and at a comfortable temperature. Remove electronic devices, such as TVs, computers, and smart phones from the bedroom. Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.

**EXTRA RESOURCES** - [Click here.](#)

Take care everyone,

Rob Rutledge – cell: 902 489-6423

Gabriela Ilie – cell: 902 989-4114

PEP@nshealth.ca

182 daily emails and PEP videos

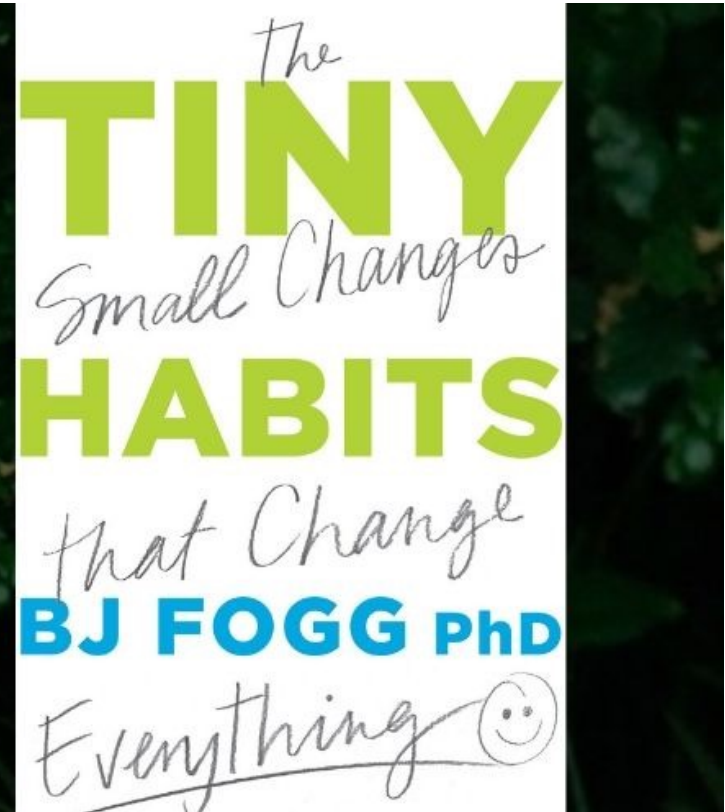


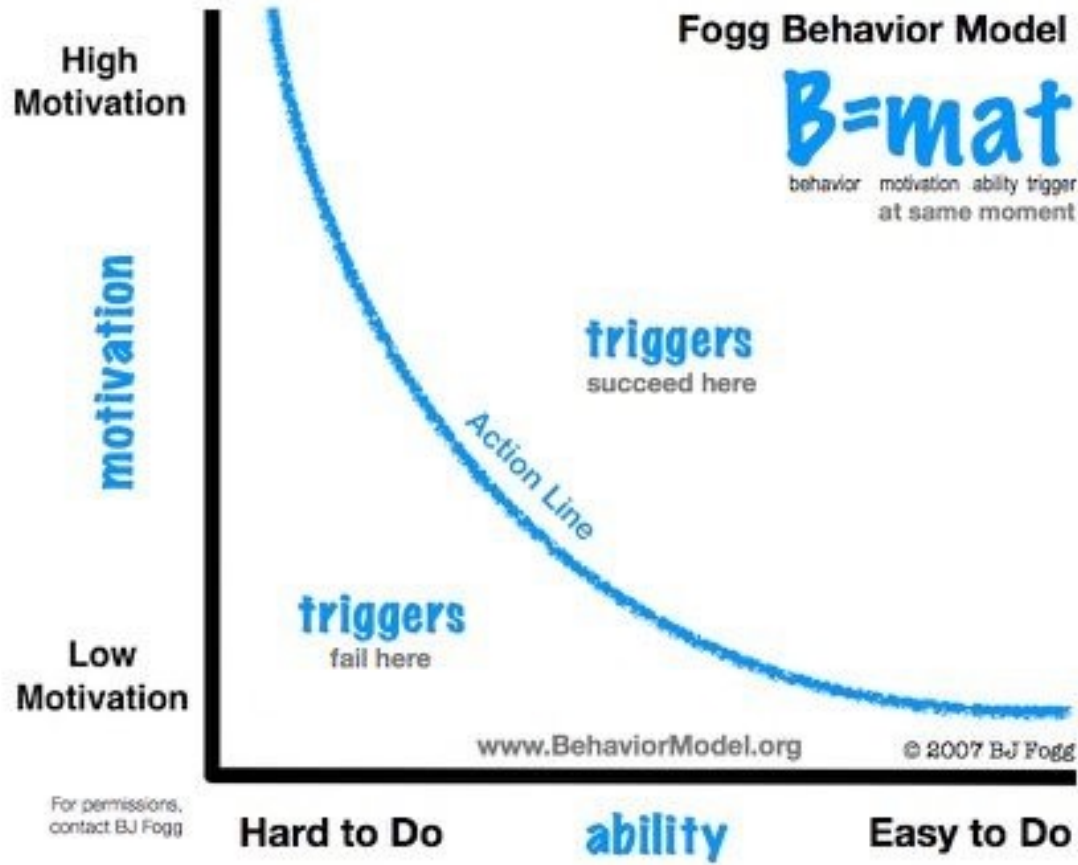
# Prescribed Aerobic Exercise

- 30+ minutes per day, 6+ days per week
- Any activity – think fun!
- Not sitting for long periods



TinyHabits.com





For permissions,  
contact BJ Fogg

# BJ Fogg's Habit Stacking

My format for a "Tiny Habit"

After I [existing habit],

I will [new tiny behavior].



