



**Hello again and welcome to our 2nd Nutrition Bites *June* edition!**

We hope you are having a beautiful June! With Father's Day approaching, we want to take a moment to appreciate all of the amazing fathers and father figures who work so hard, support endlessly, and give so much to their families and communities. We are extending our love to everyone celebrating Father's Day this month and we wish you all a happy and healthy June!

In this edition of our newsletter we will be zooming in on the "Food as Medicine" movement and what it truly means. We promise, it is definitely worth the read! Also, don't forget to register for our ***She Blooms: A Women's Nutrition Summit*** on **Saturday June 27th at Novotel Vaughan.**

This one day educational event brings you experts to address key women's health issues, latest nutrition recommendations to tackle the food and nutrition chaos on social media, an interactive recipe demo with executive chef from Novotel, gift bags and prizes. Bring a friend and enjoy a day of learning and fun! You don't miss the opportunity to feel more confident and empowered in your health journey!

For more info, be sure to scroll down and click on the link in Eventbrite to purchase tickets. Limited seating.

Hope to see you there!



**Filomena Vernace-Inserra**  
Your Registered Dietitian &



**Claire Champion**

# She Blooms - A Women's Nutrition Summit

**"She Blooms"** is a one-day summit hosted by yours truly Filomena Vernace-Inserra & Nancy Bevilacqua, award-winning private practice Registered Dietitians in Vaughan.

**This summit will be a trusted space where women can access clarity, confidence, and credible information about their health, with the promise to:**

- Cut through nutrition and health misinformation with clarity and confidence
- Deliver practical, evidence-based strategies women can apply in their day-to-day busy lives
- Promotes a message of balanced, sustainable nutrition — not extreme, misguided promises
- Build community and connection among women

**Click [HERE](#) to register and learn more!**

**See below for more information including our event speakers, sponsors, and LIVE chef demo featuring plant-forward recipes!**

# A Women's Nutrition Summit



Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2026

9 am - 3 pm

**NOVOTEL**  
VAUGHAN



eventbrite

## OUR EVENT SPEAKERS



**Dr. Sara Mahdavi**  
University of Toronto

Dr. Sara Mahdavi is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences & Clinician, Scientist, & Lecturer in the Department of Community & Family Medicine at the University of Toronto.

In "It's in Our DNA and Yes We Are Different" she explores how genetics and lifestyle shape women's health, highlighting personalized, science-backed strategies to optimize health and prevent disease.



**Dr. Christina Dakhil**  
Medical Doctor

Dr. Dakhil is an award-recognized family physician with nearly 20 years of experience, specializing in women's health and menopause care.

In "The Conversation Every Woman Should Have Heard Years Ago," she provides an evidence-based overview of hormones, heart health, iron deficiency, & weight changes, helping women better understand their bodies & advocate for their long-term health.



**Nancy Bevilacqua & Filomena Vernace - Inserra**  
Registered Dietitians

In a world of conflicting nutrition advice, Nancy & Filomena will address the misinformation and cut through the noise to address trending topics including protein and what women need, gut health & impact on hormones and overall health, supplements such as creatine, and more! This engaging presentation will translate the most evidence-based nutrition recommendations into practical strategies to support women's health.



**Wynne Ruby**  
Executive Chef

Executive Chef Wynne Ruby of Novotel Vaughan leads an interactive Mediterranean-inspired cooking demonstration alongside Dietitians Nancy and Filomena.

Attendees will experience two simple, nutritious recipes while learning practical, evidence-based culinary strategies for everyday healthy eating.



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## Understanding the "Food as Medicine" movement

The "food as medicine" movement is built on the idea that what we eat directly impacts our health. Nutrition plays a key role in regulating blood sugar, inflammation, gut health, and overall chronic disease risk, making it a foundational part of healthcare <sup>(1)</sup>.



Rather than viewing food as just fuel, this approach recognizes that everyday dietary patterns can support long-term health, help prevent disease, and play a role in managing certain conditions.

