

Home for Dinner Program

Location	Ronald McDonald House Maritimes
Address	5950 South St
Available Parking	Parking Lot
Arrival Time	1:00 – 1:30pm
Dinner Time	4:00pm
Plan to Serve	50 + people
Suggested Group Size	Max 8 people
You Will Be Greeted By	A staff member or volunteer
Kitchen Supplies	Our kitchen is fully equipped with cookware and utensils. If there is a special piece of equipment you need, you are welcome to bring it along!
Planning your menu	When purchasing your groceries, plan to make something family-friendly, nutritious and delicious! Please bring all ingredients and individual containers to prepare and package your meal.
Allergy Restrictions	None, but please notify us of any ingredients used that are known allergens (e.g., peanuts, shellfish, etc.).
FAQ's, Food Safety & Nutritional Guidelines & COVID19 policies	Very important: Please ensure each participant carefully reviews the attached guidelines prior to your group's visit. If anyone is feeling ill or has flu symptoms, we ask that you not participate.
Cancellation Policy	If your group needs to reschedule, please let us know at least 2 weeks prior or provide a \$300 contribution to offset the cost of a meal.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why Home for Dinner?

Ronald McDonald House® Maritimes helps families with sick children stay together and near the medical care they need through two core programs: Ronald McDonald House® and Ronald McDonald House Family Rooms®. Home for Dinner provides families with a delicious home cooked meal after a long day at the hospital.

What time should we arrive and what time should the meal be ready for? We ask that you arrive by 1:30pm at the House. This allows you two hours of cooking time, finishing at 3:30pm. You are able to arrive a bit earlier to accommodate longer meal prep times. The meal is served at 4pm at the Ronald McDonald House Family Room in the IWK Health Centre. We ask that you deliver half the individually packaged meals (the other half are kept at the House for families staying there). A staff or volunteer will meet you at the entrance of the hospital to accept the meals and then deliver to our families.

Are we required to stay and serve the meal?

No, due to COVID19 restrictions, our Home for Dinner meals must be individually packaged so our team can distribute these from our Family Room 4:00 – 5:00pm. Leftover meals are kept at the House for families to reheat.

What type of meals would you suggest?

We are open to a variety of meals. We recommend comfort food that is family friendly, as well as a meal that is easy to freeze and serve as leftovers. We also encourage groups to have a vegan or vegetarian option to meet varying diet needs.

How far in advance do we need to notify you of the chosen meal and ingredients?

Please have your menu planned two weeks in advance of your Home for Dinner date so that you can share it with us promptly when we reach out.

Can we cook the meal at home and drop it off?

No. Food and safety guidelines adopted by Ronald McDonald House, require all food to be prepared in our kitchen or a certified kitchen (i.e. restaurant kitchen)

What else can we bring?

Please visit our website www.ronaldmcdonaldhousemaritimes.ca to view our Wish List for items you can bring to help stock our pantry.

Photo consent?

Some families staying at RMHC Atlantic do not want pictures taken. Our team monitors a family's consent for photo taking and therefore we ask that visitors do not take any pictures of families/children while at the House. You are welcome to take pictures of the facility and your group while cooking. Our team will also capture photos if everyone provides consent.

Food Safety Guidelines

Before you begin your meal, please take a few moments to prepare not only yourself, but also your surroundings by:

- Ensuring you have no cold or flu symptoms
- Tying back long hair
- Cleaning the area in which you will be cooking, as well as dining
- Washing your hands for at least 30 seconds under hot running water
- Using rubber gloves if you have a cut or sore on your hands. Rubber gloves are located under the sink in the kitchen
- Wear a mask at all times to protect yourself and others

As you prepare your meal, keep in mind basic food preparation ideals:

- Keep raw meats away from uncooked food. If raw meat spillage occurs on your cooking space disinfect immediately.
- Use assigned cutting boards: labeled cutting boards are for uncooked meats and unlabeled cutting boards are for any other cooking needs.
- No taste testing with your fingers; when you use a spoon, please only use it once.
- Remember the “Food Safety Zone”: keep all cold foods below 40°F and hot foods above 140°F.
- Ensure fruits and vegetables are washed thoroughly.
- No deep frying is permitted.
- Proper cooking kills almost all dangerous microorganisms. Cook food thoroughly, and test your food before serving to make sure following temperatures are reached: Steaks, Roasts, Chops, and Seafood-145°F, Ground Beef and Pork-155°F, Poultry- 165°F, and Eggs-until yolk and white are firm-155°F/

Some other tips:

- Dishware, silverware, utensils, and pots and pans can all be located in this kitchen.
- Please use open bottles of condiments, dressings, and cheeses before opening new ones.
- Our kitchen will be reserved for your volunteer team in order to follow social distancing recommendations by public health.

Please help us keep our kitchen beautiful by leaving the kitchen as you found it:

- Dishes can be placed in the dishwasher located in the kitchen.
- Garbage, recycling, and compost can be placed in the labelled bins and containers.

Nutrition Guidelines

We provide a “home-away-from-home” for the families who stay at our House and visit our Family Rooms. Food is an important part of making our families comfortable; it is our goal that families not only find comfort in the food we provide, but also have access to nutritious food choices during their stay. To promote access to healthy food, please consider the following recommendations when purchasing foods.

Vegetables and Fruit

- Choose fresh or frozen vegetables as often as possible
- When purchasing canned vegetables, look for vegetables that are “reduced in sodium”, “low in salt” or have “no added salt”. Rinse well before using
- Choose canned fruit without added sugar, packed in water or natural fruit juice

Grains

When purchasing pasta, rice, bread, cereal, granola bars, tortillas, pitas, etc.:

- Look for the words “whole grain” or “whole wheat” in the ingredient list
- Choose cereal that has 4g of fiber or more

Dairy & Alternatives

When purchasing milk, yogurt, and alternatives:

- Choose skim, 1% or 2% milk products
- Choose milk alternatives that are fortified with calcium and vitamin D
- Choose yogurt and cheese that have reduced milk fat content

Meat & Alternatives

- Choose “lean” and “extra lean” cuts of meat
- When purchasing canned beans and lentils, choose products that are “reduced in sodium”, “low in salt” or have “no added salt”
- Choose unprocessed meats as often as possible

Pre-packaged Foods

Purchasing pre-packaged foods such as sauces, soups, vegetables and prepared entrees can be part of a well-balanced meal. Reading the nutrition facts label can help guide the decision making process. Here are some helpful tips for reading food labels:

Compare the % Daily Value: less than 5% is a little, more than 15% is a lot.

Aim for less than 5% of: Aim for more than 15% of:	Aim for less than 5% of: Aim for more than 15% of:
<i>Fat Fiber</i>	<i>Fat Fiber</i>
<i>Saturated and trans fat Calcium</i>	<i>Saturated and trans fat Calcium</i>
<i>Sodium (salt) Iron</i>	<i>Sodium (salt) Iron</i>