**After I step on the scale,  
I will thank God for the new day.**

**After I start my morning coffee,  
I will tidy one item in the living room**

**After I wash my face in the morning,  
I will put sunscreen on it.**

**After I start the dishwasher,  
I will take my vitamin.**

**After I walk out the door for the day,  
I will say "Today will be a great day."**

# Using the reward system of the brain

Emotional state at time of doing the new behaviour greatly influences habit formation

More important than number of repetitions

At the end of the activity – give yourself an immediate reward

Something fun, simple, and super easy

“I’m awesome”

“Bingo”

Mini dance on the spot

Practicing celebrating on cue

**YESS!**



**Celebration  
time!**

# Home-based Strength Training



- 2 sets of 30min videos
- 4 levels of difficulty
- Safe

# Dietary Recommendations



**Eat Food, Mostly Plants, Not Too Much**

**Swap in healthier foods**

**Decrease Red Meat**

**Increase Fruits and Veggies**

**Time Restrictive Eating**

**Vitamin D**

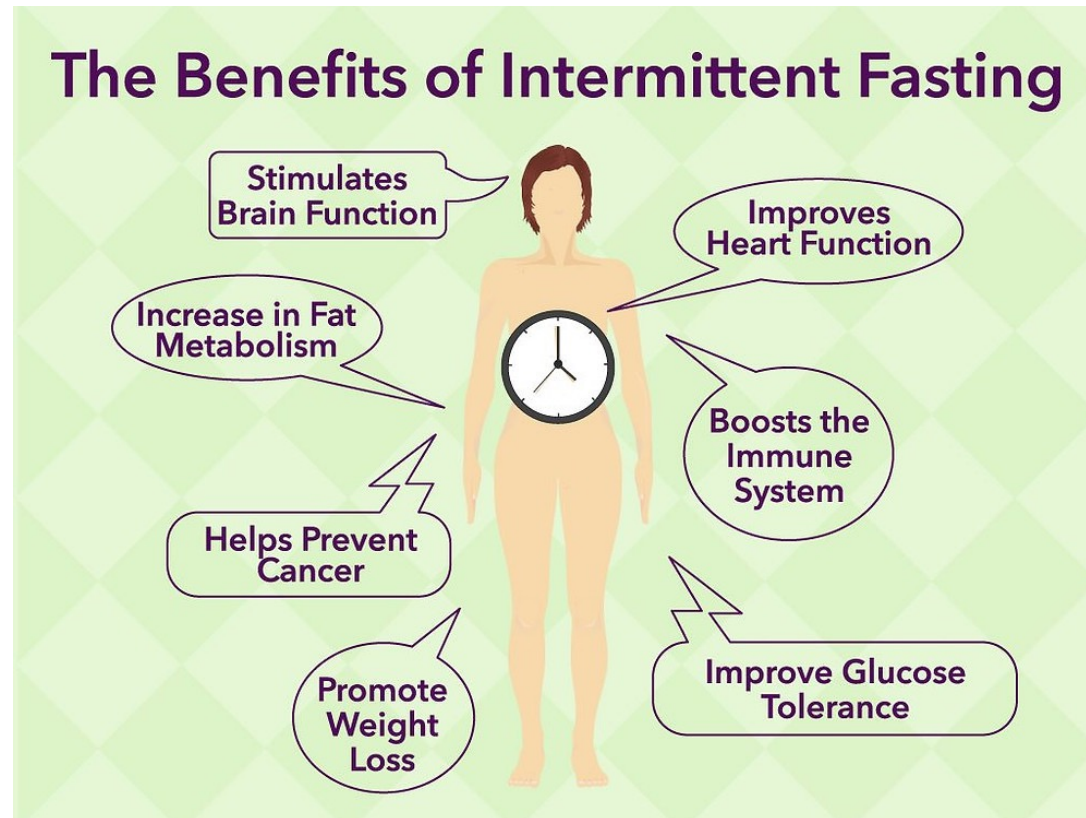
