



# Food Smart

Your guide to eating well



Food is important to all of us. Eating food gives us pleasure and provides our bodies with the fuel it needs to stay alive. When we make smart food choices, we help keep our body strong and healthy.

Food can also make us unhealthy if we eat the wrong kinds of food or eat too much. This booklet will help you figure out how to buy, cook and eat healthy food. You will learn about:

- *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.*
- Healthy food choices from the four food groups.
- Eating enough from each food group every day.
- Healthy serving sizes.
- Meal planning and food shopping.
- How to read nutrition labels on the foods you buy.

Children learn from their parents. Your children will copy your eating habits. This booklet teaches you about healthy eating choices for adults and children over the age of two so that you and your family can enjoy a healthy life.

Don't forget that eating well is only one part of healthy living. Keeping your body active is important as well. Eating the right amount of healthy foods and being active every day is a good way to keep your body healthy.

For more information on healthy eating and active living go to **[www.healthyalberta.com](http://www.healthyalberta.com)**

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# Your food **smart dictionary**

Use these pages to help you understand words in this booklet. When these words and short forms are used, this is what they mean:

## **Measurements**

- tsp = teaspoon
- tbsp = tablespoon (larger than a teaspoon)
- L = litre
- mL = millilitre (1,000 millilitres equals 1 litre)
- CFG serving = The amount of a food considered to be a single serving by *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (CFG).
- % Daily Value = The amount of a nutrient (like vitamin C) that is in a food compared to how much of that nutrient an average person needs each day.

## **Weights**

- oz = ounce
- lb = pound
- g = gram
- kg = kilogram (1,000 grams equals 1 kilogram)

## Food terms

- Saturated fat = A solid fat that makes unhealthy fats in your body.
- Trans fat = Similar to saturated fat, but usually made artificially. Trans fat can be found naturally in small amounts in milk and some meat, but most of the trans fats we eat come from manufactured (processed) foods.
- Unsaturated fat = Sometimes called monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats, these types of fats are healthy fats. Unsaturated fat is found in olive and canola oil, flax seeds, peanuts, avocados, fish, seafood, nuts and sunflower seeds.
- Non-hydrogenated margarine = A healthy margarine/fat choice because it is **not** made with hydrogenated oil.
- Carbohydrate = Includes starch, sugar and fibre. Carbohydrates are nutrients found in grains, vegetables, fruits and milk products.
- Fibre = A material found in plant foods. It helps food move all the way through your digestive system.
- Protein = A material found in meats and meat alternatives such as eggs, lentils and nuts. It helps build many parts of the body, including muscle, bone, skin and blood.
- Sodium = A mineral found in our soil (dirt). It is used in table salt and packaged foods. Our bodies need a little bit of sodium, but too much is not healthy.

# Your food **smart** pictionary



Thermos – Keeps food hot.



Freezer pack – Keeps food cold.

1 tbsp or 15 mL

1 tsp or 5 mL

1/2 tsp or 2.5 mL

1/4 tsp or 1 mL



Measuring spoons

**or**

Tablespoon



Teaspoon





Wet ingredient measuring cup



1/4 cup or 60 mL

3/4 cup or 175 mL

1/3 cup or 80 mL

1/2 cup or 125 mL

1 cup or 250 mL

Dry ingredient measuring cups

# Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide describes four food groups

For each food group, *Canada's Food Guide* recommends healthy food choices and serving sizes for adults and children over the age of two.

## Tip

- Canned, cooked, sliced, diced, fresh, frozen or dried, vegetables and fruit are all good for you!

## Tip

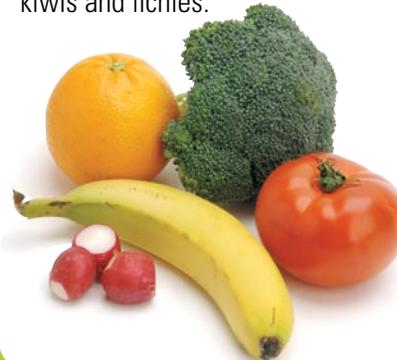
- Choose whole grains.

## Vegetables and Fruit

Examples of healthy choices are:

**Vegetables:** carrots, peas, green and yellow beans, beets, cabbage, broccoli, bok choy, onions and radishes.

**Fruit:** tomatoes, apples, oranges, bananas, berries, pears, mangos, kiwis and liches.



## Grain Products

Examples of healthy choices are:

Pasta, rice, cereals, breads, naan, roti, pita pocket, bun, bannock, sub bun, bagel, steam bun and couscous.



## Milk and Alternatives

Examples of healthy choices are: Milk (2%, 1%, skim), yogurt (plain and low fat), hard cheese (cheddar and mozzarella) and fortified soy beverage.



## Meat and Alternatives

Examples of healthy choices are: Beef (hamburger), chicken, turkey, wild game, pork (ham), lamb, fish, eggs, beans (kidney beans, pinto beans, chick peas, black beans, soy beans) and lentils (red, brown, green, orange).



## Tip

- Make low-fat choices.

For more choices refer to *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*.



