

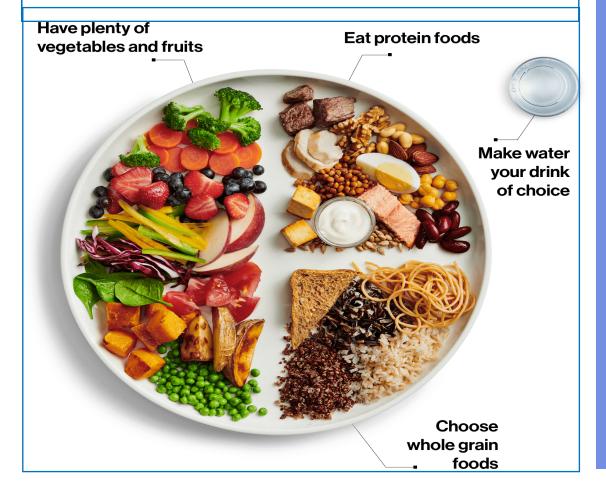
PERSONALIZED FITNESS AND WELLNESS FOR MEN 50 +

Canada's New Food Guide: A Review

Introduction

In January of this year Health Canada unveiled the new Canadian Health Food Guide along with a interactive, mobile-friendly website, https://food-guide.canada.ca. The Ontario Public Health Association gave the new guide two thumbs up, calling it, "relevant and evidence-based... and will help Canadians make healthy food choices." However, not everyone is happy with the new guide.

This Newsletter will examine what is new, what the guide emphasizes for healthy nutrition and why some health experts don't agree with all it suggests.



Did You Know

Based on the New Health Food Guide:

- 1.Envision your dinner plate half-full of veggies and fruit (see picture).
- 2. You should eat mostly plants, choosing alternative proteins, such as tofu, over food from animal sources, such as steak.
- 3. More than ever, focus on eating behaviors, such as when and how you eat. Enjoy your food and try to eat with others
- 4. Avoid alcohol. It is loaded with calories and when mixed in a cocktail can be a significant source of salt, sugar and saturated fat.
- 5. Avoid fast and processed foods, including deep-fried take-out, sugary breakfast cereals

What's New

The iconic Canadian Food Guide has been redone to better reflect growing scientific literature that a plant based diet is more inline with a healthy lifestyle than an emphasis on meat and dairy.

Here are the biggest changes with the new Food Guide;

1. Three Food Groups

The four basic food groups; milk and milk products; meat and alternatives; grain products; and fruits and vegetables have been reduced to three. Those three are now; fruits and vegetables; whole grains; and proteins, a new umbrella category that combines both dairy and meat, along with plant-based proteins such as tofu and chickpeas. The key message in that change is clear: Eat more plants, and less meat and dairy. The new guide clearly states, "Among protein foods, consume plant-based more often...The regular intake of plant-based foods – vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and plant-based proteins – can have positive effects on health," including lower risk of cardiovascular disease, colon cancer and type 2 diabetes.

2. The Half Fruit and Vegetable Rule

Portion sizes, such as 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, 1.5 ounces of cheese or 2.5 ounces of meat and the number of servings per day, such as 7 grain products or 3 meats are out. There is a new simplified rule to follow: eat a diet made up of roughly half fruits and vegetables, and half of the remaining two categories, whole grains and protein. The new guide is all about "proportions not portions" and this is accomplished by the "half fruits and vegetables" rule.

Canada's New Food Guide



3. Drink Water

The new guidelines encourages Canadians to make water their "beverage of choice." This in-

struction is meant to fulfill two purposes. First to promote hydration and second to limit the consumption of sugary or alcoholic beverages. In 2015, sugary drinks were the main source of total sugars in the diets of Canadians, with children and adolescents having the highest average daily intake. Previous versions of Canada's Food Guide had recommended 100-per-cent fruit juice as a healthy option equivalent to a serving of fruit. The new version reverses this. The new guide labels 100-per-cent fruit juice as a "sugary drink" associated with dental decay, obesity and type 2 diabetes.



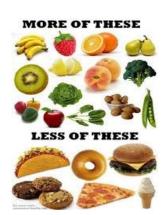
The new guide also introduces new warnings against alcohol consumption. Alcohol, the guide says, "contributes a lot of calories to the diet with little to no nutritive value."

4. Eat fewer Processed and Prepared Foods

Previous versions of the Food Guide emphasized what to eat, but the new guide gives specific warnings about what not to eat – namely, processed and prepared foods that are high in sodium, free sugars and saturated fats.

The guide states, "In recent years, the availability and consumption of highly processed products has increased significantly," This shift has been linked with rises in obesity, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes and certain types of cancer.

Examples of these processed foods listed in the guide include muffins, hot dogs, frozen pizza, chocolate and soda. "Prepared foods" refer to restaurant or similar ready-to-eat meals that are typically high in sodium, sugar and saturated fats.



5. New Emphasis on Eating Behaviours

The new Canadian guide also includes instruction on behaviours associated with healthy eating patterns: "Be mindful of your eating habits;" "cook more often;" "enjoy your food;" and "eat meals with others.



Concerns / Criticisms Regarding The New Guidelines

The New Canada Food guide is not without its critics. The Clinicians for Therapeutic Nutrition state that Canadians should be eating fewer carbohydrates while continuing to eat fat from sources such as steak and cheese. They say that new research indicates that there is controversy with respect to fat intake and that the debate about saturated fats influence on health is still not established but the food guide does not reflect that.

As well, there are those that say that "not one-size-fits-all" and that for some people, the pathway to health is by eating more eggs, meat and dairy.