**Food sharing with loved ones**



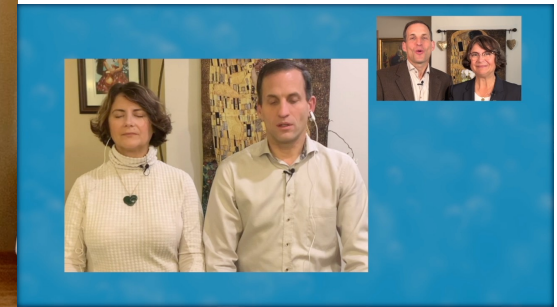
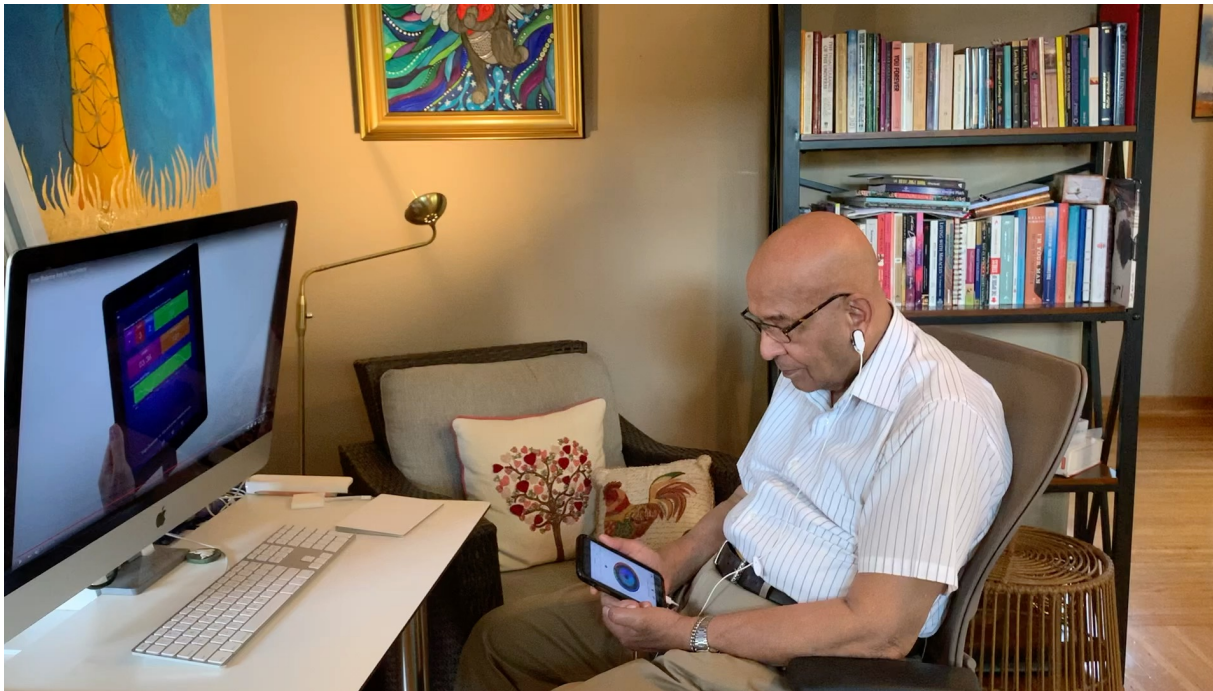
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# Time restricted Eating: No calories for 14 hours overnight



# Relaxation Technique with Bio-Feedback



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# Prescribed Intimacy and Connection exercises



- **Daily** video discussion
- **Prescribed Exercises:**
  - E.g., Walking Wednesday
- Presentations on Intimacy and **Sexuality**, group discussions, Facebook dialogue
- **Love Languages** and **Types of Intimacy**
- **The Role of Forgiveness**
- **Emotional Needs**

# Social Support

## Human-To-Human Connection – Monthly since 2020

- **Monthly LIVE** zoom **video** conference
- **Ongoing Scientific Updates**
- Small and large group discussion
- **Buddy System** – weekly phone call
- **Mentors**
- **Facebook** group
- **Live** recorded **events**



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# Healthy Living with Newfoundland & Labrador Foods

