



MENU PLANNING BASICS AND GUIDE

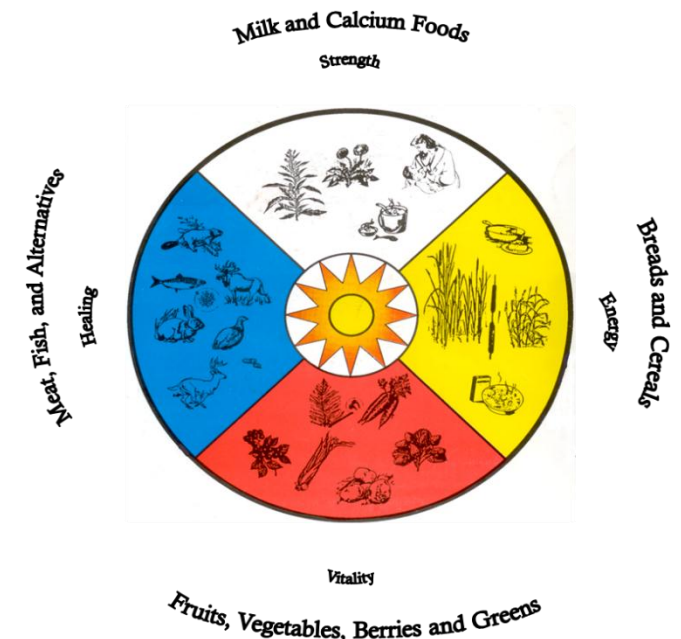
Menu Planning Basics

Remember: Use the Healthy Eating Guidelines as a resource for great menu planning!

- When making breakfast or lunch: offer at least 3 of the 4 food groups. For snacks, offer 2 of the 4 food groups including 1 serving from the *Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens* group.
- The weekly menu should include a variety of foods from
 - the **most often** category
 - all 4 of the food groups.For example, serve chicken, lean traditional game, legumes and fish on different days of the week.
- Serving sizes for the different foods should be the same as the ones shown in the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
- Balance higher-cost menu items with lower-cost items. When possible, buy shelf-stable foods in bulk. This will cut costs. Try to work with your local grocery store to learn how to purchase the healthiest foods at the lowest possible price.
- Plan a 2 to 4 week cycle menu. Get parents, staff and students to help in menu planning. There will be better buy-in from everyone!

Meals: include **3 of the 4** food groups

Snacks: include **2 of the 4** food groups



Ontario

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Getting Started with Menu Planning

Below are a variety of foods from the **most often** item category of all 4 food groups. Choose from these items and others in the Healthy Eating Guidelines to build healthy meals and snacks:

Breads and Cereals	Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens	Meat, Fish, and Alternatives	Milk and Calcium Foods
Energy	Vitality	Healing	Strength
Baked bannock/scone with whole wheat flour	Fresh/frozen berries: e.g., blueberries, raspberries, cranberries, strawberries	Peanut butter*	Chilled white or flavoured (fresh) or tetra shelf stable (UHT) milk with a % milk fat of less than 2%
Bread/toast: whole grain, multigrain, whole wheat (brown), enriched	Whole fruit: e.g., apple, pear, banana	Nuts*: e.g., almonds, walnuts, pecans	Milk based smoothies. Use milk with 2% milk fat or less
Oatmeal, oat bran hot cereal	Frozen mixed berries/fruit	Seeds*: e.g., sunflower, pumpkin	Yogurt with 2% milk fat or less
Low sugar, high fibre cereal. For example, cereal that contains bran, oat bran, corn bran	Unsweetened apple sauce	Scrambled or fried eggs in oil	Yogurt based drink or shakes. Use yogurt with 2% milk fat or less
English muffin: whole wheat (brown)	Canned fruit in water or juice	Hard boiled eggs	Cheese with a milk fat (%MF) 25% or less: cubed, sliced, shredded
Tortilla: whole wheat (brown)	100% unsweetened fruit juice	Sliced cooked meat: e.g., lean turkey, chicken	Unsweetened applesauce with added calcium
Whole grain / multigrain bagel	100% vegetable juice	Canned meat: e.g., chicken, turkey	100% fruit juice with added calcium

*if no allergies are present in schools

Breads and Cereals	Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens	Meat, Fish, and Alternatives	Milk and Calcium Foods
Energy	Vitality	Healing	Strength
Rice cakes	Vegetable sticks: celery, carrots, peppers, cucumbers	Lean, cooked meat: e.g., venison, duck, rabbit, goose, moose, turkey, chicken	Soy beverages with added calcium
Rice: wild or brown	Local, traditional vegetables: e.g., corn, beans, squash, carrot, celery	Ground meat: lean or with fat drained off	Nuts*: e.g., almonds, walnuts, pecans, hickory
Plain popcorn	Sandwich filler: e.g., lettuce, tomato, cucumber, shredded carrot	Cooked fish: e.g., pickerel, salmon, trout	Lower fat cottage cheese with % milk fat of less than 2%
Hot dog or hamburger bun: whole wheat (brown)	Frozen or canned vegetables: e.g., corn, peas, carrots, mixed vegetables, canned tomatoes	Canned fish: e.g., tuna, salmon in water	Leafy green vegetables: e.g., broccoli, spinach, dandelion leaves
Crackers or breadsticks: whole grain	Vegetable soup, stew or baked casserole	Hummus	Add skim milk or skim milk powder in cooking: e.g. soup, mash potatoes, macaroni and cheese
Pasta or noodles: whole wheat (brown), enriched	Leafy greens and wild plants: e.g., broccoli, spinach, dandelion greens	Canned legumes: e.g, white beans, navy beans, chick peas, lentils, mixed beans	Fish head soup
Pita bread: whole wheat (brown), whole grain	Wild plants: e.g. fiddleheads, puff balls	Dried legumes: e.g., kidney beans, peas, lentils	Fish with bones: e.g., canned sardines, canned salmon

