

# Healthy Eating for Seniors

## COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

### FACILITATORS' GUIDE



SeniorsBC





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### **Purpose:**

The Facilitator's Guide is meant to help you share the content of the presentations in an engaging and interactive way. The supplemental notes give ideas for discussing each slide in a conversational way, instead of simply reading the text. Many slides also have extra examples in the notes: they don't all need to be read, but are there if you need more support for discussion. Text in coloured/italics is a cue to ask the audience a question and engage in a discussion.

### **Suggestions and things to keep in mind:**

- Consider providing a healthy meal or snack that reinforces the content
- Include an "invite a neighbour" approach when advertising
- Provide resources for social support and social interaction
- Consider all three learning styles (visual, auditory and hands-on) when presenting
- Ensure the presentations are accessible: transportation, accessibility of room and washrooms, enough chairs for all, spaces for people who use walkers or wheelchairs, etc.
- Emphasize the importance of this information, as some seniors may be resistant to the value of acquiring new knowledge
- Focus on creating a safe and informal learning environment
- Provide a brief overview of the learning material and clear instructions at the start of the session
- Begin with structured activities (e.g., reviewing slides) to increase the comfort level, and then attempt more unstructured activities (such as white board discussions) later
- Explore and build on the current knowledge and experiences of the participants
- Ask open-ended questions that allow participants to share their knowledge with everyone
- Organize the session into small sections with breaks in between
- Use a variety of activities, including group discussion, peer support, tutoring, and individual work.

# PRESENTATION 1

## Eat Well, Age Well



This presentation reflects the content in chapters 1 and 2 of the Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook, which covers the basics of using *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, the Eat Well Plate concept and the role of different macronutrients.

The presentation should take one hour: 45 minutes for discussion of the slides and 15 minutes for questions and an interactive activity. Schedule 90 minutes to allow time for set-up, take-down, and additional one-on-one questions.

### Learning Objectives

After attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

- list the benefits of healthy eating for healthy aging
- discuss the basics of healthy eating
- list the four food groups from Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide
- build a healthy meal using the Eat Well Plate
- get help and more healthy eating and nutrition information, if needed.

### Recommended Handouts to Provide:

1. Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook
2. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (adapted version available in Appendix B of handbook)
3. The Eat Well Plate (Appendix C in handbook)

### Presenter Notes by Slide:

<b>Slide 1</b>	<b>Eat Well, Age Well</b>
	<i>Recommended:</i> Introduce yourself as the presenter and speak briefly about the audience expectations for the presentation and any housekeeping information (e.g., where the washrooms are located).
<b>Slide 2</b>	<b>Today's Session</b>
	Overview of the presentation.
<b>Slide 3</b>	<b>Healthy Eating Quiz – True or False</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Healthy eating is too expensive.</b> <b>False.</b> Some of the most affordable foods are also the most nutritious. Vegetables and fruit (including frozen and canned), whole grain breads, brown rice, barley, canned beans, lentils—all are low in fat, high in fibre and may cost less than processed or packaged foods.</li><li>2. <b>Snacking between meals is bad for you.</b> <b>False.</b> Eating a snack between meals or eating five or six smaller meals can help you feel more energetic throughout the day and curb the urge to eat less healthy foods out of hunger. Healthy snacks include vegetables, fruit, yogurt, nuts, seeds or a homemade muffin. (We've included a great recipe for pumpkin raisin muffins in Chapter 10 of your handbook.)</li></ol>

**3. I don't feel thirsty, so I must be drinking enough.**

**False.** As your body ages, it's harder for you to tell when you need fluids. Try to drink regularly, whether you feel thirsty or not.

**Slide 4 Question – What does healthy eating mean to you?**

*Ask audience: "What does healthy eating mean to you?"*

Keep answer period to two minutes.

**Slide 5 Healthy eating is...**

Eating well is not just about the food choices you make, but also the behaviours you have around eating. Do you eat when you're hungry, or out of boredom or because of other feelings or emotions? Are you distracted when you eat? Try and take time to really enjoy the eating experience to help establish a positive relationship with food.

Healthy eating also includes choosing a variety of foods which will help meet your nutrient and energy needs. This will contribute to your best possible health.