*Plant-based first, with fish and wild game options*



## TODAY'S OVERVIEW



Local vegetables, fruits, and berries



Mushrooms, chaga, and traditional tea plants



Practical meal ideas for everyday health



*Respect local knowledge. Harvest wild foods safely.*

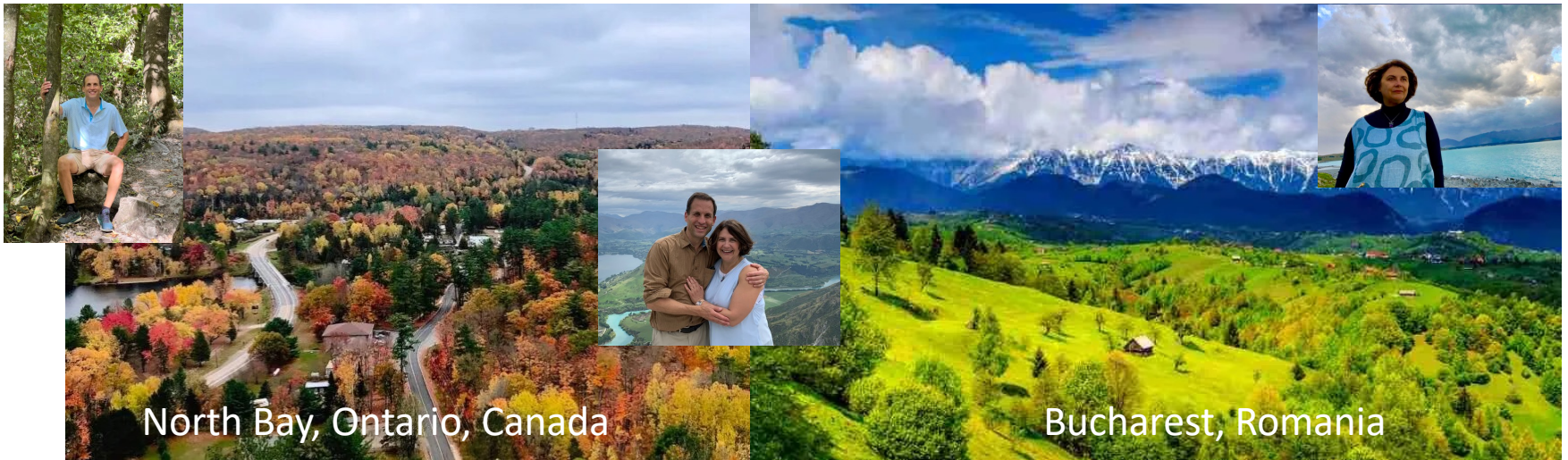


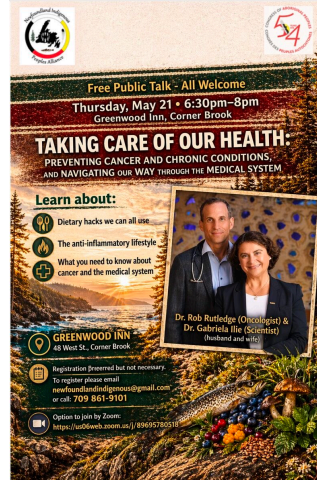


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# Rob and Gabriela







## Day 58 Cancer Patient Empowerment Program©



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### Schedule for today:

**A. Watch the Day 58 PEP Video** from Rob and Gabriela.



**B. Practice Relaxation Technique** for 10 minutes or more. As your mind wanders practice coming back to the exercise over and over:  
<https://youtu.be/jEi5UGop7Ck>

**B. Practice Relaxation Technique** for 10 minutes or more. As your mind wanders practice coming back to the exercise over and over:  
<https://youtu.be/jEi5UGop7Ck>



**C. Fruits Week** - Raspberries and strawberries high in water means lower in calories. Think lots of colours in your food.



**D. Strength Training Workout 'A'.** Click on one of the links below. Keep pushing so you have a nice post-workout feeling. **Remember to stay within your limits!**

**Level 1** - 15 seconds work followed by 30 seconds rest is for those newly back to strength training. [View here](#)

**Level 2** - has same exercises with 20 seconds of work with 20 seconds of rest. [View here](#)

**Level 3** - is 30 seconds of work and followed by 15 seconds rest. [View here](#)

**Level 4** - is most intense with 45 seconds of work followed by 12 seconds rest for each exercise. [View here](#)

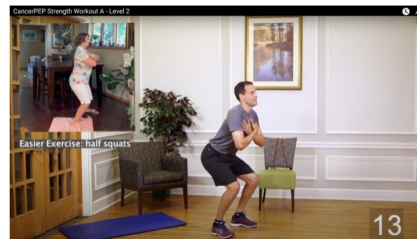
**Optional Yoga** as an alternative to the Workout A is available here:

**Easy yoga** - [click here](#)

**Intermediate yoga** - [click here](#)

**Advanced Yoga** - [click here](#)

**QiGong (pasword: 6868):**  
<https://cancerpep.com/qi-gong/>



### E. Connection - Encouragement & Connection

Take a few moments to reflect on the power of encouragement—both for yourself and for those around you.

Before reaching out to your PEP Partner or a loved one, pause and reflect:

- What is something kind or uplifting you can say to them today?
- How has their support or presence positively impacted your journey?
- What encouragement do you need right now, and how can you offer that same kindness to yourself?

Write down or **think about one thing you appreciate about yourself** and one thing **you appreciate about the person** you are reaching out to.

When you connect, share a genuine word of encouragement—a reminder of their strength, growth, or something they've done well. Notice how it feels to give and receive support.

Encouragement builds resilience, deepens connection, and reminds us we are never alone on this journey.



**Extra Resources:**  
[CLICK HERE](#) - The password for these resources is 6868. Please do not share this password with anyone.

Check out what the Cancer PEP team has been up to:



[Media Page](#)

Interested to know more about the research behind the program?



[Research Page](#)

# Dietary Recommendations



- **Eat Food, Mostly Plants, Not Too Much**
- **Swap in healthier foods**
- **Decrease Red Meat**
- **Increase Fruits, Grains and Vegetables**
- **Time Restrictive Eating**
- **Vitamin D**
- **Food sharing with loved ones**

# Healthy Living with Newfoundland & Labrador Foods

Evidence-aligned nutrition for cancer and chronic disease prevention patterns

Plant-based first • practical bowls • fish and wild game options



## Core message

No single food prevents cancer by itself.

Overall patterns matter: vegetables, fruit, beans/lentils, oats/barley/quinoa, potatoes, fish or wild game when appropriate. Healthy eating should fit culture, access, season, food sharing and community realities.

**Eat food (not chemicals e.g., ultra processed foods), mostly plants, not too much!**



Respect local knowledge. Harvest wild foods safely. Adapt examples to the community.

CancerPEP.com, email Rob or Gabriela at [info@cancerpep.com](mailto:info@cancerpep.com) to join the program for free

# 1. Healthy Living Pattern

*A practical way to talk about cancer and chronic disease prevention*



Fill most of the bowl or plate with vegetables, fruit, beans/lentils, oats, barley/quinoa, potatoes and other whole foods.

Use **beans and lentils often**; mackerel is an excellent choice for omega-3 fats, protein, vitamin D, B12, and selenium; use wild game in modest portions with vegetables.

**Prioritize fibre** for gut health, fullness, healthy blood sugar and cholesterol.

Choose **colour variety**: green, orange, red, purple and white plant foods provide different phytochemicals.