**VISIT CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE ONLINE**

[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

If you do not have access to the Internet you can pick up a copy of the food guide at your local community health centre.



# How to follow *Canada's Food Guide*

## How much should you eat?

The amount you need to eat to be healthy depends on:

- your age
- how active you are
- your height and weight
- whether you are male or female
- if you are pregnant or breastfeeding

***Canada's Food Guide gives advice for anyone over two years old. Use Canada's Food Guide for general advice.***

Depending on your age, an example of a meal plan for people who sit all day and do not exercise includes:

- at least 5 servings of Vegetables and Fruit;
- at least 5 servings of Grain Products;
- at least 2 servings of Milk and Alternatives; and,
- at least 2 servings of Meat and Alternatives.

The next few pages show examples of meals used in this plan. Watch how the daily servings add up with each meal.

# Morning meal



**Grain Products**

1 serving:

- 3/4 cup or 175 mL shredded wheat cereal

**Milk and Alternatives**

1 serving:

- 1 cup or 250 mL of milk

**Vegetables and Fruit**

1 serving of fruit:

- 1/2 cup or 125 mL fruit juice

Total servings for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Vegetables and Fruit					
Grain Products					
Milk and Alternatives					
Meat and Alternatives					



## Midday meal

### Meat and Alternatives

- 1 serving:
- 2 to 3 oz or 50 to 76 g of tuna fish

### Grain Products

- 2 servings:
- 2 halves of a whole wheat pita

### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 serving:
- 1 cup or 250 mL of milk

### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1 serving of vegetables:
- 1/2 cup or 125 mL carrot sticks and shredded lettuce
- 1 serving of fruit:
- 1 small apple



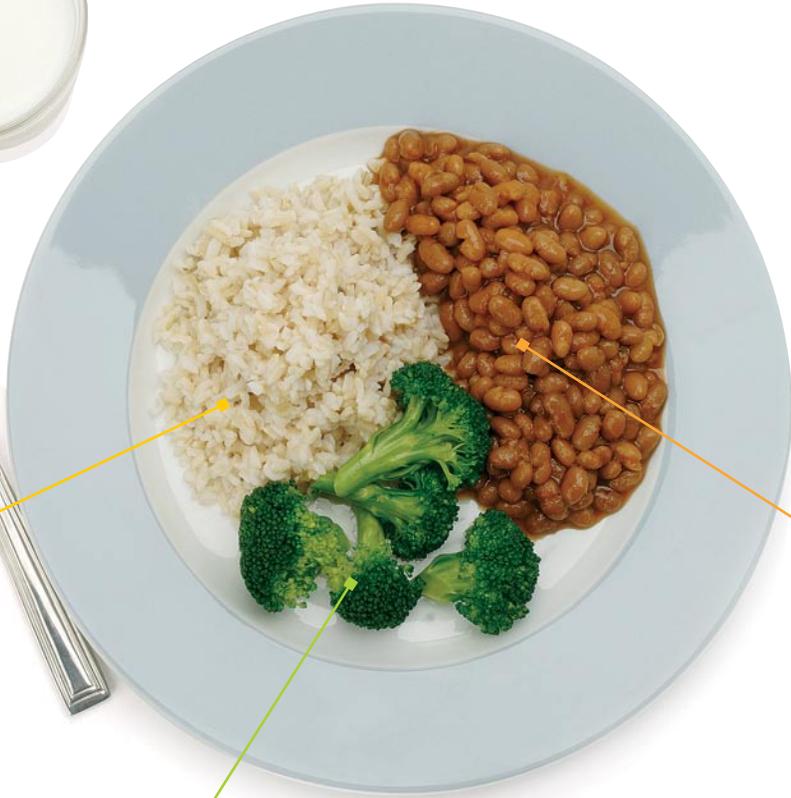
Total servings for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Vegetables and Fruit					
Grain Products					
Milk and Alternatives					
Meat and Alternatives					

## Evening meal



### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 serving:
- 1 cup or 250 mL of milk



### Grain Products

- 2 servings:
- 1 cup or 250 mL of cooked rice

### Meat and Alternatives

- 1 serving:
- 3/4 cup or 175 mL of baked beans

### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1 serving:
- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of broccoli

Total servings for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Vegetables and Fruit					
Grain Products					
Milk and Alternatives					
Meat and Alternatives					



## Snack



### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1 serving:
- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of sliced pear

Total servings for the day	1	2	3	4	5
Vegetables and Fruit					
Grain Products					
Milk and Alternatives					
Meat and Alternatives					

Age and activity level affects how much you should eat. The table on the right will help you figure out what amounts are healthy for you each day.

Young children age two years to five years need child-size servings which are half to one serving suggested in *Canada's Food Guide*.

### Tip

Children, depending on their age and activity level, need healthy small snacks between meals.

