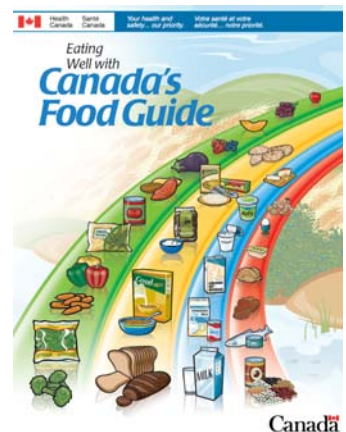


Canada's Food Guide- A new tool to support healthy living!

Health Canada launched the revised Canada's Food Guide in February 2007. The Food Guide helps Canadians by translating the latest science of nutrition and health into a practical food pattern that will meet their nutrient needs and help reduce their risk of chronic disease. The 2007 edition of Canada's Food Guide was developed after three years of research and widespread consultation that brought comments from approximately 7000 stakeholders, including dietitians, scientists, physicians and public health personnel with an interest in health and chronic disease prevention. The result is a Food Guide that builds on the best evidence available and the input from many stakeholders who shared their expertise and opinions. The Food Guide was revised to ensure it reflects updated nutrient standards (Dietary Reference Intakes), changes in the food supply, and changes in patterns of food use. In addition, the new Food Guide addresses challenges that Canadians were facing in understanding and using Food Guide information.

What Tools Are Available?

- **“Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide”**
Canada's Food Guide describes the amount and type of food recommended for Canadians aged two years and older. It replaces the 1992 tear sheet and “Using the Food Guide” booklet where the familiar rainbow concept first appeared.
- **Canada's Food Guide On-Line**
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide
This new website expands on the information and tips in Canada's Food Guide and features interactive tools, such as “My Food Guide” where people can select their personal food and activity choices.
- **Resource for Educators and Communicators**
This resource provides background information and tips to complement the recommendations in Canada's Food Guide.



Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

Canadians will be able to find detailed information on the amount of food they need based on their age and gender. The Food Guide also provides detailed guidance on the types of food to choose within each food group plus a small amount of added oils and fats. The introduction of age and gender categories and the removal of ranges within the Food Guide Serving sizes are just two of the key improvements over the 1992 Food Guide. You will also find specific tips and messages on healthy eating and daily physical activity, and advice for using nutrition information on food labels to make informed food choices. In recognition of the multicultural nature of Canada, the Food Guide's resources include a range of foods from a variety of ethnic cuisines.

The Food Guide encourages Canadians to:

- Emphasize vegetables, fruit and whole grains, and include milk and meat as well as their alternatives;
- Limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, trans fat, sugar and salt;
- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to make healthy choices; and
- Combine regular physical activity with healthy eating.

The Food Guide highlights vitamin D as requiring special attention, particularly for adults over 50 years of age. It is now recommended that a supplement of 10 µg (400 IU) of vitamin D be included daily as a single supplement or a component in a multi-supplement. A multi-supplement with folic acid is recommended for all women who could become pregnant, or who are pregnant or breastfeeding and highlights that these groups may also be at risk for inadequate dietary sources of iron.

The Resource for Educators and Communicators, available in paper copy or fully downloadable from the Web site, features “Put it into Practice” notes to give you ideas on sharing your own experiences with your audiences, “Tips for consumers” to assist you in helping others reach healthy living goals, and sample one-day menu plans for different ages and stages.

Educators and Communicators may also be interested in background information on the process undertaken to revise the Food Guide, the evidence base for the revisions, the history of Food Guides in Canada, as well as answers to Frequently Asked Questions, which is all available on the website.

Key Role for Educators and Communicators

Educators and communicators play a vital role in helping Canadians to get the most out of Canada’s Food Guide. Here are just a few examples to consider:

- Capitalize on the extensive website: use it as part of your teaching, work with clients using “My Food Guide”, refer your clients to the website.
- Improve your understanding by reviewing the Resource for Educators and Communicators and the additional background information available on the website.
- Write and talk about the importance of eating well, develop or advocate for nutrition policies, or create new tools and resources.

Canada’s Food Guide resources can be ordered from Health Canada at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide or 1-866-225-0709.

For more information, please contact a Public Health Nutritionist in your area.