

Canada's Food Guide – Child Care FAQ

Canada has a new food guide!

Canada's Food Guide is now an **online suite of resources** that support Canadians in making healthy food choices available at Canada.ca/FoodGuide.

The messages in the new Canada's Food Guide align in general with existing Alberta Health Services healthy eating information. Later in 2019, Health Canada will be releasing Phase II; Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern will provide more guidance on amounts and types of foods, as well as life stage guidance.

The healthy eating recommendations of the new food guide are available at <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations>.



Q. What has changed with the new food guide?

- A. Overall healthy eating messages haven't changed; however the way messages are presented has changed. The new Canada's Food Guide:
- no longer has food groups
 - presents healthy food choices: vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods and protein foods
 - focuses on proportions of nutritious foods using the [Eat Well Plate](#) rather than number of servings
 - combines the former Milk and Alternatives and Meat and Alternatives as protein foods
 - encourages choosing plant-based proteins more often
 - encourages replacing saturated fat with foods that contain mostly unsaturated fat, rather than placing a limit on total fats
 - places more emphasis on how you eat, not just what you eat

Q. What does this mean for menu planning in child cares?

- A. As we wait for Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern, continue to use the previous (2007) Canada's Food Guide and the [Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth](#) (ANGCY) for guidance on serving sizes and the number of servings. Continue to use our [Early Learning & Child Care Menu planning](#) tools.

Q. Are there menu changes I could make now?

- A. Yes. You could add more [plant-based proteins](#) and whole grains to your menu.
- Plant based protein ideas include hummus, beans added to chili, lentils added to meat sauce, lentil or split pea soup, and tofu stir-fry.
 - [Whole grains](#) can be incorporated by using whole grain breads, cereals and pasta.

Q. What about milk? Should we continue to offer milk on our menu each day?

A. Milk has not been removed from the new food guide. It is included as a protein food and continues to be recommended as a practical way to help meet protein, calcium and vitamin D needs for children. The ANGCY advise to serve milk or fortified soy beverages with meals, and to serve water between meals.

Ages 1–2: Offer 3.25% milk.

Ages 2 and up: Offer lower fat milk (skim, 1%, or 2%) or fortified soy beverage.

Q. What about yogurt and cheese?

A. Yogurt and cheese may still be included as part of meals and snacks.

Q. What about eggs, fish, lean meat and poultry?

A. Eggs, fish, and lean meats and poultry are healthy protein choices along with plant-based protein foods. Limit highly processed meats like sausages, hot dogs, and deli meats. Offer baked or roasted meats, chicken, canned fish or boiled eggs.

Q. What about juice?

A. On the new food guide, 100% juice is identified as a sugary drink, not to be consumed regularly. Offer children whole [vegetables and fruit](#) most often. If you are offering 100% juice on your menu, follow the ANGCY guideline and limit to ½ cup (125 mL) per day.

Resources

The [food guide website](#) has many pages including Food choices, Eating habits, Recipes, Tips, and Resources. Browse the sections for their short videos.

Some resources that can be printed include:

- [Food Guide Snapshot](#)
- [Healthy Eating Recommendations](#)
- [Educational Poster](#)

Here are some recipe ideas you may find useful:

- [Alberta Health Services Early Learning & Child Care recipes](#)
- [Alberta Health Services recipes](#)
- [Cookspiration recipes](#)

Any more questions? We are here to help. Contact your local dietitian or email PublicHealth.Nutrition@albertahealthservices.ca