**Slide 6 & 7 How to eat well**

For many seniors, eating healthy, well-balanced meals can be a real challenge.

*Ask audience: Is it a challenge for you and other seniors to eat well?*

- You may be cooking for just one or two people.
- You may find that you are much less active than you were when you were younger.
- Your sense of taste or smell is not as sharp as it used to be, so you are not as hungry or interested in food.
- You may also find it difficult to get out to the grocery store or to spend a lot of time in the kitchen.

Highlight the following:

- eat regular meals and snacks
- enjoy a variety of nutritious foods
- pay attention to your fullness cues
- share meals with family, friends, or others when possible
- try not to eat with distractions
- limit consumption of highly processed foods
- choose water to drink most often
- eat at home more often than eating out.

**Slide 8 Why is it important to eat well?**

*Ask audience: Why is it important to eat well?*

Discuss answers.

**Slide 9 How can healthy eating help you with healthy aging?**

It can be tempting to live on just tea and toast or rely on processed foods, but eating well can lead to many overall health benefits. Canadian seniors over the age of 65 are living longer than ever before. They are participating in their communities and enjoying satisfying, energetic, well-rounded lives with friends and family, well into retirement. However, surveys on the eating and activity habits of Canadians show that seniors could be doing even better.

## PRESENTATION 1

# Eat Well, Age Well



Eating well is important at any age. But it is especially important as you get older. Eating well can give you the energy to do the things you want, and help you maintain independence, positivity and overall physical and mental wellbeing.

No matter when you start, healthy eating can help you maintain and even improve your health—especially if you combine it with being active.

Growing older means getting used to a body that's different from the one you had when you were younger. It doesn't mean that you will immediately have all sorts of health problems or diseases—bad health and poor quality of life is not automatic as soon as you become a senior. In fact, many people find it a time of great growth and happiness.

Together, eating well and regular physical activity can help you adjust to the natural aging process and can mean the difference between independence and a life spent relying on others.

### Slide 10 Your first tool for eating well...

Now that you know why healthy eating is so important for healthy aging, let's talk about your first tool for eating well at home.

### Slide 11 & 12 Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

You each have a copy of Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. It's an easy-to-use healthy eating tool that explains the four main food groups, and how much of them you should eat every day based on your age and sex.

*Ask the participants if they can name the four main food groups, then go to the next slide with answers.*

- Vegetables and Fruit
- Grain Products
- Milk and Alternatives
- Meat and Alternatives

### Slide 13 How much do you need each day?

*Ask audience: Looking at the Food Guide, how many servings of each food group do you need if you're a 72-year-old woman?*

- Seven servings of vegetables and fruit
- Six of grain products
- Three of milk and alternatives
- Two of meat and alternatives

Men need one extra serving of grain products and one extra serving of meat and alternatives compared to women.

## Slide 14 What is a serving?

*Ask audience: What is a serving? Do you think serving sizes are the same for most foods? Or are they different?*

The Food Guide tells you how much of each food is a serving. For example, one cup of milk, ½ cup of vegetables or ¾ cup of yogurt are all one serving. One slice of bread is also a serving, so a sandwich with two slices of bread is two Food Guide Servings from the grain products group.

Take your Food Guide home with you to see how many servings you need. Think about what you eat right now. How do the foods you choose each day fit into these four food groups and how do your portion sizes compare to the ones listed?

## Slide 15 Your second tool for eating well...

Some people may find it challenging to translate the information from Canada's Food Guide into what they actually eat at a meal. Let's look at another tool for putting this into practice.

## Slide 16 Eat Well Plate

The Eat Well Plate is an easy way to understand serving sizes and how to put the Food Guide into practice at meal times.

For a balanced meal that provides enough important nutrients and is mindful of portion sizes, fill your plate with:

- one half colourful vegetables and fruit—at least two different kinds
- one quarter whole grains or whole grain products—we'll be talking more about healthy grain choices later on
- one quarter meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu or legumes—we'll be talking more about this in our protein section.

Have a glass of milk or water with your meal.

If you enjoy something sweet at the end of your meal, your best choice is a serving of fruit.