## Canada's Food Guide recommended daily servings

	Vegetables and Fruit	Grain Products	Milk and Alternatives	Meat and Alternatives
Young children 2 – 8 years	4 – 5 servings	3 – 4 servings	2 servings	1 serving
Adults and seniors who sit most of the day and do not exercise, and those who need to lose weight	6 – 7 servings	5 servings	2 – 3 servings	2 – 3 servings
Teenagers	7 – 8 servings	6 – 7 servings	3 – 4 servings	2 – 3 servings
Adults who get daily activity	7 – 8 servings	6 – 7 servings	2 servings	2 – 3 servings
Pregnant and breastfeeding women*	7 – 9 servings	6 – 8 servings	2 servings	2 – 3 servings

\* Pregnant and breastfeeding women need more calories, therefore they include an extra 2 to 3 CFG servings each day.

# Are you eating **too much food**?

A healthy serving is a *Canada's Food Guide* serving. The size of that serving depends on the type of food you are eating. Some foods count as more than one serving. You should make sure you know how many servings are in the food you eat, so that you can avoid eating more than your body needs. Eating more can cause you to gain weight.

***Whole grains are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. What kind of whole grains do you like to eat? Have you tried barley, brown rice, oats, quinoa and wild rice?***

## Grain Products

Here are some examples of what one serving of grains from CFG is:

Bread



= **1 slice**

Naan



= **1/2 naan**

Pita



= **1/2 pita**

Dry cereal



= **1 cup  
or 250 mL**

Granola-type cereal



= **1/3 cup  
or 80 mL**

Oatmeal



= **3/4 cup  
or 175 mL  
cooked**

Bun



= 1/2 bun

Rice



= 1/2 cup  
or 125 mL  
cooked

Pasta



= 1/2 cup  
or 125 mL  
cooked

Large store-bought  
or fast-food bagel



= 4 to 5  
CFG servings

6" sub bun



= 3 CFG  
servings

6" diameter  
pita or naan or roti



= 2 CFG  
servings

Store-bought foods may  
contain several *Canada's  
Food Guide* servings.

Store-bought  
or fast-food muffin

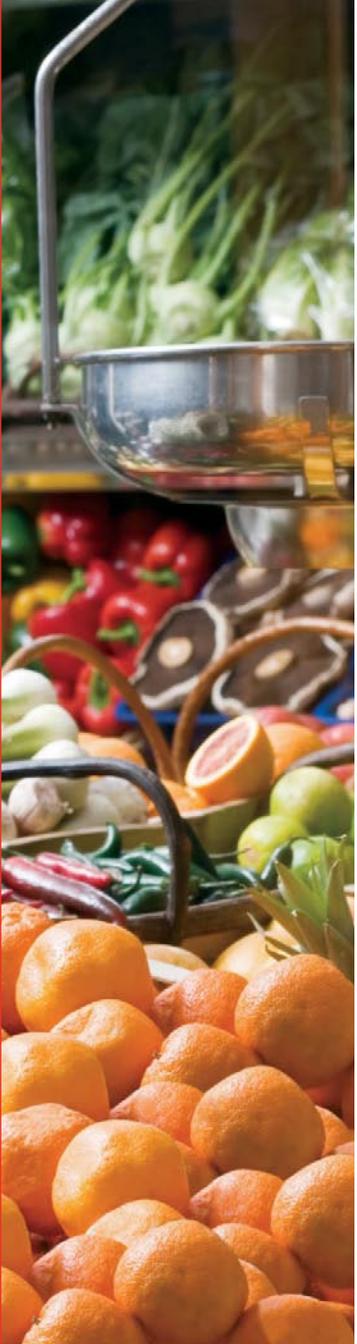


= 2 to 3  
CFG servings



Some cereal bowls  
are large enough to hold

4 CFG servings  
of cereal



## Vegetables and Fruit

Here are some examples of what one serving of fruit or vegetables from CFG is:

