

Wellness Articles

Attached are weekly health and wellness articles provided by Alberta Health Services. As a way to help all Albertans live a healthy life, we welcome and encourage weekly newspapers, community newsletters and other publications to reproduce this information free of charge. Credit to Alberta Health Services or the identified content provider would be appreciated.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

Proposed publication date: Aug. 23, 2021
Content provided by: Alberta Health Services

Healthy workday lunches

Getting fueled for your workday doesn't have to be grueling.

Take just a short time each week to create a meal plan will fuel your work week, and save you time, money and stress. Plan to have ingredients on hand to prepare nutrient-dense foods that meet your preferences, daily demands for time and whether you are at home or on the go.

Follow [Canada's Food Guide](#) and use the Healthy Plate Model to fill your plate with vegetables and fruits, whole grains and protein foods. Get started:

Plan- Planning is key to healthy eating. Without planning, we often turn to foods that are less healthy for us. Set aside a time each week to plan meals for the week. Use a calendar or your favourite app and select recipes to prepare for the week. Don't forget breakfast and snack foods. A little pre-planning goes a long way.

- Look at the upcoming week's activities. If you know that you have activities or commitments after work, maybe that's a good night to plan a slow cooker meal or leftovers.
- Consider recipes that use the same ingredients. It helps reduce waste and save money. For example, use lettuce one day for salad and another day for tacos.
- Involve your family. Ask them for input and get them to share ideas for new recipes to try or old favourites to include.
- Before you shop, make a list of the ingredients needed to make the recipes you selected.

- Keep previous menus and favourite recipes for later use.

Purchase: Shop for ingredients to make meals and recipes, not just food. If you don't have a plan for perishable food, it can lead to food waste and higher food costs over time.

Check your pantry, fridge, and freezer for staples. Make your list based on what you need to make the recipes you have selected.

Prepare: Choose healthy ingredients. Start with healthy, whole ingredients like fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods and protein foods. Save time and money with these ideas:

- Use time-saving appliances and tools such as a slow cooker, pressure cooker or mini chopper.
- Prepare ingredients ahead of time. For example, wash and chop vegetables and fruit as part of putting groceries away.
- Involve the family in food preparation. Delegate tasks that match the food preparation skill or ability of the helper.
- Cook once and eat twice. Make larger batches of recipes so you have a meal to eat now. Then freeze meals for another time.
- Consider time-saving ingredients such as mini carrots, precut vegetables, shredded cheese and rotisserie chicken.
- Cook chicken, fish, beans or tofu that can be supper one day. Then add leftovers to wraps, salads or quesadillas, or toss into soup.

Pack: To ensure that we get good healthy fuel during our work days, we need to pack that healthy fuel with us. Some packing tips include:

- Have the right supplies on hand to make portable meals and snack easy, such as containers, ice packs, lunch kit, Thermos.
- Make packing your next day's lunch part of your supper kitchen time routine, to free up time in the morning.
- Individually package multiple days of the foods you eat often. For example, package overnight oats into containers in the fridge for several breakfasts.

Don't forget about snacks and hydration to fuel your workday:

Snacks aren't just for kids. Unpredictable schedules can turn our mealtimes upside down. Snacks:

- keep you energized;
- provide important nutrients missed at meals;



- help satisfy your hunger between mealtimes.