For breakfast, where vegetables may be harder to include, choose fruit to keep your plate balanced. Enjoy your fruit with a serving of milk or milk alternatives, such as plain yogurt, a piece of cheese or a fortified soy beverage.

But veggies can fit nicely at breakfast too—try adding spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes or peppers to your eggs. Spread half an avocado on toast. Make a green smoothie. Warm up some leftover roasted potatoes or yams and top with cheese.

## Slide 17 Why are vegetables and fruit so important?

Why should vegetables and fruit fill half your plate? Because they have essential nutrients we need for our health.

What is a nutrient?

- A substance that provides nourishment essential for life and growth, like protein for increasing muscle.
- The nutrients you need come from the foods you eat, so a balanced diet of different foods helps ensure we get all our nutrients.
- As we age, we need more of certain nutrients, such as calcium.

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# Eat Well, Age Well



Vegetables and fruit are packed with health-promoting nutrients that protect against disease and help our bodies to function properly. To fit those servings in, fill half your plate and include vegetables and fruits for your snacks.

When selecting vegetables and fruit, try to choose the more colourful options, especially the dark green and orange ones.

### Slide 18 What about frozen and canned vegetables and fruit?

Frozen and canned vegetables and fruit have the same health benefits as fresh vegetables and fruit—they're packed at peak freshness and nutritional value. There may be slight nutrient loss over time, but the same is true for fresh vegetables and fruit brought in from far away.

- Choose canned fruit packed in water or juice, rather than syrup.
- Buy canned vegetables packed with little or no sodium (salt).
- Look for frozen vegetables and fruit that have nothing else listed in the ingredient list (that is, not in a sauce or syrup).

### Slide 19 What is protein?

Protein is a nutrient your body needs in large amounts. It helps build and repair your body and keeps your muscles strong. Protein also helps you heal if you've been ill or have had surgery.

Getting enough protein can be difficult for seniors. The best way to make sure you get enough protein is to include it at each meal.

### Slide 20 Sources of protein

Remember to have one quarter of your plate filled with a protein source (such as 2.5 oz cooked meat or  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup legumes)

The best sources of protein are meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt, nuts, seeds, legumes such as peas, beans and lentils, and soy products (tofu, soy beverages).

Whole grains, vegetables and fruit have a bit of protein in them too.

- Choose sprouted grain breads that can have five or six grams of protein per slice
- Choose whole grains like barley to boost protein

### Slide 21 Which types of protein are better?

There is a growing body of evidence showing the benefits of eating a plant-based diet, such as:

- reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer
- helping manage your weight
- improving your overall health.

Include plant-sources of protein when you can, such as using lentils, beans, tofu, nuts and seeds regularly through the week.

Peas, beans and lentils are affordable and sustainable proteins. Canned legumes are just as good for you and are a convenient way to add in these foods if you don't have time to soak and cook dried legumes.

Fish is also a good source of protein. Canada's Food Guide recommends eating at least 2 servings of fish per week. Fatty fish, such as herring, mackerel and salmon have been found to have heart healthy benefits.

Try to choose red meat less often and limit how much processed meats you eat. These sources of protein have been shown to increase the risk of cancer.

#### **Slide 22**    **What are carbohydrates?**

Carbohydrates are nutrients we need for our organs to function properly and for our bodies to have energy for activity.

They also contain essential vitamins and minerals.

#### **Slide 23**    **Which types of carbohydrates are better?**

Natural sugars and starches are found in fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains and milk products. These foods are essential for energy and other nutrients.

Some sources of added sugars are obvious: those added to sweet treats and sugary drinks such as pop, fruit drinks and specialty coffees.

Added sugars can be found in less obvious foods too, including flavoured yogurt, ketchup and salad dressings.

The best way to limit your added sugars is to read ingredient lists (see handbook Chapter 6) and consume fewer processed and packaged foods and sugary drinks.

Some fad diets say to cut down on or cut out all carbohydrates because they make you gain weight. But that severely limits what you can eat and you miss out on many important nutrients.

Instead, choose healthy carbohydrates and be mindful of how much you consume rather than cutting out an entire nutrient group.

