

EASY & EFFICIENT MEAL PLANNING

Lunch and Learn Handout & Resources



Why Meal Plan?

There are so many benefits to thinking ahead and planning your meals.

- Saves money
- Saves time
- Improves nutrition
- Improves health and well-being



7 Step Strategy to Success



1) Have some core adaptable recipes

Keep recipes simple and easy to tweak. Choose meals your whole family enjoys.

2) Involve the family

Allow everyone to have input. Delegate tasks. Use as a life skill teaching opportunity.

3) Be wise with proteins

Choose lean cuts. Buy less expensive cuts for slow cooker meals and marinades. Plan for plant-based meals like those that include beans and lentils, egg, or quinoa.

4) Plan for and use leftovers

Double or triple the serving size of dishes everyone enjoys. PLAN for leftovers by working them into your meal plan. Get creative with a weekly leftover buffet!

5) Organize your shopping list

Have a master list you work from each week. Shop your pantry, cupboards and freezer first. Let sales dictate what you add on each week. Organize your list by subgroups or aisles.

6) Use local seasonal foods

Seasonal produce offers higher nutritional value, is less expensive, tastier, and supports local farmers and local economy.

7) Plan for 'On the Go'

Don't forget the days on the road. Plan portion-sized snacks, portable meals, or plan for healthy "on the road" options.

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Toolbox and Supports

The New Canada Food Guide has what you need to understand how and what to eat to prevent chronic disease, provide the nutrition your body needs, and maintain a healthy weight.



- No measurements or serving size calculations needed! Healthy eating is simplified.
- A healthy plate should be made up of 25% whole grain, 25% meat and alternatives, and 50% fruits and vegetables.
- Limit dairy, processed foods, and prepare food at home where possible.

Smart Swaps

An easy way to increase the nutrition factor of your meal plan! Take a look at your list, see where you can make a swap for a healthier option. Simple swaps make a big difference.



Yams/Sweet Potatoes	White Potatoes
Oven-roasted chicken/turkey breast, extra-lean ham	Bologna, salami
Brown, wild rice	White rice
Quinoa	Rice
Frozen yogurt or sorbet	Ice Cream
Low-Sodium broth-based soups	Cream based soup
Whole wheat wraps, pitas, crackers, bread	White wraps, pitas, crackers, bread
Frozen pizza with whole wheat, thin crust, chicken, vegetables	Deep dish pizza with pepperoni

Healthy Portable Snacks

A snack should satisfy your hunger and provide energy to sustain you through your day. The easiest way to accomplish this is to pair a protein/fat with a high-fibre carbohydrate. Smart snacking can be an important strategy to keep your energy high when your schedule is hectic. It is important to keep healthy snacks on hand to avoid reaching for a convenient sugary or salty treat.



Greek yogurt – 100g individual size (low sugar)	Apple, pear, orange or kiwi
Cheese portion	Sliced carrots, sugar snap peas, bell peppers
Pumpkin seeds or almonds (1/4 cup)	Apple
Edamame beans (1/2 c. shelled)	Celery sticks and baby carrots
Hardboiled egg + 2 tbsp hummus	2 Roasted beets
Cottage cheese (1/2 cup)	Berries (1/2 cup)
Granola bars, protein bars, homemade healthy muffins: <u>use the 5-5-10 rule!</u>	

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Healthy Portable Snacks There are so many apps to help to make meal planning less daunting. Let an app do the work for you!



- Allrecipes
- Dinner Spinner
- Mealime
- Yummly
- Foodprint
- Pepperplate
- Flip

WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER GUIDE	MONDAY		TUESDAY		
	Breakfast		Breakfast		
	Lunch		Lunch		
	Dinner		Dinner		
	Snack 1		Snack 1		
	Snack 2		Snack 2		
WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Breakfast		Breakfast		Breakfast	
Lunch		Lunch		Lunch	
Dinner		Dinner		Dinner	
Snack 1		Snack 1		Snack 1	
Snack 2		Snack 2		Snack 2	

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Lunch and Learn Resources:

- <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>
- <https://www.cbc.ca/life/food/23-recipes-as-fresh-and-healthy-as-canada-s-new-food-guide-1.4991859>
- <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/page/why-buy-local>
- <https://nutrition.org/study-shows-a-high-fiber-diet-rich-in-plant-protein-is-best-for-gut-microbiota-derived-fatty-acids/>