**Use water** (with herbs, e.g., thyme or lemon) or **unsweetened tea more often than sweet drinks**.

**Safe water** is essential for healthy living, so communities should regularly test drinking water for bacteria, metals, and other contaminants, especially when using wells, stored water, or local sources.

2/3

plant foods

Fibre

first

Colour

variety

Food

access

These foods support healthy living as part of an overall eating pattern; they do not replace medical care.

CancerPEP.com, email Rob or Gabriela at [info@cancerpep.com](mailto:info@cancerpep.com) to join the program for free

## 2. Foods to Capitalize On

*Regional or accessible foods with clearer nutrient relevance*



Food group	Key nutrients & compounds	How it helps
<b>Cabbage, kohlrabi, turnip/rutabaga</b>	Fibre, vitamin C, folate, glucosinolates	Supports gut health, fullness, antioxidant defence, and healthy inflammation through fibre, vitamin C, folate, and glucosinolates.
<b>Carrots, parsnip, beets, potatoes</b>	Fibre, potassium, carotenoids, betalains, resistant starch	Filling, affordable foods that support gut health, blood pressure, blood sugar balance, and antioxidant protection.
<b>Garlic, onions, leeks/chives</b>	Organosulfur compounds, quercetin, prebiotic fibres	Add flavour while supporting gut bacteria, antioxidant activity, and healthier inflammation.
<b>Apples, blueberries, cranberries, raspberries/strawberries, rhubarb</b>	Pectin, anthocyanins, proanthocyanidins, vitamin C, polyphenols	Provide fibre and polyphenols; help replace high-sugar desserts and drinks.
<b>Beans, lentils, oats, barley, quinoa</b>	Plant protein, soluble fibre, resistant starch, folate, magnesium	Strong prevention foods: support gut health, cholesterol, blood sugar control, fullness, and reduced reliance on processed meats.
<b>Mushrooms and fungi: button/cremini, oyster, shiitake, chanterelle, lobster mushroom, lion's mane, chicken of the woods, hen of the woods/maitake, reishi, and chaga</b>	Beta-glucans, ergothioneine, selenium, polyphenols, triterpenes	Add savoury flavour, fibre, beta-glucans, and antioxidants; use wild mushrooms/chaga only with expert guidance.
<b>Fish; modest wild game options, especially mackerel when available</b>	Omega-3 fats, vitamin D/B12, selenium; iron/zinc/B12	Fish supports heart and inflammatory health; wild game provides iron, zinc, and B12 when used in modest portions with plant foods.

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### 3. Vegetables with Strong Prevention Relevance



*Root vegetables, cabbage family foods, garlic/onions, tomatoes and peppers*

Food	Compounds to name	Simple ways to use
<b>Cabbage, kohlrabi, turnip/rutabaga</b>	Glucosinolates, vitamin C, vitamin K, folate, fibre	Slaw, soups, boiled dinner, roasted wedges
<b>Carrots, parsnip, yams/sweet potato</b>	Carotenoids, beta-carotene, fibre, potassium	Roast, grate, mash, soup, bowls
<b>Beets</b>	Betalains, nitrates, folate, potassium, fibre	Roast, grate raw, soup, salad
<b>Garlic and onions</b>	Allicin/organosulfur compounds, quercetin, inulin-type fibres	Dressings, soups, beans, stir-fries
<b>Tomatoes</b>	Lycopene, vitamin C, potassium, polyphenols	Fresh bowl, sauce, soup, roasted
<b>Peppers</b>	Vitamin C, carotenoids, polyphenols, fibre	Slice raw, bowls, soups, stews



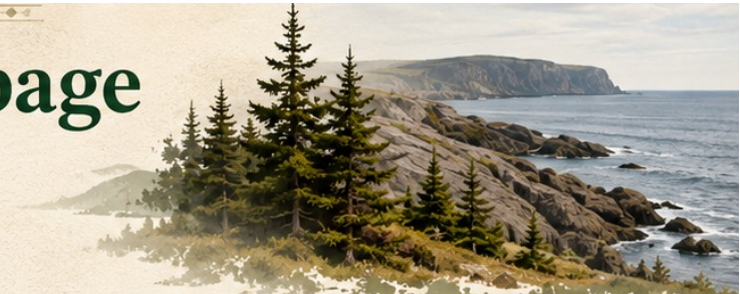
#### No-cook bowl idea







Cabbage + kohlrabi + carrots + peppers + tomato + apple + beans + quinoa, with balsamic-oil-honey-garlic dressing.



# Root Vegetables, Cabbage Family & Garlic

*Affordable, filling foods that store well*



Food	Key nutrients & compounds	Why useful	Simple ways to use it
 <b>Carrots</b>	beta-carotene, fiber, potassium	supports vision, digestion, and fullness	roast, soup, stew, grate raw
 <b>Parsnip</b>	fiber, folate, potassium, vitamin C	hearty, warming, naturally sweet	roast, mash, soup, stew
 <b>Cabbage</b>	vitamin C, vitamin K, folate, glucosinolates	budget-friendly, supports gut and immune health	slaw, soup, boil, stir-fry
 <b>Kohlrabi / turnip / beets</b>	vitamin C, folate, nitrates, betalains, glucosinolates	versatile root crops, colourful, nourishing	roast, mash, slaw, soup
 <b>Potatoes</b>	potassium, vitamin C, resistant starch	satisfying energy food	bake, boil, mash, chowder
 <b>Garlic</b>	allicin, sulfur compounds, manganese, vitamin B6	adds flavor and plant compounds	soups, stews, beans, roasted vegetables