Dried fruit



= 1/4 cup  
or 60 mL

Canned, cooked,  
sliced or diced



= 1/2 cup  
or 125 mL

Whole fruit  
e.g. (1) apple or (1) orange



= about the  
size of 1  
tennis ball

100% Juice



= 1/2 cup  
or 125 mL

Juice box  
100% Juice - 250 mL



= 2 SERVINGS

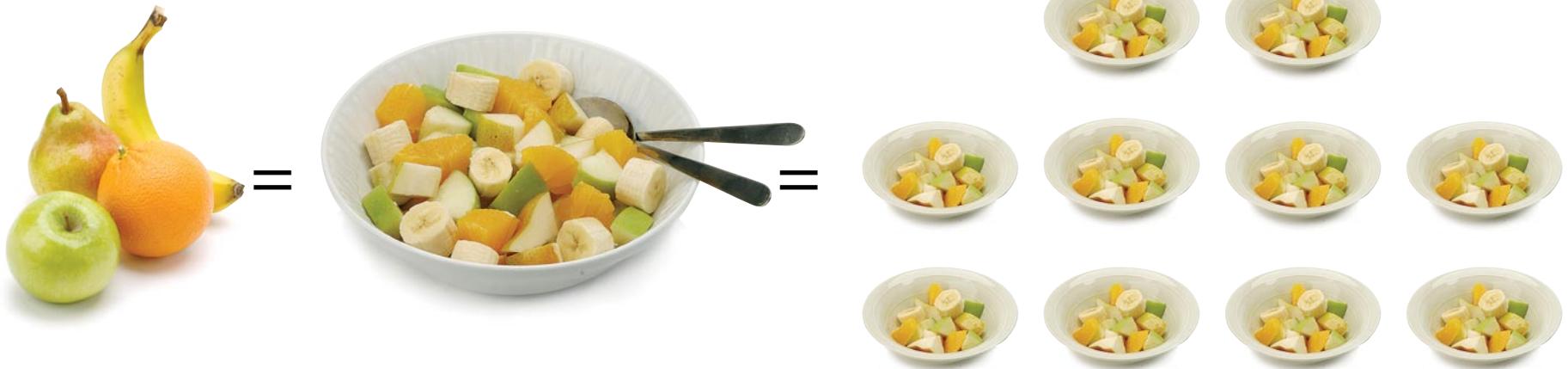
### Tip

- Choose canned vegetables with little or no added salt.
- Choose canned fruit that is packaged with no added sugar.

Try to limit 100% juice to 1/2 cup (125 mL) per day, which is only 1/2 of a juice box. Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

## What you buy in the store is bigger than you think

Make a fruit salad by cutting up:



**1 apple + 1 banana  
+ 1 orange + 1 pear**

**=**

**10  
servings**

**=**

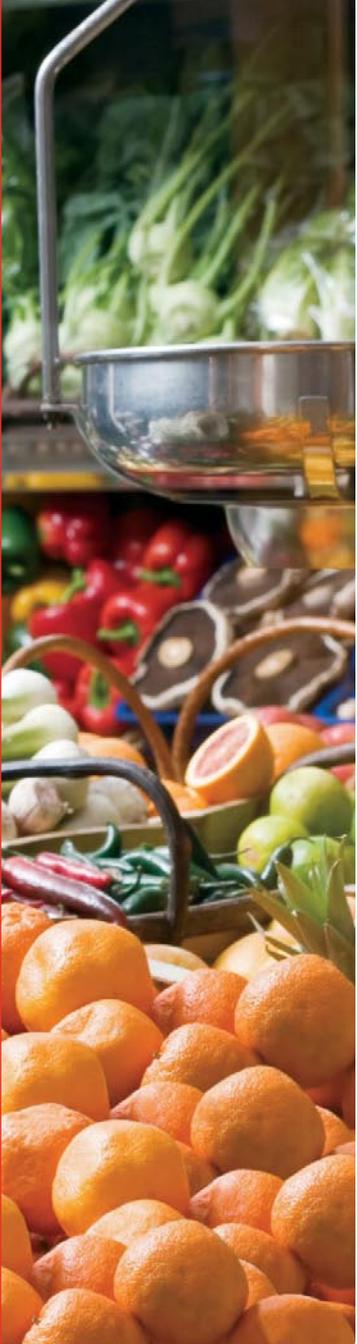
**(1/2 cup or 125 mL each)  
CFG serving**

## Tip

Make sure the juices you buy are 100% juice.

Fruit drinks, fruit-ades (like lemonade), fruit punches, beverages and cocktails are mostly sugar and water.

Most fruit you buy in the store is larger than the tennis ball size serving.



## Milk and Alternatives

Here are some examples of what one serving of milk or alternatives from CFG is:

Fluid milk or fortified soy beverages, low-fat



**= 1 cup  
or 250 mL**

Yogurt  
(plain and low-fat)



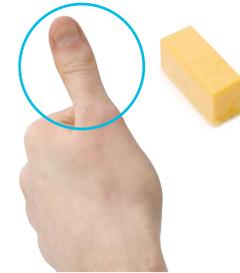
**= 3/4 cup  
or 175 mL**

Cheese slices  
(store-bought)



**= 2 slices**

Hard cheese  
(eg. cheddar and mozzarella)



**= 50 g  
or length of thumb**

## Did you know...

Your body needs calcium to make bones, teeth and muscles strong. Vitamin D helps your body absorb the calcium from milk and fortified soy beverages. To make vitamin D, your body needs sunlight, but during the winter Canada doesn't get enough sunlight for you to make all the vitamin D you need. That's why vitamin D is already added to milk and fortified soy beverages.



## Did you know...

Drinking milk with meals and water to quench thirst is a healthy habit. You can save money and avoid a lot of extra sugar by not buying pop or fruit-flavoured drinks.



## Meat and Alternatives

Here are some examples of what one serving of meat or alternatives from CFG is:

Meat, fish, poultry



**= 2 to 3 oz  
or 50 to 75 g  
or size of palm  
of hand**

Eggs  
(small)



