



Promoting healthy eating to employees

As an employer, you are uniquely positioned to promote healthy eating to your employees. To encourage and support healthy eating habits, try a few of these practical suggestions.

- Provide a safe, clean eating space for employees who prefer to bring food from home.
- Provide a refrigerator for safe storage of food and a microwave for food preparation.
- Include healthy choices in vending machines and on your menu if you have a workplace cafeteria or canteen.
- At staff gatherings and meetings, provide or encourage staff to bring healthy meals or snacks.
- Offer healthy eating tips and topics on your intranet, via email or in company newsletters. You can also consider sharing staff suggestions for healthy recipes.
- Offer occasional “lunch and learn” sessions led by health professionals. This can be an effective way for employees to discuss healthy eating topics. At these sessions, you can provide healthy lunches and snacks or encourage employees to bring their own.

Examples of topics that these sessions can address include

- how to follow Canada’s Food Guide;
- how to shop and plan for making healthier meals;
- reducing consumption of sugars and salt;
- understanding cholesterol and various fats;
- reading nutrition and food labels and making smart choices when grocery shopping; and
- how healthy eating can help support weight management and prevent health problems like high blood pressure, diabetes and heart conditions.

At each session, we suggest that you provide accurate information in plain language for your employees. For instance, you can provide examples of a what a one-week

meal plan and shopping list looks like, with plans geared toward a single person, couples or even larger families.

Use reliable information sources

Ensure the food and nutrition information you provide to employees is based on reliable sources—like Canada’s Food Guide or the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Adults.

Canada’s Food Guide recommends, by age and gender, how much food you need daily from each of the four food groups:

- vegetables and fruit,
- grain products,
- milk and alternatives, and
- meat and alternatives.

Here are some basic recommendations you can share with your employees:

- aim for variety across these four food groups;
- make water your default drink when thirsty;
- eat at least one dark green vegetable (for example, broccoli) and one orange (for example, carrots) each day;
- eat vegetables with little or no added fat, sugar or salt;
- make sure at least half of your daily grain portions consist of whole grain products;
- drink two cups of skim, one per cent or two per cent milk each day to get adequate vitamin D;
- enjoy meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often; and
- eat at least two servings of fish each week.

Refer to [Canada’s Food Guide](#) for more details and recommendations. Consider providing copies of the guide to your employees or refer them to the guide online using the link provided.

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