



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Learning Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- apply health knowledge and living skills to make healthier food choices
- apply critical and creative thinking skills while clarifying and focusing ideas related to making healthier food choices.

Facility

Classroom

Equipment List

20-30 copies of Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide or Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide - First Nations, Inuit and Métis (1 per student)

 [Teacher Resource 1: Healthy Eating and Living Skills Checklist](#)

 [Student Resource 1: Healthy Food Choices KWL Chart](#)

 [Student Resource 2: Big Ideas](#)

 [Student Resource 3: Healthy Food Choices Self-Assessment Ladder](#)



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Minds On

Share and clarify the lesson Learning Goals.

In groups of 3 – 5, students brainstorm how to make healthier food choices. Guide student responses during the brainstorm by circulating through the room to ensure student understanding.

Once brainstorming time is up, record student responses on the board and clarify responses that need further direction.

Student response: “Follow *Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide (Canada’s Food Guide)*.”; “Eat appropriate portion sizes.”; “Satisfy your thirst with water.”; “Limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt.”; “Drink skim, 1% or 2% milk each day; drink fortified soy beverage if you do not drink milk.”; “Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.”

A&E - Minds On

Teacher observation with verbal feedback of students’ ability to demonstrate knowledge related to healthy food choices



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Action

Lead students through the following large-group discussion.

Teacher prompt: “What do you know about *Canada’s Food Guide*?” Explain that *Canada’s Food Guide* is a tool used to establish healthy eating habits through the daily selection of food. If students are not familiar with this guide, spend time reviewing some of the concepts (see Notes to Teacher). Hand out a copy of *Canada’s Food Guide* to each student (see Notes to Teacher for ordering information).

(Adapted from *Discover Healthy Eating! A Teacher’s Resource for Grades 1–8*, (1998, revised 2009), Public Health Professionals in Ontario.)

Divide students into four groups and assign a food group to each group. Hand out Student Resource 1: Healthy Food Choices KWL Chart to students. Groups will complete the KWL chart together, focusing on and clarifying ideas as they fill out their own handout on their assigned food group. To accommodate for various learners, consider having the groups select one recorder who will complete the handout on behalf of the entire group.

Review the procedure for completing a KWL chart. *Teacher prompt:* “I am handing out a KWL chart. We will use this organizational tool to remind us what we already know about *Canada’s Food Guide* and what we want to know about it. Complete the first two columns now, without reviewing *Canada’s Food Guide*.”

Next, students will use their copies of *Canada’s Food Guide* to decide as a group what the important information to remember about their food group is when making healthier eating choices. They will add this information to the third column as something that they have learned.

Using a large-group discussion, groups share what they have learned about their food group. Have students complete the final areas of the KWL chart based on the key information shared by classmates. Be sure to circulate through the room, guiding student learning related to making healthy food choices.

A&E - Action

Teacher observation with verbal feedback of students’ demonstration of knowledge related to making healthy food choices, and their ability to apply critical thinking skills as they focus and clarify ideas using Teacher Resource 1: Healthy Eating and Living Skills Checklist



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Consolidation

Students individually complete Student Resource 2: Big Ideas and respond to the following question. *Teacher prompt:* “What healthier food choices can you make every day?” Have some students share their responses.

Hand out Student Resource 3: Healthy Food Choices Self-Assessment Ladder to each student. Explain to students that they must fill in their level of achievement for completing the lesson Learning Goals. Clarify for students what each level looks like: Level 1 means having limited knowledge and Level 4 means having a high degree of knowledge related to making healthier choices.

A&E - Consolidation

Teacher observation with verbal feedback of students’ demonstration of knowledge related to making healthy food choices as connected with the lesson Learning Goals using Teacher Resource 1: Healthy Eating and Living Skills Checklist

Students’ self-assessment of their ability to make healthier choices using Student Resource 3: Healthy Food Choices Self- Assessment Ladder

Ideas for Extension

Students can make a healthy-eating poster offering one idea from the food group they explored.

Next Steps

Describe how healthy food choices can help to promote wellness and prevent health disorders.



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Notes to Teacher

Teacher Resource 1: Healthy Eating and Living Skills Checklist will be used in Lesson 1 only to assess criterion 1 of healthier food choices and criteria 1 and 2 of critical thinking.

Healthy eating is something that can be reinforced every day during the school year, and the teacher is a key role model in delivery of this message. Ensure that the healthy eating messages being delivered in class are being reinforced by what the rest of the school is doing to promote healthy eating. See information on the Ministry of Education's School Food and Beverage Policy provided below.