*Tip: Combine roots + cabbage + beans or fish for a balanced meal.*



## 4. Fruits and Berries: Stronger Fit Only

*Focus on fibre and polyphenols*

Food	Compounds	Simple ways to use
<b>Blueberries</b>	<b>Anthocyanins</b> for antioxidant and anti-inflammatory support; fibre, vitamin C, manganese	Fresh/frozen in oats, yogurt, smoothies, less-sugar sauces
<b>Cranberries</b>	<b>Proanthocyanidins</b> for antioxidant support and urinary tract health; vitamin C, fibre	Tart flavour in chutney, oats or dressing; limit added sugar
<b>Apples</b>	<b>Pectin fibre</b> for gut health and fullness; <b>quercetin/polyphenols</b> for antioxidant and anti-inflammatory support; vitamin C	Eat raw, bake, grate into bowls or oats
<b>Raspberries / strawberries</b>	<b>Anthocyanins and ellagic acid</b> for antioxidant support; fibre and vitamin C for gut and immune health	Fresh/frozen dessert replacement; add to oats or yogurt
<b>Rhubarb</b>	<b>Fibre</b> for gut health; <b>polyphenols</b> for antioxidant support; vitamin K	Stewed/compote; mix with berries to reduce sugar



### Easy breakfast bowl







Oats + apple + blueberries or raspberries + seeds or yogurt. Use whole fruit to replace sweet drinks and high-sugar desserts when possible.



# Berries, Apples & Other Fruits in NL

*Natural sweetness, fibre, and protective plant compounds*



Food	Key nutrients & compounds	Why useful	Simple ways to use it
 <b>Blueberries</b>	anthocyanins, fiber, vitamin C, manganese	supports heart and brain health	fresh, frozen, oatmeal, yogurt
 <b>Partridgeberries</b> (lingonberries)	polyphenols, benzoic acid, fiber, vitamin C	tart local berry, good for sauces and baking	sauce, oatmeal, tea biscuits
 <b>Bakeapples</b> (cloudberries)	vitamin C, carotenoids, ellagic acid	special seasonal berry with bright flavor	fresh, sauces, less-sugar jam
 <b>Cranberries / currants</b>	proanthocyanidins, vitamin C, fiber	tart berries with strong flavour	sauce, baking, mixed berries
 <b>Apples</b>	pectin fiber, vitamin C, quercetin, polyphenols	familiar, portable, good snack	eat fresh, bake, add to oats
 <b>Rhubarb</b>	fiber, polyphenols, vitamin K	useful local tart fruit-vegetable for desserts and sauces	stewed, compote, mixed with berries



*Tip: Use fruit to replace some high-sugar desserts and sweet drinks.*



## 5. Beans, Lentils, Oats and Whole-Grain Staples



*Affordable, filling and strongly aligned with prevention-oriented eating patterns*

Staple	Nutrients & compounds	Simple ways to use
<b>Beans and lentils</b>	Plant protein, fibre, folate, iron, magnesium, resistant starch	Soups, chili, patties, salad bowls
<b>Oats</b>	Beta-glucan soluble fibre, manganese, magnesium, polyphenols	Overnight oats, porridge, savoury oats
<b>Barley or quinoa</b>	Fibre, magnesium, manganese; quinoa adds complete protein	Batch-cook for bowls; add barley to soups
<b>Potatoes with skins</b>	Potassium, vitamin C, fibre; resistant starch if cooled	Boiled/baked; cooled potato salad; avoid deep-frying
<b>Nuts/seeds, if accessible</b>	Unsaturated fats, magnesium, vitamin E, lignans	Small sprinkle on oats or bowls



### Simple rule

1 plant protein + 1 grain/starch + 3 colours of vegetables or fruit. Frozen, canned/rinsed, dried and stored foods all count.

## 6. Mushrooms and Chaga

*Useful foods and tea ingredients; not cancer treatment*



Food	Compounds and their benefits	Careful use
<b>Button / cremini mushrooms</b>	<b>Beta-glucans</b> support immune and gut health; <b>ergothioneine</b> supports antioxidant protection; selenium and B vitamins support overall health	Affordable savoury food; soups, omelettes, grain bowls
<b>Oyster / shiitake mushrooms</b>	<b>Beta-glucans</b> and <b>ergothioneine</b> support antioxidant and immune health; B vitamins support energy metabolism	Meaty texture; stir-fry, soup, plant-forward meals
<b>Shiitake mushrooms</b>	<b>Beta-glucans</b> , including lentinan, support immune health; ergothioneine and B vitamins support antioxidant and metabolic health	Only if expertly identified; never guess
<b>Lion's mane</b>	Contains <b>beta-glucans</b> and unique compounds called <b>hericenones/erinacines</b> , studied for nerve and brain-health support	Use as food; avoid making treatment claims
<b>Chaga tea</b>	<b>Polyphenols, melanin, beta-glucans, and triterpenes</b> support antioxidant activity	Traditional tea ingredient; moderate use; no treatment claims
<b>Chanterelles</b>	Provide fibre, minerals, carotenoids, and antioxidant compounds	Wild mushroom; only eat if expertly identified
<b>Chicken of the woods</b>	Provides fibre, protein, minerals, and antioxidant compounds	Wild mushroom; must be expertly identified and cooked well; some people are sensitive to it
<b>Reishi</b>	Contains <b>beta-glucans</b> and <b>triterpenes</b> , studied for immune and anti-inflammatory effects	Usually used as tea/extract; may interact with blood thinners, immune medicines, and cancer treatments



### Safety message

Wild mushrooms and chaga should only be harvested with correct identification, local guidance and sustainable practices. Chaga and mushroom supplements may interact with medications; people in cancer care should discuss supplements or extracts with their oncology team.