#### **Slide 24**    **What is fibre?**

Fibre is a substance naturally found in plants. There are many benefits of including fibre in your diet. Fibre helps with:

- keeping your digestive system working properly and regularly
- lowering blood cholesterol levels
- controlling blood sugar
- preventing high blood pressure
- keeping you satisfied and full for longer.

How much fibre do we need each day?

- Women over age 51 need 21g
- Men over age 51 need 30 g

Most Canadians—especially seniors—only get about half the fibre they need each day!

If you haven't been eating much fibre, add it in slowly and drink plenty of fluids to help it work properly!

## PRESENTATION 1

# Eat Well, Age Well



### Slide 25 How do we get enough fibre?

Choose grain products that are high in fibre, including breads, pasta and roti made of whole grain wheat, wheat bran, mixed grains, dark rye or pumpnickel flours.

Look for “whole” grains to be the first ingredient on the ingredient label.

“Enriched wheat flour,” “all-purpose flour” and “unbleached flour” are all refined white flours and have much less fibre than whole grain flour.

The term “multigrain” is often used on grain products. However, it may just mean that a small amount of whole grain has been added to white flour. Read labels on grain products and choose ones with the higher amount of fibre.

Filling half your plate with vegetables and fruit, enjoying legumes, such as peas, beans and lentils, and adding nuts and seeds to snacks are also great ways to add fibre to your diet.

### Slide 26 What is fat?

Fat is an important nutrient that your body needs for many important functions. These include supplying your body with energy and building a protective coat around your cells.

- It supplies your body with energy
- It helps build a protective coat around your cells

Everyone needs to eat some fat to stay healthy, but it’s best to use healthy fats and in the recommended amount.

Which fats are better for me?

- Unsaturated fats reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke
  - Monounsaturated
  - Polyunsaturated

Omega-3 fatty acid is a particularly helpful polyunsaturated fat. It makes blood less “sticky” and reduces the risk of developing blood clots.

### Slide 27 Sources of healthy fats

There are many sources of healthy fats.

Oily and fatty fish are great sources, such as salmon, anchovies, rainbow trout, sardines, mackerel, eulachon, char and herring. They can also be canned, which is very affordable and easy to keep on hand in your pantry.

Nuts and seeds, such as cashews, almonds, walnuts, peanuts and ground flaxseeds are also sources of healthy fats.

Vegetable oils and soft-tub margarines made from olive, peanut, canola and/or sesame oil are sources of healthy fats, provided they have “non-hydrogenated” on the label.

Wheat germ and avocados are sources of healthy fats.

Some foods are sometimes fortified with healthy fats. Check the label of eggs, yogurt, and soy beverages to see if they have been fortified with omega-3.

**Slide 28 Which fats should we try to limit?**

Saturated fats that come mostly from meat and high-fat milk products like cream and butter, but they are also found in palm and coconut oils.

**Slide 29 Which fats should we try to avoid?**

Trans fats are known to increase the risk of heart disease. Trans fats are a type of fat made from a process changing vegetable oil into a solid.

Common food sources that may contain trans fats include:

- deep-fried foods
  - chips, French fries, samosas, spring rolls, etc.
- hard margarines and vegetable shortening
- partially hydrogenated vegetable oil
- store-bought baked items made with hydrogenated oils (cookies, cakes, pies and pastries).

**Slide 30 Why do we need fluids?**

Fluids have many important functions in our body. These include:

- helping you think clearly
- keeping your body temperature where it is supposed to be
- preventing and/or managing constipation
- helping to prevent dizziness.

Your current total fluid intake is probably okay if you produce colourless or slightly yellow urine and feel well. In general, it's recommended that women should aim for about 9 cups and men should aim for 12 cups of fluids per day.

Your fluid requirements may increase if:

- it's hot outside
- after you exercise
- if you have been vomiting or have diarrhea.

**Slide 31 Which fluids are better?**

Water is the best choice to satisfy thirst. Try sparkling or mineral water or add cucumber or fresh fruit to plain water if it helps you drink it more often.

A glass or two of milk or fortified soy beverage can be an easy way to help meet your three daily servings of milk and alternatives, and get fluids and the nutrients you need for strong bones and muscles.

Fresh vegetables and fruit also contain a lot of water. By including them as half your plate, you help to meet your fluid needs.