Copies of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, including the Resource for Educators, may be downloaded for free at

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/order-commander/index-eng.php#1>, or you may order individual copies for your class by calling TTY: 1 800 926-9105 or by contacting your local public health unit/department.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis is also available for free order and download at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php>, or by contacting your local public health unit/ department.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide is available in 10 languages. Consider providing ELL/ESL students with copies in their first language.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

In 2007, *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* was redesigned and renamed *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. This revision was intended to reflect the updated nutrient recommendations (Dietary Reference Intakes) and to help make **Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* easier to understand and use.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide describes the amount and types of food considered to be part of a healthy eating pattern. This pattern helps individuals meet their nutrient needs, reduce their risk of chronic disease and achieve overall health and vitality. When teaching *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, use the rainbow design to help communicate that the different sizes of the arcs represent the proportion of each food group in a healthy eating pattern.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide recommends enjoying a variety of foods from each of the four food groups: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives.



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

(Copied with permission from *Discover Healthy Eating! A Teacher's Resource for Grades 1-8*, (1998, revised 2009), Public Health Professionals in Ontario.)

Four Food Group Key Messages

Vegetables and Fruit

Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.

Dark green vegetables are important sources of folate. Examples include broccoli, spinach, romaine lettuce, green beans, brussels sprouts and bok choy. Orange vegetables are rich in carotenoids such as beta-carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A. These foods include carrots, squash and sweet potatoes. Some orange-coloured fruit such as apricots, cantaloupe, mango and papaya are also important sources of carotenoids. You can eat them in place of an orange vegetable.

Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.

Most vegetables and fruit are naturally low in fat. Examples of higher-fat choices include French fries, onion rings, salads with large amounts of dressing, and fruit served with cream. Choose fresh fruit, unsweetened frozen fruit or fruit packed in water or juice. Look at the nutrition facts table on the package to find the amount of fat and salt (sodium) in prepared and packaged vegetables. Use fresh or dried herbs, spices, flavoured vinegars or lemon juice instead of salt to enhance the flavour of vegetables.

Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

Vegetables and fruit contain fibre, while their juice contains little to none. Fibre can help you feel full and satisfied. Youth should be encouraged to try a variety of vegetables and fruit.

Grain Products

Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.

Whole grains and whole-grain foods are composed of all three layers of the grain seed or kernel: The bran (outer layer) provides all of the fibre as well as B vitamins, minerals (such as magnesium, iron and zinc), phytochemicals and some protein. The endosperm (middle layer) accounts for the majority of the weight of the grain and is composed mostly of carbohydrate and protein. The germ (inner layer) provides B vitamins, unsaturated fats, vitamin E, minerals and phytochemicals.

Examples of whole grains include brown rice, bulgur, pot barley, quinoa, whole oats or oatmeal, whole-grain wheat and whole rye. You can find out if a product is made with whole grain by reading the



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

ingredient list on the food label. Whole-grain foods will have the words “whole” or “whole grain” followed by the name of the grain as one of the first ingredients.

Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.

Baked goods such as cakes, croissants, doughnuts, pastries, pies and most cookies and muffins will add extra calories, fat, sugar and/or salt (sodium) to the diet and should be limited. These foods are typically low in fibre and are not usually made with whole grains. Use the ingredient list and nutrition facts table on food labels to compare products and make informed choices.

Choose products that have as little trans fat and saturated fat as possible. Avoid products that have “partially hydrogenated” or “vegetable oil shortening” in the ingredient list.

Milk and Alternatives

Drink skim, 1% or 2% milk each day.

Everyone should drink two cups of low-fat milk each day to obtain adequate vitamin D. Drinking low-fat milk is an effective way to consume protein, calcium, magnesium, riboflavin, vitamin A, vitamin B12, vitamin D and zinc while minimizing the amount of saturated fat and calories consumed. Fortified soy beverage can be used as an alternative to milk. Rice, potato and almond beverages may be fortified; however, these types of beverages do not contain the level of protein found in milk and fortified soy beverage. Look for the word “fortified” on the label of soy beverages, as only these contain added vitamins and minerals to make them a nutritionally adequate alternative. It’s important to shake the container since added calcium may stick to the package lining.

Select lower-fat milk alternatives. Lower-fat yogurts are those with 2% milk fat (M.F.) or less. Lower-fat cheeses have 20% M.F. or less. Selecting these lower-fat products helps to reduce saturated fat intake.

