Checklist to Review Your Food Intake

Healthy eating is not just about what you eat, but also about how much and when. This checklist will help you review your food intake to see what you're doing well and what you can improve.

Instructions

1. Record everything you ate and drank for one full day. You can write it on paper, or record it in a computer, phone, or tablet.

2. Include portion sizes, how foods were prepared, and any added foods like sugar, cream, margarine, sauces, and dressings.

3. Use your food record to answer the questions below.
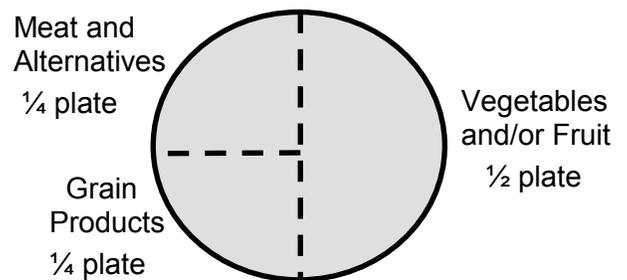
Questions

1. Did you have breakfast?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

2. Did you eat four or five times, including meals and snacks?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

3. Did you avoid drinks with calories (except skim and 1% milk)?

   - Drinks with calories include pop, iced tea, fruit flavoured drinks, slushes, alcoholic drinks, energy drinks, coffee and tea drinks made with sugar, syrups, or cream.

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

4. Did you have 2–3 servings of lower fat milk products? Examples of 1 serving:
   - 1 cup (250 mL) skim or 1% milk
   - ¾ cup (175 mL) yogurt (less than 2% MF)
   - 1½ oz (50 g) cheese (less than 20% MF)

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

   MF = Milk fat

5. Did you have at least one food with fibre at each meal? Examples of foods with fibre:
   - vegetables and fruit
   - whole wheat and whole grain breads and pasta; brown rice
   - high fibre cereal, oatmeal
   - beans, peas, or lentils

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

For the next three questions, you don't need your food record.

6. In the past week, did you have 0–2 sweets or extras?
   - Extras are foods that are high in sugar, fat, and/or calories, like pop, baked goods, potato chips, candy, chocolate, ice cream.

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

7. Did you eat out 0–2 times in the past week?
   - Examples are restaurant food, fast food, take-out foods.

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

8. Do your portions usually look like the plate below?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

Meat and Alternatives ¼ plate

Vegetables and/or Fruit ½ plate

Grain Products ¼ plate

How am I doing?

I answered *Yes* to _____ questions out of 8.

Each *Yes* is a healthy eating habit that will help you improve your health and manage your weight! Read the *Healthy eating tips* on the next page to find out why.

Alberta Health Services

Healthy eating tips

1. **Have a healthy breakfast every day**.
   - Helps you get the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients you need.
   - Helps reduce overeating later in the day.

2. **Eat four to five times every day**.
   - Eat 3 meals and 1–2 snacks every day.
   - Helps to manage hunger and total calories.

3. **Avoid drinks with calories**.
   - Drinks with calories can add up quickly, and they don't fill you up like food does.
   - Drink water throughout the day.

4. **Have 2–3 servings of low fat milk products each day**.
   - Gives you vitamins and minerals for bone health and overall health.
   - May help you manage your weight.

5. **Have at least one food with fibre at each meal.**
   - Helps you to feel full, lowers cholesterol, and may lower your risk for heart disease, digestive problems, and colon cancer.
   - Choose foods with at least 2 grams of fibre per serving.

6. **Limit sweets and extras to 0–2 each week**.
   - Helps manage weight by reducing extra calories.

7. **Limit eating out to 0–2 times each week.**
   - Restaurant food is often high in fat, salt, and/or calories. Portions are larger than needed.
   - It's harder to make healthy choices and eat smaller portions when you eat meals that are not made at home.

8. **Aim for smaller portions and a healthy plate at every meal.**
   - First, start with a smaller plate.
   - Make half your plate Vegetables and Fruit.
   - Divide the other half into smaller portions of Grain Products and Meat and Alternatives.
   - Have a glass of low fat milk.

Putting it into practice

Set a SMART goal:

1. Look at page 1. Find the question(s) you answered *No* to.

2. Choose one *No* that you would like to change to a *Yes*. Examples:
   - Have breakfast?
   - Have one higher fibre food at each meal?
   - Aim for ½ plate vegetables at supper?

3. Use the chart below to make a SMART goal.

My first SMART goal is:	
Goal:	
Specific How I will do it?	

Measurable
    How I will measure it?
    How much, how many?	

Attainable Is this something I can do?	
Rewarding Is this something I want to do?	
Timely How often or when will I do this?	