

Healthy Eating 101

Our environment is filled with information, recommendations, and guidelines on “Healthy Eating”. It can be overwhelming to choose where to start and what information to trust.

A “healthy diet” can look different from one person to another. A healthy diet may include traditional foods, celebrations with others, trips to the farmers market, and even eating out!



Photo from <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

Follow these steps to get started in making healthy lifestyle changes:

1. Eat three meals daily at regular times and space the meals four to six hours apart.
2. Follow the [Canada's Food Guide](#) Well-Balanced Plate. This includes half a plate of vegetables, one-quarter plate of high fibre grains and starch, and one-quarter plate of lean protein.
3. Start [meal planning](#) and include well-balanced meals and variety in your dietary intake.
4. Eat more high-fibre foods such as [whole grain](#) breads and cereals, lentils, quinoa, bulgur, steel cut oats, dried beans, and peas.
5. Eat a variety of vegetables as they are high in nutrients and fibre. If you struggle with [picky or selective eating](#) in your home provide new vegetables multiple times and in many different ways.
6. Choose whole fruits in place of fruit juices.
7. Choose lean animal proteins and fish at least twice a week. Select plant-based protein more often.
8. Choose plant oils such as olive and canola and nuts instead of animal fats. Limit your portion of nuts and seeds to a quarter cup per day.
9. Eat desserts and foods with added sugars in moderation and enjoy small portions.
10. Choose [healthy methods of cooking](#): baking, grilling, broiling, steaming, roasting, pressure-cooking, stir-frying, slow-cooking, no-cook. Limit added saturated and trans fats, salt, and sugar.
11. Read the [nutrition facts table](#) and choose foods that are high in nutrients, fibre, and protein and low in salt, saturated and trans fats, and added sugar.

12. When getting takeout or eating at a restaurant choose a meal that includes vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein sources. Choose water instead of a sugar sweetened beverage.
13. Hydrate yourself with [water](#) and plain milk most often. Avoid high calorie drinks like juice, pop, energy drinks, and alcohol.
14. Practice intuitive or [mindful eating](#) through responding to your physical hunger and fullness cues most often.
15. Follow a well-balanced diet and incorporate regular physical activity to support a [healthy weight](#) for you.
16. At mealtimes eat together as a family, away from distractions most often. Parents decide what is offered, when meals are offered, and where meals are offered. Provide children with choices from each food group.
17. Include 150 minutes of [physical activity](#) weekly for adults and one hour daily for children. Being active has many benefits and there are many ways of staying active so choose a way that you enjoy!

References:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/healthy-living.html>