**= 1 to 2 eggs**

Nut butters



**= 1 to 2 tbsp  
or 15 to 30 mL**

Tofu

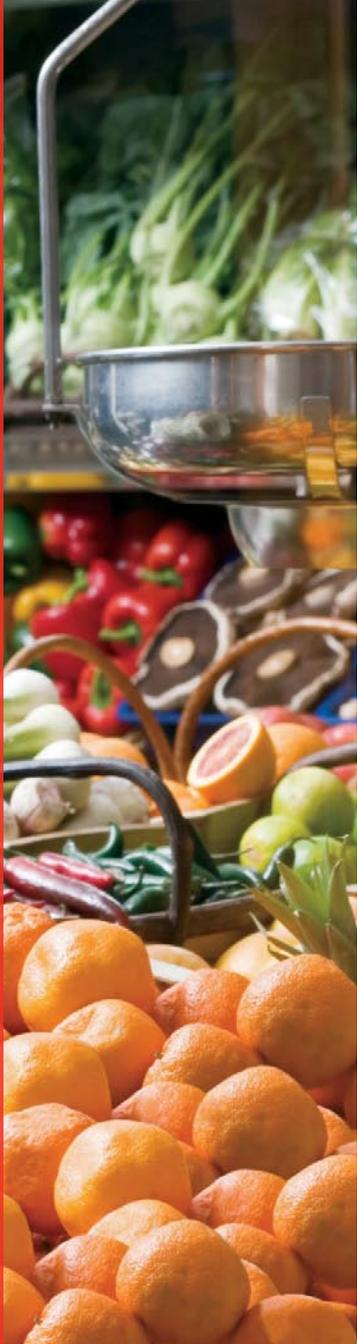


**= 1/3 cup  
or 75 mL**

Beans, lentils and legumes  
(eg. black beans, chick peas, split peas)



**= 1/2 cup to 1 cup  
or 125 mL or 250 mL**



## How to calculate the number of servings in a package of raw meat.

### 1. Find the weight listed on the package.

Is it in kilograms (kg) or grams (g)?

- a. If it is kilograms (kg), you will need to calculate the weight into grams.  
Go to step 2.
- b. If it is in grams, go to step 3.

### 2. Calculate the weight in grams.

Multiply the weight in kilograms by 1,000.

### 3. Calculate the number of servings in the package.

A serving for one person is about 80 grams of uncooked meat. Divide the weight of the package (in grams) by 80.

## Tip

Lean and skinless meats are healthy choices. Regular meats might have a lower price, but you may be paying for skin and fat that you would probably cut off and throw away at home.

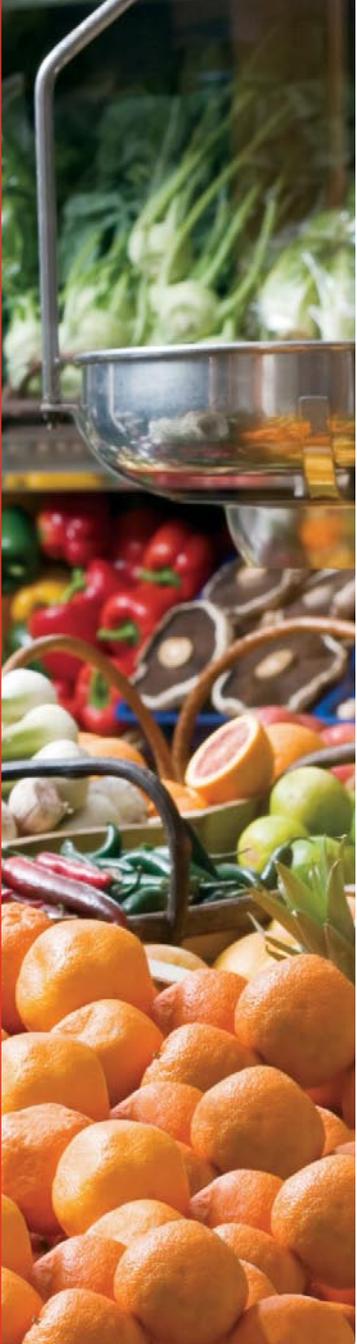


Example:

1. This package of meat says the weight is 0.400 kg.
2.  $0.400 \text{ kg} \times 1,000 = 400 \text{ grams}$
3.  $400 \div 80 = 5 \text{ servings}$

So the package contains 5 CFG servings of meat.

**Note:** If the meat in the package has bones, then a serving size is 85 grams. Divide the weight of the package by 85 instead of 80.



### Is sugar bad for me?

Sugar is a source of energy found naturally in foods like vegetables, fruits and milk products. These foods are healthy sources of sugar because they also contain important vitamins and minerals. Foods with added sugar in them, like pop, chocolate bars, hard candies, ice cream, cakes and

sugar cereals are unhealthy choices because they contain too much sugar and very few other nutrients. If you do eat these foods, make one choice and have it only once a week. Always remember to brush your teeth after eating to protect your teeth from cavities.

### Did you know...

A large bowl full of sugar sweetened cereal (4 servings) has just as much sugar as one can of pop! Would you serve your child a can of pop for breakfast?



## Is salt bad for me?

Your body needs only a small amount of salt, also called sodium. Small amounts of sodium are found naturally in almost all foods. If you make healthy food choices daily, you will provide your body with all the sodium it needs. Foods that come in packages contain added sodium to prevent the food from spoiling on the shelf. Eating a lot of packaged foods can give your body too much sodium, which can cause problems like high blood pressure.

## What about water?

If you are thirsty, have a drink of water. In Canada the water that comes from the tap is safe to drink. You already pay monthly for the water from the tap. You do not need to spend extra money on bottled water. When you move to a new place to live, you can phone your community health centre and ask if there are any water warnings.

