

Informed Dining in Health Care Staff Training Guide

Top Five Things You Need to Know About Informed Dining in Health Care

1. The Informed Dining in Health Care program is a nutrition information program required in all retail food service establishments operating in B.C. health authority owned or operated health care facilities.

A significant percentage of British Columbians eat out three or more times per week. The choices customers make can have a significant impact on their health. Because nutrition labelling is only mandated on packaged foods, customers lack this information in restaurants. Retail food service establishments in health care facilities serve patients, staff, families and friends, many of whom live with chronic diseases. It is important that nutrition information is available to help these customers make informed choices.

Mandated retail food service establishments are required to:

- Display the program logo and directional statement on the menu or menu board advising customers that nutrition information is available.
- Provide nutrition information for all standard menu items before or at the point of ordering. Calorie and sodium content of standard menu items must be highlighted.
- Provide information regarding daily calorie and sodium requirements.

Environmental Health Officers will verify program standards are being met as part of their routine food safety inspections.

2. Informed Dining in Health Care helps customers make informed menu choices while eating out. It does not identify healthy choices on the menu.

The Informed Dining in Health Care program simply provides nutrition information to assist customers in making an informed menu choice.

A standard menu item is a food or beverage item or meal that is offered for sale more than 60 days per calendar year or is part of the regularly planned rotational menu.

3. Nutrition information is provided for standard menu items that are offered for sale for more than 60 days or are part of the regularly planned rotational menu.

This does not include daily chef specials. Nutrition information is provided as a supplemental nutrition menu, 3-ring display, brochure, menu insert, or poster before or at the point of ordering. Ask your manager where the nutrition information is kept in your food service establishment.

4. The calorie and sodium content of menu items is highlighted. Excess sodium and calories can be harmful to our health.

Did you know?

Healthy adults should aim for 1,500 to 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day. Children and seniors need less. Healthy adults should aim for 2,000 to 2,400 calories per day. Individual needs vary depending on age, activity level and gender. (Source: Health Canada)

5. For more information:

Call: 8-1-1 to speak to a HealthLink BC Dietitian
Visit: www.informeddining.ca