## PRESENTATION 1

# Eat Well, Age Well



### Slide 32 What about coffee, tea and alcohol?

Be mindful about what goes in your coffee and tea. We already talked about added sugars and high-fat milk products. If you drink a lot of double-doubles, you are getting added sugar and saturated fat alongside the caffeine.

We recommend keeping your caffeine intake to less than 400 mg per day, which is about 3 cups of coffee. Black or green tea contains less caffeine, so you can drink a bit more of them.

A standard alcoholic drink is considered to be:

- one mixed drink containing 43 mL (1.5 fl oz) of 40 per cent hard liquor, such as vodka, gin, rye whiskey or rum
- one 142 mL (5 fl oz) glass of 12 per cent wine
- one 341 mL (12 fl oz) bottle of 5 per cent beer or wine cooler.

Be mindful of what you mix your drinks with. Having hard liquor with pop or fruit drinks can contribute to excess added sugar.

### Slide 33 What about sodium?

Sodium is one of two minerals found in table salt - the other being chloride. We only need 1500 mg/day but most Canadians eat much more – two to three times this amount.

We only need 1500 mg of sodium per day, but limit sodium to 2300 mg per day (1 tsp of salt) to protect against high blood pressure. To help with controlling the amount of sodium we eat, try the following:

- eat more fresh vegetables and fruit
- eat fewer packaged and highly processed foods
- cook at home more often than eating out
- read labels.

### Slide 33 Let's give it a try! - Activity

(A whiteboard or chart paper is recommended for this activity)

*Ask audience:*

- *Let's start with breakfast—how would you build a healthy and balanced meal? What would be the first food you might want to have?*
- *If the example is eggs, then ask what part of the Eat Well Plate or which food group eggs are a part of. What could you have with your eggs to balance the meal? Whole grain toast? Roasted root vegetables? Sliced tomato? Sautéed mushrooms? Steamed spinach? Avocado? Where does bacon fit? It should be considered more as an occasional breakfast item.*
- *If the example is cereal or oats, then ask what part of the Eat Well Plate or which food group oats are a part of. What could you have on your cereal or oats to balance the meal? Plain yogurt or 2% milk? Nuts and seeds? Fresh fruit?*

*If time allows and the audience is engaged, try a lunch or dinner meal.*

- *Now, let's move onto lunch—what might you start with? A sandwich? What group does the bread fit into? What would be an important and healthy filling? Protein! Choose canned fish more often than deli meats or try an egg or cheese and vegetable sandwich. What about half your plate vegetables and fruit? Add a vegetable soup or some raw vegetables and hummus.*
- *What about dinner? If you're having a piece of chicken, what group would that fit in? How would you balance it? Perhaps some whole grains, such as brown rice. How much of your plate should the grains take up? One-quarter of your plate and the other half should be vegetables, such as roasted cauliflower, steamed broccoli, a green salad, asparagus, sautéed kale or bok choy.*

## NOTES

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## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



This presentation reflects the content in chapters 3 and 9 of the Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook. It will first discuss the importance of vitamins and minerals in healthy aging and the need for multivitamins and/or supplements. It will then encourage participants to think critically about the information they receive, highlighting where to find reliable information and key resources for seniors living in British Columbia.

The presentation should take one hour: 45 minutes for discussion of the slides and 15 minutes for questions and an interactive activity. Schedule 90 minutes to allow time for set-up, take-down and additional one-on-one questions.

### Learning Objectives

After attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

- identify which vitamins and minerals are key for healthy aging
- understand the role of these micronutrients for overall health
- identify food sources of these micronutrients
- understand what supplements are recommended for seniors and where to find more information on multivitamin/mineral supplements
- identify how to know if health and nutrition information is reliable
- identify where to find trustworthy information in British Columbia.

### Recommended Handouts to Provide:

1. Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook
2. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide (adapted version available in Appendix B of handbook)*

### Presenter Notes by Slide:

<b>Slide 1</b>	<b>Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust</b>
	<i>Recommended:</i> Introduce yourself as the presenter and speak briefly about the audience expectations for the presentation and any housekeeping information (e.g., where the washrooms are located).
<b>Slide 2</b>	<b>Today's Session</b>
	Overview of the presentation.
<b>Slide 3</b>	<b>Healthy Eating Quiz #1</b>
	<b>1. All seniors need a calcium supplement.</b> <b>False.</b> If you are eating calcium-rich foods at every meal, you may not need to take a calcium supplement. But because many seniors do not get enough calcium, you should talk to your health-care professional or a dietitian about your current eating habits and whether you should take a calcium supplement.

