

# Healthy Eating



School  
Mental Health  
Ontario

Santé mentale  
en milieu scolaire  
Ontario



Well-being  
St. Clair Catholic District School Board



## Facts

- Healthy eating can improve energy, alertness, concentration, attention, and cognition yet poor eating habits can cause fatigue, impairments with concentration and attention, and difficulty in decision-making.
- By choosing foods that provide good energy and nutritional value, you can help nourish your body and mind.
- Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat
- Healthy eating gives your body the nutrients and energy it needs to get through the day.
- Healthy eating helps to improve your health and well-being and can lower your risk of health problems.
- Unhealthy eating is one of the five behavioural risk factors for chronic disease identified by the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance (OCDPA)
- About 1/3 of all cancers can be prevented by eating well, being active and having a healthy weight. There is a link between diet, a healthy weight and many cancers, including esophagus, colorectal, breast and kidney cancer. Healthy eating habits that reduce the risk of these cancers also lower the risk of heart disease.
- No single food can give you all the nutrients your body needs in the right amount, so healthy eating means eating a variety of foods. [Canada's Food Guide](#) is a tool that can help you make healthy food choices.
- Canada's Food Guide tells us the types and amounts of food to eat each day from each of the four food groups: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives and Meat and Alternatives.
- Healthy eating is also more than just what foods you eat.
- It includes eating at regular meal times (including breakfast each morning) and listening to your body when you are hungry or full.
- Eating together as a family, and learning to shop for and prepare food are also important to develop healthy eating habits.
- Healthy eating has even been linked to school performance — meaning, when you eat well, you do better in school! Healthy eating and active living go hand in hand — so remember to also be physically active every day.

## Tips

Canada's Food Guide encourages us to do the following:

- Select a variety of foods from each of the four food groups.
- Emphasize vegetables (especially ones that are dark green or orange) and fruit.
- Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
- Select lower fat milk and milk alternatives.
- Choose meat alternatives (beans, lentils, tofu, etc.), fish and leaner meats more often.
- Limit foods and drinks that are high in calories, fat, sugar, and salt.
- Eat protein foods
- Make water your drink of choice
- Be aware of food marketing and use self discipline and awareness
- Educate yourself on ingredients and nutrients of different foods
- While unhealthy weight can put children at risk, it is important to focus on healthy eating and physical activity and NOT on body weight, shape or size.
- Talk to your nurse, doctor or dietitian. These health care providers will be able to help you and your children improve your health through eating well and being active.

## Resources

- <https://food-guide.canada.ca/static/assets/pdf/CFG-snapshot-EN.pdf>
- <https://rnao.ca/bpg/fact-sheets/healthy-eating-and-physical-activity-healthy-habits-last-lifetime>
- <https://www.ophea.net/healthy-schools-certification/healthy-eating>
- <https://www.healthunit.com/healthy-eating-and-cancer>
- <https://www.nutritioneducationconsulting.ca/consulting-services>

## Sources

- Food-Guide Canada
- Registered Nurses Association of Ontario
- Ontario Physical and Health Education Association
- Canadian Cancer Society
- World Health Organization
- Middlesex-London Health Unit