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# Beans, Lentils, Mushrooms & Chaga

*Plant protein, savoury flavour, and traditional tea ingredients*



Food	Key nutrients & compounds	Why useful	Simple ways to use it
 <b>Beans &amp; lentils</b>	plant protein, fiber, folate, iron, magnesium	affordable protein that stretches meals	soup, chili, curries, patties
 <b>Button / cremini mushrooms</b>	beta-glucans, ergothioneine, selenium, B vitamins	adds savoury flavour and nutrients	sauté, soups, stews, omelettes
 <b>Oyster or shiitake mushrooms</b>	beta-glucans, ergothioneine, B vitamins	meaty texture, good in plant-forward meals	stir-fry, soup, grain bowls
 <b>Wild mushrooms (e.g., chanterelles)</b>	fiber, minerals, beta-glucans	local seasonal food; only if expertly identified	sauté or add to stews
 <b>Chaga</b>	polyphenols, melanin, beta-glucans, triterpenes	traditional tea ingredient with earthy flavour	steep as tea; use with knowledge and moderation



*Wild mushrooms and chaga should only be harvested if correctly identified and sustainably gathered.*



*Respect local knowledge. Harvest wild foods safely.*



## 7. Wild Greens and Tea Plants



*Food first, safety always*

Plant	Compounds	Safe use
<b>Stinging nettle</b>	<b>Iron, calcium, potassium, vitamin C, chlorophyll, and polyphenols</b> support mineral intake, antioxidant activity, and general nourishment	Blanch/cook; soup, omelette, tea; wear gloves
<b>Dandelion greens</b>	<b>Vitamin K, carotenoids, potassium, fibre, and polyphenols</b> support bone health, antioxidant defence, digestion, and healthy blood pressure	Bitter green; salad/sauté/soup from clean areas
<b>Spruce tips</b>	<b>Vitamin C and aromatic terpenes</b> provide antioxidant compounds and fresh flavour	Tea, infused water, seasoning; identify correctly
<b>Rose hips</b>	<b>Vitamin C, carotenoids, and polyphenols</b> support antioxidant activity and immune health	Tea, jelly/syrup; avoid excessive sugar
<b>Wild mint/herbs</b>	<b>Aromatic oils and polyphenols</b> support flavour, digestion, and antioxidant intake	Tea, salads, infusions; correct identification

Use as foods or teas that support healthy living as part of local food knowledge. They are not cancer treatments and should not replace medical care.






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# Wild Greens & Traditional Tea Plants

*Food and tea plants that can support healthy living*



Food	Key nutrients & compounds	Why useful	Simple ways to use it
 <b>Stinging nettle</b>	iron, calcium, potassium, vitamin C, chlorophyll	nutrient-rich spring green	blanch or cook in soup, tea, omelette
 <b>Dandelion greens</b>	vitamin K, carotenoids, potassium, polyphenols	bitter green that pairs well with meals	salads, sautéed greens, soup
 <b>Spruce tips</b>	vitamin C, aromatic terpenes	fresh, citrusy local flavour	tea, infused water, seasoning
 <b>Wild mint</b>	aromatic oils, polyphenols	refreshing herb for tea and flavour	tea, salads, infusions
 <b>Rose hips</b>	vitamin C, carotenoids, polyphenols	tart local fruit useful for teas and sauces	tea, jelly, syrup

 *Harvest respectfully, avoid polluted areas, and learn from knowledgeable local harvesters and Elders.*



## 8. Fish and Wild Game Options



*Plant-based first, with culturally appropriate protein options*

Protein option	Nutrients	Practical preparation
<b>Fish: cod, trout, salmon, char</b>	<b>Protein</b> supports muscle and healing; <b>omega-3 fats</b> support heart and inflammatory health; <b>vitamin D, B12, selenium</b> support bone, nerve, thyroid, immune, and antioxidant function	Baked/poached/pan-cooked; chowder with vegetables
<b>Wild game: moose and other local options</b>	<b>Protein</b> supports strength; <b>iron</b> supports oxygen transport and energy; <b>zinc and B12</b> support immune and nerve function	Modest portions in stew, soup, meat pie, bowl topping
<b>Beans/lentils as frequent protein</b>	<b>Plant protein and fibre</b> support fullness, gut health, cholesterol, and blood sugar balance; <b>folate, iron, magnesium</b> support energy metabolism and overall health	Helps stretch meals and reduce processed meat reliance

Build the meal around vegetables, beans, roots and grains.  
Use fish or wild game as one ingredient, not the whole plate.  
Limit processed meats and avoid heavily charred or heavily smoked preparation.  
Adapt to **food sharing**, community **freezers**, season and availability.