**2. You can never take too much vitamin C.**

**False.** You can usually get all the vitamin C you need by eating lots of vegetables and fruit and taking a multivitamin. If you decide to take more vitamin C as a supplement, keep it to 2000 mg or less a day. More than that can cause digestive upset, headaches or kidney stones in some people.

**3. Herbal supplements must be safe because they're natural.**

**False.** If you are taking drugs for a medical condition, an herbal supplement can be harmful. Check with your health-care professional before taking any kind of herbal supplement.

**Slide 4 Question: Are you concerned about getting enough vitamins and minerals?**

*Ask audience: "Do you have concerns about getting enough vitamins and minerals?"  
Keep answer period to 2 minutes. Consider writing answers on the white board.*

*If audience is not participatory, consider asking:*

- As an older adult, has your health-care professional or dietitian talked about any changes to your diet or intake of vitamins and minerals? What about your friends and family?*
- Out of curiosity, are you taking a vitamin or mineral supplement?*

*Consider:*

- multivitamin*
- calcium*
- vitamin D*
- vitamin B12*
- vitamin C*
- iron.*

As an older adult, it may be more challenging to get enough vitamins and minerals through your food than it used to be. You may have concerns that you're not getting enough or perhaps your doctor or health-care professional has told you that you need more of a particular nutrient and has advised you to take a supplement.

Today we will talk about the key vitamins and minerals you need for healthy aging and discuss where supplements fit in.

**Slide 5 Rule of thumb**

The best way to get the vitamins and minerals you need is by eating a wide variety of healthy foods recommended in Canada's Food Guide, as discussed in the first presentation – Eat Well, Age Well. But sometimes even people who have healthy eating habits find it hard to get all the fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods they need.

You may need to eat fortified foods—that is, foods with added vitamins and minerals—or take a supplement to fill the gaps.

**Slide 6 What vitamins and minerals are important for healthy aging?**

Vitamins and minerals are important for good health at any age. But some become even more important as you get older, particularly vitamins B12, B6 and folate, calcium and vitamin D, iron and magnesium, as well as vitamins C and E.

Let's take a closer look at each of these nutrients. To find out exactly how much of these nutrients you need each day, refer to Chapter 3 of your Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook or talk to your health-care professional or a dietitian.

## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



### Slide 7 Why do we need vitamin B12?

Your body needs vitamin B12 to form healthy red blood cells, which carry oxygen around your body. It is also keeps your nervous system—the control centre of your body—working properly. This vitamin helps you feel energetic and alert.

Vitamin B12 deficiency can make you feel weak, tired and lightheaded. If you feel this way, see your doctor to make sure you're getting enough.

As you get older, your body does not absorb vitamin B12 from natural food sources as well as it does from fortified foods and supplements.

### Slide 8 Sources of vitamin B12

When you were younger, your body could obtain all the vitamin B12 it needed from natural sources, including:

- meat, fish and poultry
- eggs
- milk, yogurt and cheese.

With the decrease in absorption of B12 that comes with age, if you are over the age of 50 you should eat foods fortified with vitamin B12 or take a daily multivitamin/mineral supplement containing B12 to make sure you are getting enough. Talk to your health-care professional or a dietitian.

Fortified foods are those that have had vitamins or minerals added to them. Food fortified with B12 include veggie meats, like tofu patties, some breakfast cereals and soy beverages.

### Slide 9 Why do we need vitamin B6?

Vitamin B6 helps carry oxygen through the blood much like B12. It also helps your body make and use protein, promoting growth and repairing muscles. And, it helps to store energy in your muscles and liver, which helps regulate blood glucose (sugar) levels.

Similar to B12, your vitamin B6 needs increase with age because your body's ability to absorb and use the vitamin changes. Choosing a variety of foods and eating enough food each day can meet the increased need for vitamin B6.

