



## Healthy Eating During COVID-19

Healthy eating, keeping active, getting enough sleep and managing stress can help you stay healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthy eating is important for keeping your immune system strong and lowering your risk of illness and chronic disease. If you have a health condition, continue to follow any dietary recommendations from your health care provider or registered dietitian.

### Eating Well During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many nutrients are involved in the normal functioning of the immune system. Eating a variety of healthy foods each day and drinking plenty of water can help support your immune system. Healthy eating can also help lower your risk of chronic health conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and cancer. People with these conditions are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. To learn more about healthy eating see:

- [Government of Canada: Canada's Food Guide](#)
- [Government of Canada: Healthy Eating During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Healthy Eating](#)

### Chronic Health Conditions

If you have a chronic condition, eating healthy foods and being active continue to be important for keeping well and avoiding complications. Follow any dietary recommendations from your health care provider or registered dietitian. Reach out to your health care provider if you find it hard to manage your condition or are feeling unwell.

Learn more about managing chronic health conditions during COVID-19 and healthy eating:

- [BCCDC: COVID-19 information for those with chronic health conditions](#) (PDF, 714KB)
- [Healthy Eating For Your Condition](#)

### Food Safety

There is no evidence that COVID-19 spreads by eating foods contaminated with the virus. It's still important to handle food safely to prevent food-borne illness (food-poisoning). When preparing food for yourself or others, use good hygiene practices. Wash your hands with soap and water before and during preparing food, after handling raw food and before eating. When preparing fresh fruits and vegetables, wash or scrub them under cold, running, tap water that is safe to drink, before eating them.

When grocery shopping, practice physical distancing and good hygiene to protect yourself and others. These include not shopping if you're sick, shopping alone, keeping a 2-meter distance from other customers, and washing your hands after shopping and after putting away your groceries.

For answers to common questions about COVID-19 and food safety, including advice when grocery shopping, see:

- [BCCDC: Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
- [BCCDC: Food Safety](#)

To learn more about general food safety, see:

- [Food Safety](#)
- [Government of Canada: Food Safety and You](#)

## Food Access

There is currently no shortage of food in British Columbia, but some people may find it harder to buy. Loss of income, changes to services, buying limits and the need to be at home more has made it hard for some people to access the food they need. There are new programs, services and financial benefits to providing support for people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Below is a list of local and government services that may help:

- For non-health related information, including financial, child care and education supports, visit: [British Columbia's Response to COVID-19](#) . Or call 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) between 7:30am and 8pm Pacific time, seven days a week
- Dial 211 or visit [211.ca](#) for information about community services
- Contact your local social service organization or public health unit for information about programs and services in your area. Check if your community has local food security groups if you are looking for food programs (e.g. community gardens, farmers markets, free/low cost meals). These may be part of your health authority, local government, social service organizations or they may be independent
- Use the [Government of Canada Benefits Finder](#) to learn more about benefits that you might be eligible for
- Reach out to family, friends, neighbours and local services for help with grocery shopping and food delivery. Delivery is an option at some stores and is useful for people who are not able to leave their homes for reasons such as illness or mobility challenges

## Meal Planning and Recipes

For some people, being at home more than usual may mean more time to plan and cook meals. If this is true for you, it may be a great time to learn to cook with different ingredients and to teach kids food skills. Find new recipes and learn about meal planning and cooking with kids in the links below:

### Recipes

- [Canadian Public Health Association: COVID-19 and the Basic Shelf Cookbook](#)
- [Dietitians of Canada: Cookspiration](#)
- [Government of Canada: Canada's Food Guide - Recipes](#)
- [Government of Canada: Canada's Food Guide - Recipes to meet your needs](#)

### Meal planning

- [Government of Canada: Canada's Food Guide - Healthy Eating on a Budget](#)

- [Meal Planning: Getting Started](#)
- [UnlockFood.ca: My Menu Planner](#)
- [UnlockFood.ca: Tips on Reducing Food Waste](#)

## Cooking with kids

- [UnlockFood.ca: Cooking with Kids](#)
- [UnlockFood.ca: Cooking with Kids of Different Ages](#)
- [UnlockFood.ca: Kid Friendly Recipes](#)

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