



Many of us are more than ready to say goodbye to the bitter cold and snowy January! As I see it, we are 1 month closer to Spring. The image of our "Hello February" gave me some hope that soon we will be seeing the trees budding and tulips peeking. Wishful thinking I know!

Recently, the media and supporting research have been buzzing with many food and nutrition trends that we thought to share with you. We're covering everything from vitamin D updates to the latest food and nutrition trends, plus practical tips for balanced eating, gut health, and mindful grocery shopping. Whether you're looking to optimize your meals, support your gut, or make healthier choices, we've packed this newsletter with insights and tips you can start using today.

Also, **PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE vote in Vaughan's Readers Choice Awards for Best Nutritionist.** I have been nominated once again for 2025 and I hope I am worthy of your vote. I hold the title for Best Nutritional Counselling and Best Nutritionist for 2024 and I plan to continue to wear this title with pride for 2025.

I would be most honoured to receive your vote! Please click on the following **LINK** to place your vote - it closes next Friday Feb 6th. Thanking you in advance!

Happy February!

— Best of —
**VOTING IS
NOW OPEN**
READERS' CHOICE  AWARDS 2025



Filomena Vernace-Inserra

Your Registered Dietitian &
Newsletter Contributor



Claire Champion

Newsletter Contributor

Menopause

A study published in the journal Post-Reproductive Health 2025 found that more than 70% of midlife women have actively sought nutrition information during menopause, often monthly or more, making nutrition a high-demand topic! We want information that is based in science - no false promises, no gimmicks!

Many of us are struggling with how our bodies are changing during this transition time - body composition changes, weight shifts, mood changes, sleep disturbances, joint pain, gut issues, and so much more! HELP!

We get it! We understand! We are in the same transition time as you! And, we can guide you! We are launching a new hybrid program for women in midlife to support a healthy transition through menopause. We have created a nutrition & fitness program that is built on evidence-based guidelines to support change that is founded on science and practicality.

Nutrition sessions will be held **Thursdays at 8-930pm** and will be online & live (no pre-recorded sessions!) The fitness component will be twice weekly on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings and can be offered in person and online guided by Fitness Specialist Silvana Taffo. The fitness sessions can be shared as a recorded session as well making it flexible according to your schedule.

4 Nutrition Sessions, 8 Fitness Sessions for \$199.99 - and you can claim the fee if you have Registered Dietitian as part of your extended health benefits or if you have a health care spending account!

Registration ends Feb 13th. We have limited spaces available and we are 50% full! Please **CLICK HERE** to send us an email and we will get you started with us for a supportive, educational, and empowering experience.

Fit & Fuelled
MENOPAUSE PROGRAM

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Silvana, Fitness Specialist | Filomena, Registered Dietitian

LIMITED SPACES

- 4 Weeks: Feb 16th Start
- Hybrid - In-person/Virtual Fitness; Virtual Nutrition
- LINK in BIO or Email
 - dietitain@innerhealth1.ca
 - taforcefitness@gmail.com

\$199.99

Reimbursable by Extended Health Benefits for Registered Dietitian services

Recent Food & Nutrition Trends⁽²⁾



1 It's Time to Balance

Say goodbye to protein maxing and welcome a balanced diet. When we look at how satiety plays a role in digestion, fullness, and overall health, fibre comes into the spotlight. Recent research suggests that a 3:1 animal to plant protein ratio helps make

it easier for people to meet both protein and overall nutrient needs, including fibre, likely because animal and plant proteins each provide a different and complementary mix of nutrients (3).

Tips

- **Fibre + Protein = Better Together.** Pairing fibre with your protein is the new gold standard for maximum impact on nutrient intake, satiety, and gut health.
- **3:1 Animal to Plant Protein Ratio** helps to meet protein and fibre needs. How do you do this? We have some examples below to get you started:
- **Examples:** egg and black bean breakfast burrito, beef and lentil bolognese, chicken and chickpea salad, greek yogurt and chia seed yogurt bowl, salmon and edamame stirfry, hardboiled egg with apple slices and peanut butter.