### Slide 10 Sources of vitamin B6

Good sources of vitamin B6 include:

- meat, chicken, fish and organ meats
- bananas, green beans, sweet potatoes and other starchy vegetables
- whole grains and fortified cereals
- lentils, chickpeas and sunflower seeds.

If you are over 50 and not eating many foods that contain B6, or you are not eating much in general, talk to your doctor or dietitian about taking a multivitamin/mineral supplement that contains B6.

### Slide 11 Why do we need calcium?

Calcium is a key nutrient for building and maintaining strong and healthy bones and teeth.

Don't forget vitamin D! Calcium works together with other bone-building nutrients, particularly vitamin D, which allows your body to absorb calcium.

Recent studies have also shown that eating foods rich in calcium and vitamin D will help protect against muscle weakness, which helps prevent falls.

Eating foods rich in calcium and vitamin D throughout your life, combined with regular physical activity, may help prevent osteoporosis.

### Slide 12 Sources of calcium

Milk and milk products, including yogurt, cheese and kefir are the best sources of calcium. Try to include these foods as a part of your Eat Well Plate every day to make sure you get the recommended amount of calcium.

Other good sources of calcium include:

- firm and extra-firm tofu made with calcium
- salmon and sardines with bones
- almonds and almond butter
- sesame seeds and sesame butter (tahini)
- fortified milk alternatives like soy and rice beverages.

You also get small amounts of calcium from eating foods like turnip greens, bok choy, kale and broccoli and whole grains.

### Slide 13 Question: Can you take too much calcium?

Many seniors do not get enough calcium from their diets and their health-care professional or dietitian may suggest you take a calcium supplement.

*Ask audience: "Can you take too much calcium?"*

### Slide 14 Caution with calcium

Studies suggest that too much calcium from supplements can damage your kidneys and may increase your risk of heart disease.

**Get calcium through your food when possible.** Ask your doctor or a dietitian for more information on calcium.

### Slide 15 Why do we need vitamin D?

Remember, calcium and vitamin D work together to build and maintain strong bones because vitamin D allows your body to absorb calcium. Without it, you may be at risk for weaker bones, so make sure you are getting enough vitamin D as well as enough calcium.

Vitamin D is unique in that it can be made by the body after exposure to sunlight. This is our main source of vitamin D.

However, because Canada is a northern country, it can sometimes be hard to get as much sunlight as you should. About 15 minutes of sunlight twice a week between April and September is enough for your body to make vitamin D. But from October to March, the Canadian sunlight is too weak, and you need to look for other sources of vitamin D.

## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



Because many Canadian seniors do not get the recommended amount of vitamin D from sunlight or the food they eat, Canada's Food Guide recommends seniors take a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU a day.

### Slide 16 Sources of vitamin D

Food sources of vitamin D include:

- fatty fish, such as salmon, eulachon and herring
- egg yolks, and
- foods fortified with vitamin D, including milk, soy beverages and non-hydrogenated margarine.

### Slide 17 Why do we need iron?

Iron helps carry oxygen to all parts of your body, giving you the energy to live a healthy life.

Not getting enough iron can lead to iron-deficiency anemia, which makes you feel tired and can cause you to get sick more easily. However, too much iron can be bad for your health as well.

As a senior, it's important to make sure you are getting enough iron from the foods you eat every day. If you are a vegetarian, you will need more iron.

### Slide 18 Sources of iron - not all iron is created equal

There are two main types of iron and they are not created equal.

Your body absorbs **heme iron**, found in most animal products like beef, pork, chicken and fish, better than **non-heme iron**, found in legumes (such as lentils), grains, nuts, seeds, tofu, fruit, vegetables and eggs.

If you are a vegetarian, you must eat lots of iron-rich foods regularly throughout the day to make sure you get enough. To maximize your absorption of non-heme iron, eat foods high in vitamin C at the same time, such as red and green peppers, broccoli, strawberries and grapefruit.

Eating a variety of iron-rich foods will, in most cases, ensure you get all the iron you need. Some people may find it hard to get enough iron from their diet and could benefit from an iron supplement.