If you use bottled water to make baby milk, you must boil the water first.

## Is fat bad for me?

Fat is found naturally in foods like meats, nuts, some plants, and milk products. But your body only needs a small amount of fat to keep it healthy. When adding fatty ingredients like butter, margarine or oil to your foods, use small amounts and look for foods that only have healthy fats. Saturated fat and trans fat are unhealthy fats. Monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat are better choices.

Fats like oil, butter, margarine, mayonnaise and salad dressings add flavour to foods but eating too much can make you gain weight. Foods like cakes, pies, chocolate bars, doughnuts, potato chips and french fries are very high in fat and are not good choices for your body.



# Healthy eating **checklist**

Look at the quiz on the next page. Can you answer “yes” to most or all of these questions? If you can, congratulations. You are eating healthy.

If not, this is a good time to think about the changes you can make to eat healthy.



**These questions refer to what you eat every day.**

1. Do you eat at least 5 servings of whole grain rice, cereal, bread, naan, pita, or pasta?
2. Do you eat at least 5 servings of vegetables and fruits?
3. Do you eat at least 2 to 3 servings of milk or alternatives?
4. Do you eat at least 2 servings of meats or alternatives?
5. Do you use less than 2 to 3 tablespoons of oils, non-hydrogenated margarine, butter and salad dressing when you prepare your food to eat?
6. Do you eat very little sugar-filled and high-fat food, such as sugary drinks, cakes, cookies, pies, candy, fried potatoes and potato chips?
7. Do you eat very little salt (sodium)?

Yes

No



# Plan your meals **using a weekly menu**

Save time and money by planning a week of meals *before* you go grocery shopping. With a plan, you will buy fewer food items that you don't need and make fewer trips to the store.

Here's what you'll need:

- a copy of *Canada's Food Guide*,
- recipes that you and your family like to eat, and
- a piece of paper divided into a table like the one to the right.

This is an activity the whole family can do together.

Plan your evening meal first.

**Step 1** Choose the meal. What is the meat or alternative?

**Step 2** Choose the vegetable.

**Step 3** Choose the grains.

**Step 4** Choose the milk product or fortified soy beverage.

**Now you have evening meals planned for a week using all four food groups!** Next, plan your morning and midday meals by following the same easy steps.

# Weekly Menu

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning Meal							
Midday Meal							
Evening Meal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Chicken Curry</li><li>2. Broccoli</li><li>3. Pasta</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Black Bean Casserole</li><li>2. (includes vegetables)</li><li>3. Cucumber slices</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lentil Soup</li><li>2. Carrot Sticks</li><li>3. Whole Wheat Bread</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Scrambled Egg Wrap</li><li>2. Tomato slices</li><li>3. Pita or Tortilla Wrapper</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Hamburger</li><li>2. Celery Sticks</li><li>3. Whole Wheat Bun</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fish</li><li>2. Green Beans</li><li>3. Brown Rice</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Homemade Pizza</li><li>2. Green Salad</li><li>3. (includes crust)</li><li>4. Milk</li></ol>
Daily Activities							

## Tip

When you are planning your evening meals make sure to plan for extra servings. You can use the leftovers for lunch the next day. Don't forget to include a piece of fruit for lunch.



# Packing healthy lunches

## Lunch idea #1

Lunches should include at least one choice from each of the four food groups. Here are some ideas if you do not have leftovers to use.

**Vegetables and Fruit**

- 1 apple

**Milk and Alternatives**

- 2 cheese slices

**Meat and Alternatives**

- 75 g of sliced meat

**Grain Products**

- 2 slices of whole wheat bread



## Lunch idea #2

### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 cup or 250 mL of 1% chocolate milk

### Grain Products

- 1 whole wheat tortilla wrap
- 1/4 cup or 60 mL of rice

### Meat and Alternatives

- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of beans

### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1/4 cup or 60 mL of shredded carrot
- 2 tbsp or 30 mL of diced celery
- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of sliced canteloupe



### Lunch idea #3



#### Grain Products

- 4" long whole wheat sub bun

#### Meat and Alternatives

- 75 g of sliced turkey meat

#### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 cup or 250 mL of 1% or skim milk

#### Vegetables and Fruit

- lettuce and tomato slices
- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of grapes



Here are some more lunch ideas to choose from:

Vegetables and Fruit	Grain Products	Milk and Alternatives	Meat and Alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celery sticks</li> <li>• Banana</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat pita</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheese string (1 stick)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrambled eggs (for pita)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrot sticks</li> <li>• Apple</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat bun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk—1% or skim</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuna salad</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut vegetables with dip</li> <li>• Peach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noodles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yogurt—plain or low-fat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meatballs and sauce</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honeydew melon balls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pizza shell (individual—6")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortified soy beverage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ham or chicken (topping for pizza)</li> </ul>

## Tip

If you don't have a thermos or small freezer pack, it is hard to pack cold milk for children's lunches. Pack a water bottle instead. Your child can have a glass of milk or fortified soy beverage as an after school snack.