**if no allergies are present in schools*

Sample Menu Planner

Use this planner and checklist to help make healthy meals and snacks. Here is an example of a week of healthy breakfasts:

Breakfast / Snack / Lunch

Week: <u>1</u>	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Recipe / Dish	<i>High fibre cereal with frozen berries</i> <i>Hard boiled egg</i>	<i>Peanut butter and banana on toast</i> <i>Chocolate milk</i>	<i>Breakfast burrito</i> <i>Milk</i>	<i>Oatmeal with fresh berries and almonds</i> <i>Chocolate Milk</i>	<i>Turkey and cheese breakfast sandwich</i> <i>Fruit juice</i>
Foods and Ingredients included in the dish					
Breads and Cereals	<i>High fibre cereal</i>	<i>Whole grain toast</i>	<i>Whole wheat (brown) tortilla</i>	<i>Oats</i>	<i>Whole wheat (brown) English muffin</i>
Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens	<i>Frozen berries</i>	<i>Banana</i>	<i>Cooked vegetables (mushrooms, peppers)</i>	<i>Fresh berries</i>	<i>100% fruit juice</i>
Meat, Fish, and Alternatives	<i>Hard-boiled egg</i>	<i>Peanut butter</i>	<i>Scrambled eggs</i>	<i>Almonds</i>	<i>Lean turkey deli meat</i>
Milk and Calcium Foods	<i>Milk with 1% milk fat (in cereal)</i>	<i>Chocolate milk with 1% milk fat</i>	<i>White milk with 1% milk fat</i>	<i>Milk (in oatmeal) and Chocolate milk (with 1% milk fat)</i>	<i>Cheese slice</i>

Check list:

- At least 1 serving of *Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens* at every breakfast / snack / meal
- Has 2 food groups for snacks and at least 3 food groups for meals
- Portion sizes for each food group are based on serving sizes and are age appropriate
- Always give plain tap water unless there is a boil water advisory in effect.

Menu Planner

Now do it yourself! Photocopy this page for different meals/weeks.

Breakfast / Snack / Lunch







Week: _____	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Recipe / Dish					
Foods and Ingredients included in the dish					
Breads and Cereals					
Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens					
Meat, Fish, and Alternatives					
Milk and Calcium Foods					

Check list:

- At least 1 serving of *Fruits, Vegetables, Berries and Greens* at every breakfast / snack / meal
- Has 2 food groups for snacks and at least 3 food groups for meals
- Portion sizes for each food group are based on serving sizes and are age appropriate
- Always give plain tap water unless there is a boil water advisory in effect.

Sample Menu

Below are some meal and snack ideas you can add to your menu!

Week: _____	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Breakfast	 <p>High fibre cereal with frozen berries</p> <p>Hard boiled egg</p>	<p>Peanut butter and banana toast</p> <p>Chocolate milk</p>	<p>Breakfast burrito</p> <p>Milk</p> 	<p>Oatmeal with fresh berries and almonds</p> <p>Chocolate Milk</p>	<p>Turkey and cheese breakfast sandwich</p> <p>Fruit juice</p>
Snack	<p>Celery sticks with hummus dip</p> 	<p>Apple slices with yogurt dip (with less than 2% milk fat)</p>	<p>Fruit cup (in juice) and rice crackers</p>	<p>Cheese cubes and carrots</p>	 <p>Yogurt (with less than 2% milk fat) and banana</p>
Lunch	<p>Lean ground turkey on a whole wheat (brown) bun with lettuce and tomato sandwich filler</p> <p>Unsweetened applesauce with added calcium</p>	 <p>Bean and vegetable stew with whole wheat bannock/scone</p> <p>Milk</p>	<p>Chicken noodle soup (with whole wheat noodles) or vegetable soup (soups should be low salt/sodium)</p> <p>Milk pudding (with less than 2% milk fat)</p>	<p>Slices of cooked chicken</p> <p>Side of cooked vegetables (squash, dandelion leaves)</p> <p>Side of wild rice</p> <p>Fruit juice</p>	<p>Tuna salad in a pita with lettuce and tomato sandwich filler</p> <p>Chocolate milk</p> 

Let's Make a Change!

Go through the following steps to help you: plan new menus, get students on board, and to get ready to evaluate the changes made to the menus.



Completed	Tasks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read and refer back the Healthy Eating Guidelines to become familiar with the 4 different food groups. This will help with healthy menu planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan and record a 2 to 4 week menu cycle using this Menu Planning Guide. <i>Make photocopies for different meals/weeks.</i> Use the checklist at the bottom of the Menu Planner to ensure healthy eating at each meal and snack.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Let students, staff and parents know of the new and exciting healthier changes! Display the menu cycles in easy-to-see places so students and staff know what is being served.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose a time and place for food to be served. The same time and same place each day would be helpful.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make note of following things about food items to help plan for future menus: likes and dislikes, easy to make, servings, and cost and revenues (if this applies).

Making changes takes time. You may need to introduce healthier meals and snacks into the menu cycles *slowly*. In time, phase out the **least often** items. Slowly reduce the **sometimes** items for future menus. This may be helpful in bringing forward healthier foods. You can also promote healthy foods by having healthy Special Food Days, fun food themes, and discounts on healthier items.

If possible, ask a dietitian or public health nurse for ideas on how to plan a menu for healthy meals and snacks at school.