Eating for a Healthy Weight
Adapted for Punjabi Diet

A healthy diet can help you reach and maintain a healthy weight. This handout gives healthy eating guidelines to help you manage your weight and improve your health.

Steps you can take

1. Eat regular meals and snacks.

Use Canada’s Food Guide to plan three small meals each day, and 1 to 2 healthy snacks if needed. Eating regular meals and snacks can help you control your portion sizes, feel satisfied and avoid overeating.

- A meal has 3 to 4 food groups. A snack has 1 to 2 food groups.
- Follow the recommended number of servings per day from each food group for your gender and age group.

2. Drink fluid throughout the day.

Choose water most often when you are thirsty. Tea, coffee, lower fat milks (skim, 1%) and fortified soy beverages are also healthy choices. Limit fruit juice.

Avoid sugary drinks such as:

- pop;
- punches, cocktails and fruit drinks; and
- sweetened teas and coffees.

3. Include lower fat meat and meat alternatives at meals and snacks.

Foods rich in protein and lower in fat include:

- beans, peas and lentils (cholay, raj mahn, dahl);
- lean meat, poultry (remove skin), fish;
eggs;
- low-fat cheese (less than 20% MF); and
- soybeans and tofu.

Other sources of protein include nuts and seeds, but these are also high in fat. Eat them less often.

4. **Cook foods with less fat.**

Grill, stir-fry, steam or roast foods with little added fat instead of deep frying or frying. Use plain brown rice without adding oil, ghee or other fats.

Limit fried foods and snacks such as:
- muttian;
- mitiaee;
- fried nuts and corn nuts;
- muttrinamkeen snack mixes;
- samosas; and
- pakoras.

5. **Choose higher fibre foods at each meal and snack.**

Fibre rich foods include 100% whole grain flours and breads, higher fibre cereals, vegetables, fruit, lentils, dried beans and peas and ground flax seeds, nuts and seeds.

- Look for the term “whole grain” on food labels.
- Choose foods with more than 4 grams of fibre per serving.
- Eat vegetables and fruit with the skin instead of their juices.

Increase fibre gradually and increase your fluid intake at the same time.

**Other Tips**

**Be physically active.**

A healthy diet works best when combined with regular physical activity.

- Aim for 150 minutes of activity per week.
If you have not exercised in a while, start slowly. Try 10 minutes sessions. Increase the time when you feel ready.

Do your activity all at once, or in smaller amounts like 10 minute sessions.

See Health Canada - Physical activity and your health for more information.

Pick an activity that you enjoy so that you are more likely to stick to it. Try swimming, walking, gardening, yoga, or dancing to bhangra music. Involve family and friends who can help keep you motivated.

**Eat only when you are hungry.**

Choose non-food related activities instead of food for satisfaction and comfort. Try the following activities:

- gardening;
- going for a walk;
- prayer or meditation;
- reading;
- phoning or emailing a friend;
- yoga; or
- listening to your favourite music.

**Avoid fad diets.**

Many fad diets that promise quick weight loss may be too low in nutrients and energy to be healthy over the long term.

Fad diets are hard to follow for a long time. When you return to how you ate before going on the diet, you may gain back the weight you may have lost.

**If you are overweight, try to lose weight slowly.**

A healthy weight loss is about 0.5- to 1 kg (1 to 2 pounds) per week.

**Ask for support in your weight loss journey.**

Your doctor, dietitian, and other health professionals can recommend safe
ways to make healthy lifestyle changes.

Friends and family can also support you as you make lifestyle changes to improve your health.

**Additional Resources**

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide  
[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

- Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide – Punjabi Translation (PDF 3.39 MB)  

Health Canada - Physical activity and your health  

Dietitian Services Fact Sheets available by mail (call 8-1-1) or at [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating):

- Eating for a Healthy Weight - Adapted for Punjabi Diet: Extra Tips for Healthy Meals  
  [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/weight-punjabi-diet-tips.html](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/weight-punjabi-diet-tips.html)

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**Notes**

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This information is not meant to replace advice from your medical doctor or individual counseling with a registered dietitian. It is intended for educational and informational purposes only.
Dietitian Services at HealthLinkBC (formerly Dial-A-Dietitian), providing free nutrition information and resources for BC residents and health professionals. Go to www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating or call 8-1-1 (anywhere in BC). Interpreters are available in over 130 languages.