# Remember to eat a morning meal

Eating in the morning is very important. Your body needs the energy from food to work well each day. Your children will also do better in school if they eat in the morning. You can eat just about any food for breakfast, but try to use foods from at least three of the four food groups.

## Another breakfast idea

- Rice with beans, fortified soy beverage and melon slices

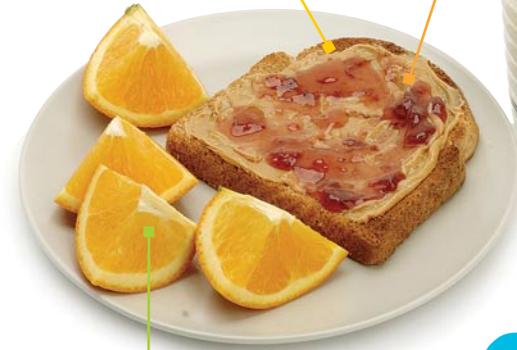
## Breakfast idea #1

### Grain Products

- 1 slice of toast

### Meat and Alternatives

- 1 tbsp of peanut butter



### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1 medium orange

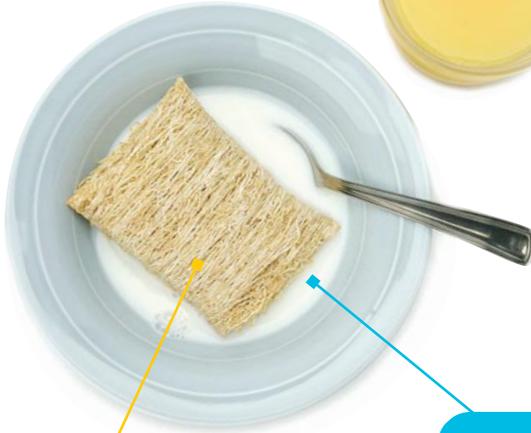
### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 cup or 250 mL of milk

## Breakfast idea #2

### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of 100% juice



### Grain Products

- 3/4 cup or 175 mL of cereal

### Milk and Alternatives

- 1 cup or 250 mL of milk

## Breakfast idea #3

### Vegetables and Fruit

- 1/2 cup or 125 mL of fruit



### Grain Products

- 3/4 cup or 175 mL of cereal

### Milk and Alternatives

- 3/4 cup or 175 mL of yogurt

## Foods to keep **in your cupboard**

These are foods you should keep in your fridge:

- Milk
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Cut vegetables (carrots, celery) ready to eat in a container

This picture shows some foods that will last a long time and that you will use often. Keeping them in your cupboard saves time and money (you can buy them in bulk or on sale without worrying that they will spoil).

- Build up your cupboard supplies by buying a few of these foods with each shopping trip.
- Use discount food coupons from newspapers and flyers to make your food budget go farther.
- Only buy the foods and spices that you and your family will eat.
- Make sure to store these foods in airtight containers to make them last even longer.



# Buying food **for a recipe**

Sometimes it is hard to know how much of an ingredient you need to buy for a recipe. Here is a guide to help you.

## Tip

- Help your children make healthy choices. Keep healthy snacks in your cupboard instead of pop, chips and candy. If unhealthy foods are not in your cupboard, your children will learn to choose healthy snacks.
- Promote healthy habits. Reward your children with non-food rewards such as extra story reading. Or find something fun and active to do with them. Play outside with them or go swimming together. Go for a walk or play in the snow.

1 kg of rice



**= 6 cups or 1500 mL uncooked rice (12 cups or 3000 mL cooked rice)**

450 g of pasta



**= 4 cups or 1000 mL of uncooked pasta**



1/2 cup  
uncooked rice

**= 1 cup or 250 mL  
cooked rice**

1 kg of sugar



**= 4 1/2 cups or 875 mL  
of sugar**

1 kg of brown sugar



**= 5 cups or 1250 mL  
of brown sugar**

1 L of milk



**= 4 cups or 1000 mL  
of milk**

450 g of spaghetti



**= 6 cups or 1500 mL  
cooked spaghetti**

1 kg of flour



**= 9 cups or 2250 mL  
of flour**

450 g of cheese



**= 4 cups or 1000 mL  
of grated cheese**

450 g of non-hydrogenated  
margarine



**= 2 cups or 500 mL  
of non-hydrogenated  
margarine**

# How can I shop for healthy food and stay within my budget?

Writing a list before you go to the grocery store helps you shop better. Keep looking at your list so you buy only what you need.

## Step 1

Write down the four food groups and add “Extras” as circled on the next page.

## Step 2

Look at your menu plan for the week and decide what food you need to buy. Check your cupboards for the food you keep on hand like flour and spices. These are “Extras.”

## Notice how your grocery store is set up.

Most grocery stores put healthy choices from the four food groups on the outside edges of the grocery store. High fat, high sugar, packaged foods are usually in the centre aisles of the store. These pre-packaged foods usually cost more and are not as healthy.

More expensive items are often placed where you can easily see them at the ends of aisles.

## Tip

Eat before you shop for food—you will buy less and make better food choices if you are not hungry.