## How does food act like medicine?

Food plays a fundamental role in how the body functions. Every system, whether it's the immune system, brain, hormones, muscles, or digestive tract, relies on nutrients from the foods we eat to operate effectively. For example, eating patterns that emphasize vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean protein sources are associated with a lower risk of chronic conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes <sup>(2)</sup>. These patterns highlight how everyday food choices can support long-term health.

Nutrients also contribute to essential processes like immune defence, inflammation regulation, wound healing, and maintaining steady energy levels. In this way, food helps support the body at all stages: before illness, during recovery, and in maintaining overall wellbeing. It strengthens the body's natural protective systems and aids in more effective healing.

Beyond its physical benefits, food also holds important cultural and social significance. For many communities, food represents connection, identity, and tradition, often described as “supporting cultural foodways.” These practices, passed down through generations, provide not only nourishment but also a sense of belonging and resilience <sup>(3)</sup>.

## Don't misunderstand the phrase

The “food as medicine” movement emphasizes that **nutrition is a complement to healthcare**, not a cure-all. Medical care, medications, and professional guidance are still essential when needed.



Additionally, what we eat is only one piece of the puzzle. A range of social determinants of health, including income, education, employment, social support, living conditions, gender, and access to healthcare, can all shape a person's ability to access and maintain a nutritious diet <sup>(4)</sup>. Because of this, simply telling someone to “heal with food” overlooks the broader context.

For instance, an individual may follow a balanced diet and still develop a chronic condition due to genetics or other underlying factors. On the other hand, someone may want to prepare healthy meals but face barriers such as limited time, financial constraints, or lack of access to adequate cooking facilities.

## The power of food and medicine together

Food is an excellent tool in preventing illness, supporting treatment, and enhancing overall quality of life, however it does not replace alternate medical care such as medications or therapies.

Rather than being separate, food and medicine are most effective when used together. From this perspective, “food as medicine” can be understood in both modern and traditional contexts.

In Western healthcare, nutrition is often used as a complementary tool within treatment plans. At the same time, many Indigenous and cultural communities around the world have long recognized food itself as a source of healing, with traditional food practices supporting not only physical health but also identity, connection, and balance <sup>(5)</sup>.

When we consider both medical and cultural perspectives, food becomes more than just fuel, it becomes a powerful link between the body, community, and overall wellbeing.

It is worth the effort to plan your meals, stock your fridge, freezers and pantries with healthier food staples, and make time to nourish and provide your body with the essential nutrients to support your mind, body and soul! You are worth it!

## June's Recipes

### Green goddess chickpea bowl

Chickpeas are a great source of plant-based protein and dietary fibre! We suggest including legumes into your diet more often - aim for 2-3 times per week.



### Dill chicken and kale orzo

Kale is packed with vitamins A, C, and K, fibre, and antioxidants that support immune function, bone health, heart health! It's a nutrient powerhouse! Cost effective too!



### French onion cabbage steaks

Cabbage is a great source of nutrients including vitamin A and C, antioxidants, and fibre! It can be more than just coleslaw! Hope you try this recipe today!



## Veggie breakfast casserole

Eggs are a high-quality source of protein, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals that support muscle growth, brain function, and eye health! Cut into squares and freeze them individually for a quick breakfast on the go.



## Raspberry oatmeal bars

Raspberries are rich in fibre, vitamin C, and antioxidants that may support digestive health, immune function, and protection against inflammation! And they are so yummy! This makes a great snack on the go this summer!



### References

1. <https://snapatuofguelph.wordpress.com/2025/12/05/understanding-the-food-as-medicine-movement/>
2. <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/11/2/338>
3. <https://nourishleadership.ca/programs/food-is-our-medicine/>
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Inner Health Nutrition Consulting | 8333 Weston Rd, Woodbridge ON | Woodbridge, ON L4L 8Z2 CA

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