2 The Old Ways are Back

Pickling and fermenting are making a comeback. This trend has been circling social media because people are seeking comfort, simplicity, and tradition in a very AI-driven world. Beyond nostalgia, traditional preservation methods have real science behind them. Fermented foods in particular interact with the gut microbiome, which plays a key role in digestion, immune function, mental health and metabolic health (4). Did you see our video on social media where our very own Claire showed how she makes Kefir...on the daily...be sure to follow Inner Health Nutrition on Instagram or TikTok to see our videos, tips and more!

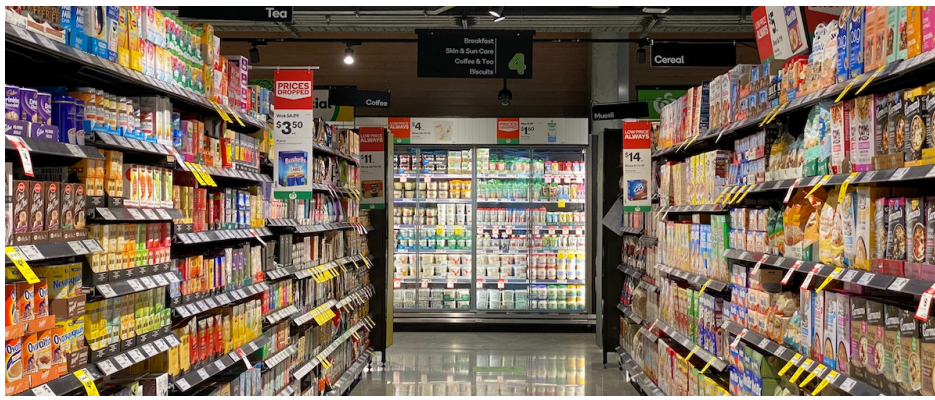
Pickled vs Fermented Foods:

Pickled:

- Preserved using vinegar, salt, or brine
- The tangy flavour comes from added acid, not microbial activity
- Do not naturally contain live probiotics (vinegar inhibits bacterial growth)
- Shelf-stable and quick to prepare
- Still provide fibre and phytochemicals from vegetables
- **Examples:** vinegar pickles, pickled onions, pickled beets

Fermented:

- Preserved using beneficial microorganisms (mainly lactic acid bacteria)
- Fermentation takes days to weeks
- Microbes consume sugars and starches, producing lactic acid, alcohol, or carbon dioxide, which preserves the food and alters its nutritional profile
- Contains live probiotics (if unpasteurized)
- Associated with improved gut microbial diversity and digestive health
- **Examples:** sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir, miso



3 Saying Goodbye to Ultra-Processed Foods

One of the largest, yet under-addressed, public health threats right now is the incidence of diet-related disease, and many signs point to the prevalence of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) in North American diets (5).

- **What are UPFs:** industrial formulated foods that are high in additives, sugar, salt, and less healthy fat, and are specially designed to be convenient and addictive.
- **Health risks linked to UPFs:**
 - Increased risk of obesity and cardiometabolic diseases
 - Higher rates of type 2 diabetes
 - Increased risk of hormonal imbalances
 - Poor overall diet quality leading to lower quality of life
- **How do we combat this issue?**
 - The high prevalence of UPFs in the average North American diet comes down to a systemic issue that needs to be addressed by public health and policy actions.
 - Unfortunately, the food system prioritizes profit over health, encouraging the widespread production, marketing, and affordability of UPFs over whole foods.
 - As a consumer, you are casting a vote each time you purchase a food product. Supporting local and minimally processed or whole foods make an impact on the food system itself.
- **Rule of thumb =** If the ingredient list of a food product is long, hard to pronounce, or contains things you wouldn't use in your kitchen, it's likely ultra-processed. Avoid foods that have sugars, white flours, salt listed in the first few ingredients!