## Grocery List

### Vegetables and Fruits

- Apples
- Bananas
- Oranges
- Juice - 100%

### Grain Products

- Bread
- Naan
- Sub-buns (3)

### Milk and Alternatives

- Milk - 1% or Low Fat
- Fortified Soy Beverage
- Cheddar Cheese

### Meats and Alternatives

- Hamburger
- Lentils
- Tofu

### Extras

- Cinnamon
- Cumin
- Flour
- Non-hydrogenated Margarine
- Salad dressing (dip)

*Stay focused on your grocery list and compare prices. The store brand is not always the best buy.*

# Reading the ingredients label and nutrition facts label

Reading labels and using *Canada's Food Guide* is a great way to make the healthiest food choices for your family. Read the ingredients label and the nutrition facts label before you purchase food. You will learn different things from each label.

## Ingredients label

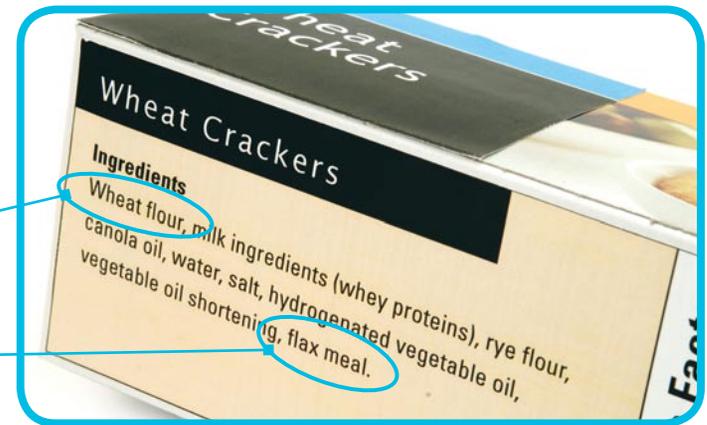
Food packages list all the ingredients that are used to make the food. This list is always written in order of amounts: the package will contain the most of the first ingredient and the least of the last ingredient listed.

For example, this label was found on a box of wheat crackers:

- These crackers have more wheat flour than any other ingredient.
- These crackers have less flax meal than any other ingredient.

Ingredients lists are useful for people with food allergies and for people who want to avoid or limit certain ingredients for health reasons.

Read the ingredients list and avoid foods that use the words: shortening, hard margarine, butter, hydrogenated oil or partially hydrogenated oil. They will contain unhealthy fat.



## Nutrition facts label

The nutrition facts label provides information about one serving of the food. Each package usually holds more than one serving.

- The company that makes the food decides how big a serving size is and lists how much of each nutrient is in one serving. **Often the serving size on the package is more than a CFG serving.** This label tells us that one serving is six crackers.

The label will tell you the amount of fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates (fibre and sugar), protein, vitamins (A and C) and minerals (calcium and iron) contained in one serving. This label tells us that there is both saturated and trans fat in one serving. These crackers would not be a healthy choice.



The % daily value shows whether a food is high or low in nutrients. As a quick guide,

- 5% is low—the food provides a small amount of the nutrient.
- 20% is high—the food provides a large amount of the nutrient.

This label tells us this food has 23% sodium. These crackers provide a large amount of sodium. For a healthy choice, choose crackers with 5% or less sodium per serving.



# How do I know if my food is safe to eat?

There are four rules for keeping food safe to eat.

## Rule 1: Keep it clean.

This means *everything* in the kitchen—your hands, the food, cooking tools like pots and spoons, dishcloths, kitchen towels and countertops.

- Wash your hands **before** handling food.
- Wash your hands, the sink and the countertop **after** handling meat or eggs.
- Use water (**not** soap and water) to wash all fruits and vegetables.
- Keep one plastic cutting board for raw meat **only**. Wash the cutting board with soap and water right after you use it.
- Keep a second plastic cutting board for fruits and vegetables **only**. Wash it well, too.

## Rule 2: Keep it separate.

- Put raw meat in a separate area of the fridge in a plastic bag or on a plate. Don't let raw meat touch other food.
- Make sure meat is well cooked to kill any possible germs.
- Don't use cracked or dirty eggs.

### Rule 3: Keep it fresh.

Many food items have **Best Before Dates** or **Expiry Dates** on the package or label.

- An **Expiry Date** means “Don’t use the food after this date.”
- A **Best Before Date** means that the food is best if you use it before that date.
- If you aren’t sure you can eat the food, you can make a free phone call to Food Safety Alberta at 1-800-892-8333.

### Rule 4: Keep it cold.

- When shopping for food, try to put the cold items (meat, milk, cheese) in your cart last to prevent spoiling.
- Refrigerator foods should feel cold. Frozen foods should feel very cold and solid. If they don’t, you should not buy them.
- Keep the cold foods cold. Put them away in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible.



# Recipes **on the Internet**

Don't forget to visit the website **[www.healthyalberta.com](http://www.healthyalberta.com)** for quick and easy recipes. You'll find recipes for tasty meals you can make for breakfast, lunch and dinner. New recipes are added each month. Enjoy!



Alberta



March 2008  
NCN1428A  
ISBN: 978-0-7785-6670-0