### Example plate

2/3 vegetables, beans, oats/quinoa/barley or potatoes  
+  
1/3 fish or modest wild game portion  
+  
water or unsweetened tea




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# Fish, Wild Game & Practical Meal Ideas

*Plant-based first, with fish and wild game options*



Food	Key nutrients & compounds	Why useful	Simple ways to use it
 Cod / trout / salmon / char	protein, omega-3s, selenium, vitamin D, B12	supports strength, heart, and overall health	bake, poach, chowder, pan-cook
 Wild game (e.g., moose)	protein, iron, zinc, B12	traditional option that can support iron intake	stew, soup, meat pies, small portions with vegetables
 Sweet potatoes / yams	beta-carotene, fiber, potassium	nutritious store option when local produce is limited	roast, mash, soups, side dishes

## Practical meal ideas



Berry oatmeal  
with apples



Bean and root  
vegetable soup



Mushroom  
barley soup



Fish with potatoes  
and cabbage



Moose or bean stew  
with carrots and turnip

*Take-home message: build meals around vegetables, fruits, beans, and whole foods;  
add fish or wild game in moderate amounts.*



# 9. Build-a-Bowl Formula

Minimum preparation, maximum flexibility



- 1. Crunch base** Kohlrabi, carrots, cabbage, peppers, onions
- 2. Sweet/tart** Apple, cranberries, blueberries, rhubarb compote
- 3. Hearty base** Yams/sweet potato, potato, quinoa, oats, barley
- 4. Protein** Beans/lentils first; add fish or small wild game portion if available
- 5. Dressing** Balsamic vinegar + oil + honey + garlic + mustard if available

**Jar dressing** 3 Tbsp oil + 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar + 1 tsp honey + 1 grated garlic clove + pepper. Shake in a jar.

Easy shortcuts: pre-shredded slaw, canned/rinsed beans, airfried yams or potatoes, batch-cooked grains.

# 10. Easy Recipe Ideas

*Bowls and one-pot meals with flexible ingredients*



**Crunchy Harvest Bowl**

Kohlrabi, carrots, parsnip, apple, onion, peppers, tomatoes, quinoa/oats + beans. Grate/slice and toss with balsamic-oil-honey-garlic dressing.



**Warm Yam + Lentil Bowl**

Microwaved yam/sweet potato, cabbage, carrots, onions, beans/lentils, garlic. Steam or sauté 5–8 minutes; add dressing or yogurt-herb sauce.



**Mushroom Barley/Oat Soup**

Mushrooms, onions, garlic, cabbage, carrots, barley/oats and lentils. Simmer in broth or water; good freezer meal.

Optional fish or moose vegetable stew: use fish or a small moose portion as one ingredient, then add potatoes, turnip, carrots, cabbage and onions.

# 11. Make Healthy Choices Easier

*Low-cost, low-waste strategies that fit community realities*



## Root-cellar thinking

Potatoes, carrots, turnip, beets, cabbage and onions store well and stretch meals.

## Frozen is healthy

Frozen berries and vegetables are useful when fresh foods are expensive or unavailable.

## Batch-cook once

Cook oats/quinoa/barley and beans/lentils for several days.

## Keep dressing ready

A jar dressing makes raw vegetables easier to eat and enjoy.

## Use flavour builders

Garlic, onions, mushrooms, vinegar, herbs and pepper reduce reliance on salty packaged sauces.

## Share knowledge

Invite Elders, local harvesters and community cooks to adapt examples and teach safe harvesting.

Community discussion: Which foods are most available, affordable and acceptable here right now?

## 12. Safety, Respect and Clinical Cautions



*Especially important for wild plants, mushrooms, chaga and cancer care*

Topic	Message
<b>Wild foods</b>	Harvest only with correct identification. Avoid roadsides, sprayed areas and polluted sites. Harvest sustainably.
<b>Mushrooms</b>	Never guess. Eat only mushrooms identified by an experienced local forager or mycologist.
<b>Chaga and herbs</b>	Use as tea/food, not as cancer treatment. Supplements can be stronger and can interact with medications.
<b>During cancer treatment</b>	Ask the oncology team before supplements, concentrated extracts, fasting/detox regimens or major diet changes.
<b>Culture</b>	Invite community guidance. Foods and practices vary by Nation, community, family and season.

This presentation supports health education. It does not replace medical, dietary or harvesting advice.

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# 13. Evidence Base



*Selected sources for the nutrition and safety messages*

Source area	How it supports the presentation
<b>AICR / WCRF cancer prevention recommendations</b>	No single food protects against cancer by itself; make whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans a major part of the usual diet.
<b>WCRF fibre and wholegrains evidence</b>	Fibre-rich foods, including wholegrains, reduce bowel cancer risk and support healthy weight.
<b>Canadian Cancer Society</b>	Recommends making half of the plate vegetables and fruit.
<b>Indigenous Services Canada / Canada's Food Guide resources</b>	Support healthy eating and food safety resources for First Nations and Inuit; adapt to culture and availability.
<b>Memorial Sloan Kettering herb guidance</b>	Chaga may interact with anticoagulant/antiplatelet and diabetes medications; discuss supplements during cancer care.

**Thank you**

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Watch our documentary, ***Empower*** at  
[pcpep.org/empower](http://pcpep.org/empower)



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