Meat and Alternatives

Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.

Beans, lentils and tofu are sources of protein, fibre and folate. Eating more of these meat alternatives helps to minimize the amount of saturated fat in the diet.

Eat at least two Canada’s Food Guide servings of fish each week.

Fish is a great source of protein. It is low in saturated fat, with some types containing omega-3 fatty acids. People are encouraged to eat at least two *Canada’s Food Guide* servings (150 grams) of fish



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

each week to help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Choose fish such as char, herring, mackerel, rainbow trout, salmon and sardines as these are good sources of omega-3 fats.

Fish should be cooked using lower-fat preparation methods, such as baking or broiling. Deep-fried fish or fast-food fish sandwiches do not offer the same cardiovascular benefits.

Certain types of fish contain high levels of methylmercury, a strong toxin that concentrates in the muscle tissue of fish and shellfish. Higher methylmercury levels are typically found in large predatory fish, such as white (albacore) tuna, shark, king mackerel and swordfish, which accumulate methylmercury over their lifespan. Choose fish that are low in methylmercury. For canned tuna, youth should be offered canned “light” tuna.

Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no fat.

Canada’s Food Guide emphasizes lean cuts of meat and skinless poultry to minimize the amount of saturated fat in the diet. Lean meat, poultry and fish become higher-fat choices once they are fried, deep fried or served with higher-fat sauces. *Canada’s Food Guide* recommends baking, broiling, poaching or roasting meats and allowing the fat to drain off.

(Copied with permission from *Discover Healthy Eating! A Teacher’s Resource for Grades 1–8*, (1998, revised 2009), Public Health Professionals in Ontario.)

DiETING

One of the most common methods of trying to lose weight is dieting. The lure of quick, easy weight loss is hard to resist. People who go on diets may initially experience quick weight loss due to water and protein losses. However, severely restricting food intake may leave a person with a lack of energy and a whole new set of physical and emotional problems. For example, the metabolism slows down when calorie intake is low. This means that the body burns less energy and the body begins to adjust to the chronically low energy intakes. So, restricting calories causes an imbalance in metabolism.

Diets don’t work! Most people who diet regain their weight, and are left with a feeling of failure, may suffer from further weight gain, and may experience unhealthy physical and psychological effects. Diets are unhealthy, especially for adolescents who are still growing. When young people diet, they put themselves in danger of not obtaining the proper amount of food and nutrients needed by the body to function properly. Psychologically, people become preoccupied with food, weight and body shape.

Diets teach people that there are good foods and bad foods. But there is no such thing as a forbidden food. It is OK to eat things like chocolate, cake and cookies as long as they are not the only foods eaten. Foods should be enjoyed without guilt.



Making Healthier Food Choices

Grade 7 | Personal and External Factors and Influences

Diets affect people not only physically but also socially. On diets, people may become excessively preoccupied with looks and body image. This, in turn, may lead to social withdrawal, such as not attending parties or no longer interacting with friends. When a person reaches a nutritionally deprived state, she or he usually begins to experience signs of an eating disorder.

Where to Get Help for Students with an Eating Disorder

As a teacher, if you suspect that one of your students may be suffering from an eating disorder, you do not have to deal with it alone. Your concern and support for the individual and his or her family are important, but refrain from taking on the role of therapist. It may be difficult to talk with a student you suspect has an eating disorder, or with his or her family. They may not appreciate your concern at first and may be in denial or respond with anger. It is essential to follow the school's procedures in these cases. Communicate your concern for the individual's health while still respecting the person's privacy. For more information, contact National Eating Disorders Information Centre at 416 340-4156, toll-free 1 866 633-4220 or <http://www.nedic.ca>.

(Adapted from *Help for Friends and Family*, (2008), National Eating Disorder Information Centre, <http://www.nedic.ca>.)

Ministry of Education's School Food and Beverage Policy

The School Food and Beverage Policy (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 150) requires that all food and beverages offered for sale in Ontario's publicly funded elementary and secondary schools for school purposes comply with the requirements set out in the policy, including the nutrition standards, by September 1, 2011.

The nutrition standards apply to all food and beverages sold in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops/canteens), through all programs (e.g., catered lunch programs) and at all events (e.g., bake sales, sports events). For more information, visit the Ministry of Education's website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/policy.html>.

Additional Resources

Mission Nutrition (<http://www.missionnutrition.ca>) provides lesson plans and activities specific to self-esteem and body image, as well as healthy eating and physical activity. Available in French and English.