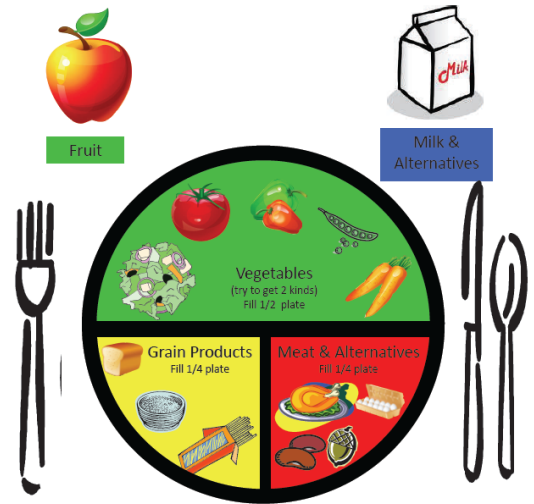


Menu Planning

Menu planning can be a hard job when feeding a family of different ages and with different food likes. Planning a menu ahead of time can help you to create tasty nutritious meals for the whole family. Writing a quick menu for the week before shopping can help you to save time, money, and ensure you have all of the ingredients on hand.



At every meal:

- Use Canada's Food Guide to help you include food items from all four food groups.
- Vary your food choices within each food group to get a variety of different nutrients.
- Plan the timing of snacks so that they do not affect the child's appetite at mealtime.

When you have little time:

- Have healthy options on hand, such as washed vegetables and fruits or portioned leftover meat, for quick sandwiches and salads.
- Consider using a slow cooker so meals are ready when you arrive home.
- Use leftovers to create new dishes.
- Have homemade frozen meals on hand rather than buying convenience foods.
- Keep a list of family favourites handy for when you are out of meal ideas.

When you have lots of time:

- Involve your child in the planning and preparing of meals.
- Cook larger dishes and save leftovers for days when you have little time.
- Wash, prepare, and store vegetables and fruits to have them ready for later.

To help develop healthy eating habits, include many different tastes, textures, and colours, and provide children with opportunities to try new foods. Enjoy meals as a family.