

Your Guide to Catering Requests

Healthy Catering Guide for Alberta Health Services (AHS) Funded Meetings and Events

To support the health of our staff and guests, apply the following guidelines to AHS catered meetings and events:

Planning

- Consider whether food is required. For mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks, beverages may be enough.
- Request smaller portions of all foods. This also helps reduce waste.
- Accommodate food allergies and dietary restrictions.

 **More about accommodating food allergies or dietary restrictions**



Beverages

- Provide pitchers of ice water throughout the event.
- Provide lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less).
- Offer a variety of unsweetened drinks such as fruit-infused sparkling waters or soda water with sliced lemons or limes on the side.
- If juice is offered, serve 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Opt for smaller portions, no larger than 355 mL.
- Avoid sugar sweetened drinks.



Baked Goods

- Cut all baked goods into smaller portions or provide smaller sizes (e.g. whole grain bagels cut in half or mini muffins).
- If baked goods are ordered for breakfast or breaks, include whole grain varieties (e.g. whole grain breads, English muffins, bagels, etc.)
- If muffins, loaves, or cereal/granola bars are offered, choose varieties made with whole grains.
- Limit pastries, croissants, cakes, cookies, and squares.



For more information, visit Healthy Eating Starts Here: AHS Healthy Eating Environment *Healthy Meetings and Events* <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page6351.aspx>

The presentation of menu items from food service providers may vary from shared pictures

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Please apply the following guidelines to AHS catered meetings and events *continued*

Lunch and Dinner

- Serve all sandwiches and wraps on whole grain breads, tortillas, pitas, etc.
- Offer roasted meats, eggs and/or fish instead of processed meats for sandwiches and wraps.
- Always offer a vegetarian option at meals (e.g. dahl, Chana masala, vegetarian stew or chili, or roasted vegetable sandwich).
- Provide whole grain breads, dinner rolls, and pasta or rice options.
- Serve salad dressings and condiments on the side.



Desserts

- Offer fresh fruit (e.g. whole fruit, fruit salad, fruit kabobs, fruit platters, fruit smoothies etc.)
- If baked goods are served, opt for fruit-based and whole grain options (e.g. whole grain fig bars, fruit cobblers, fruit crisps).
- Serve all desserts in smaller portions (e.g. bite-sized cookies or squares).



Other

- Limit complimentary mints or candy. If offered, opt for sugar-free varieties. Serve them only at meal times on a side table or food table, and not on meeting tables.
- Label menu items with their ingredient list when possible.



“It’s all about making the healthiest choice the easiest choice. If that’s what’s available to eat, people will eat it.” AHS staff

Sample Menu 1

Continental Breakfast

- Fresh fruit
- Whole grain muffins and bagels (small or cut in half)
- Peanut butter and/or low fat cream cheese
- Yogurt
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Morning Break

- Granola bar
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Deli Lunch

- Garden salad or Greek salad with low fat dressing on the side
- Salad with legumes (e.g. beans or lentils)
- Selection of sandwiches or wraps with roasted meats, egg and/or tuna made on whole grain bread, includes vegetarian option with hummus spread.
- Whole grain fig bars
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Afternoon Break

- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Sample Menu 2

Hot Breakfast

- Scrambled eggs or egg frittata with vegetables (no meat)
- Baked tomato
- Whole grain bagel, cut in half
- Peanut butter and/or low fat cream cheese
- Fresh fruit
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Morning Break

- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Hot Lunch

- Salad with low fat dressing on the side
- Beef chili and vegetarian chili OR
Build your own fajita bar – Stir-fried peppers and onion, stir fry chicken, black beans, whole grain 6” wrap, low fat sour cream, avocado, salsa
- Fruit based dessert (e.g. apple cobbler)
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)



Afternoon Break

- Fresh fruit or fig/cereal bar made with whole grains
- Water, coffee, tea (regular and decaf)
- Lower fat milk for coffee and tea (2% M.F. or less)

➤ Menu adapted from **Eat Smart Meet Smart (2012)**. Available from: www.health.alberta.ca/documents/EatSmartMeetSmart-PlanningGuide.pdf