4 The Food Cost Dilemma

Food cost is the primary concern for 76% of Canadians, which is higher than the global average of 59%. It's not surprising then that one of four households face food insecurity. Being budget-minded and paying more attention to what foods are on-sale have become a common necessity of Canadians. **What can you do if you are feeling this struggle?**

- **Avoid the tariffs:** you can do this by buying foods that are made locally or have a "Product of Canada" label.
- **Limit household food waste:** when you are shopping, pay attention to expiration dates of food items as a way to limit fast food spoilage and the need to throw out food at home. You can also opt for frozen produce because it is generally cheaper than fresh produce and it won't go bad as fast.
- **Shop seasonal:** fruits and vegetables that are in season are usually cheaper. Right now, in Canada, greenhouse-grown items are in season, including potatoes, carrots, onions, parsnips, rutabaga, cucumbers, and peppers.
- **Shop by unit pricing:** look at the "price per 100g" or "per litre" to compare products and to find the best value.
- **Plan your meals:** make a weekly meal plan before grocery shopping in order to create a grocery list that helps you avoid impulse buys.

Changes in Canada's Vitamin D Fortification Regulations

Health Canada is updating its approach to vitamin D fortification to help address widespread inadequate intake among Canadians.

Under the new fortification strategy, the amount of vitamin D added to certain foods, especially cow's milk and margarine, has been significantly increased by the end of 2025.



Cow's milk and margarine will require almost double the previous level of vitamin D, and plant-based beverages can now be fortified to the same level as cow's milk. Regulations were also updated in 2024 to allow yogurt and kefir made from dairy products to be fortified with vitamin D, responding to their growing popularity and calcium content.

Vitamin D is essential for calcium absorption and bone health, yet many people, especially in northern latitudes with less sun exposure, do not get enough from diet and sunlight alone. These changes aim to help Canadians reach recommended vitamin D intakes through regular foods (1).

Have you spotted the increase in vitamin D? Check out the nutrition labels on your dairy products - fluid milk now has 5ug or 200IU of vitamin D per 8oz. Kefir has 4ug or 160IU of vitamin D per 3/4 cup.

Recipes for February

Protein Overnight Oats



Winter Lentil Power Bowl



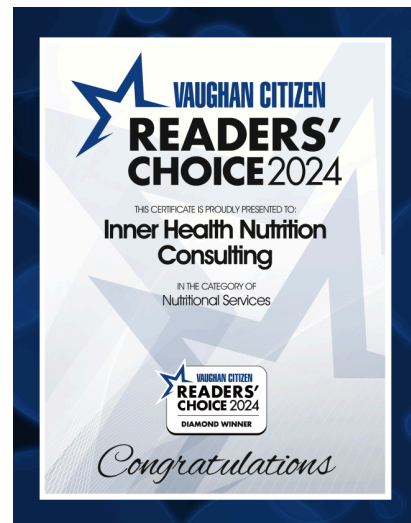
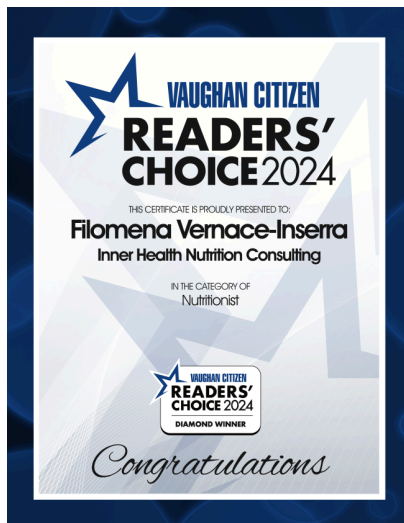
Noodle-Free Chicken Pad Thai



Mediterranean Lentil Meatloaf



Gluten-Free Banana Muffins



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