\*Only take iron supplements when recommended by your doctor or dietitian. When taken at the same time, calcium may decrease the amount of iron that is absorbed by your body from a supplement. If you are taking a calcium and iron supplement, talk with your pharmacist or a dietitian about the best time of day to take them.

If you are feeling tired, weak and are finding it hard to get enough iron in your diet, talk to a dietitian for more support.

### Slide 19 Why do we need magnesium?

Magnesium is needed for proper muscle, nerve and enzyme function. It also helps the body use energy from food.

Good sources of magnesium include:

- legumes, such as beans, peas and lentils

- nuts and seeds
- spinach and other leaf greens
- whole grains
- fish
- fruit.

Eating a balanced diet and a variety of magnesium-rich foods will make sure you get all the magnesium your body needs. For more information and to make sure you're getting enough magnesium, talk to a dietitian.

#### Slide 20 What about vitamins C and E?

Vitamin C and vitamin E are known as antioxidants. Antioxidants are substances that protect cells from some of the damage caused by free radicals, harmful chemicals that can come from a variety of dietary, lifestyle and environmental factors.

Vitamin C helps your body form collagen, something it needs to make skin, tendons, ligaments and blood vessels. It is essential, too, for healing wounds and for repairing and maintaining bones and teeth.

You can get the amount of vitamins C and E that you need by eating a balanced diet, rich in vegetables and fruit.

#### Slide 21 Sources of vitamins C and E

Vegetables and fruit are great sources of vitamin C, especially:

- oranges
- kiwi fruit
- strawberries
- broccoli
- Brussel sprouts
- red and green peppers
- potatoes and tomatoes.

Good sources of vitamin E include:

- unsaturated vegetable oils (olive, canola)
- nuts and nut butters (like peanut butter)
- sweet potatoes
- leafy greens
- avocados
- sunflower seeds
- wheat germ.

You can get the vitamin C and vitamin E that you need from your diet. Be careful if you're taking vitamin C and vitamin E supplements: you can take too much.

If you are not eating a variety of food or you are not sure if you are getting enough of these vitamins, talk with your health-care professional or a dietitian. They may recommend a multivitamin/mineral supplement.

## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



### Slide 22 Questions: Do you need to take a multivitamin/mineral supplement?

*Ask audience: Do you need to take a multivitamin/mineral supplement?  
Keep answer period to 2 minutes. Consider writing answers on the white board.*

### Slide 23 A supplement is intended to complement what you eat, not replace a healthy diet

The best way to get the vitamins and minerals you need is by eating a wide variety of healthy foods. However, some people may find it hard to get all the nutrients they need—particularly those who are ill or recovering, have low appetite or have food allergies that cause them to avoid certain foods.

You may need to eat fortified foods (foods with added vitamins and minerals) or take a supplement to fill the gaps.

It's important to remember that **a supplement is intended to complement what you eat, not replace a healthy diet.**

### Slide 24 Do you need to take a multivitamin/mineral supplement?

We've talked about the different micronutrients, and how seniors should take a daily vitamin D supplement. You may also need help getting enough of some other nutrients, like vitamin B12.

Multivitamin and mineral supplements come in the form of pills, chewable tablets or liquids. They usually contain a combination of water-soluble vitamins (C and B vitamins), fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K), and minerals like calcium, iron, magnesium and zinc. If your health-care professional recommends extra nutrients to support your diet, choose a multivitamin that provides a variety of vitamins and minerals, rather than a supplement that provides only a single vitamin or mineral (unless your health-care professional or dietitian recommended it).

Choose a multivitamin that is specifically intended for adults over 50 to ensure it includes an adequate amount of vitamin D (400 IU). Take it as directed. Ask your pharmacist for help in selecting one that is right for you.

As well, natural health products, just like conventional drugs, may have potentially serious side effects or trigger allergic reactions. These supplements may also interact with prescription drugs.

Talk to your doctor before you take any natural health products, including herbal or botanical supplements, Chinese, Ayurvedic or other traditional medicine.

### Slide 25 Questions?

We are moving onto the second topic of discussion for this presentation: Finding information you can trust.

### Slide 26 How do you know if you're getting reliable information?

*Ask audience: How do you know if you're getting reliable information?  
Keep answer period to 2 minutes. Consider writing answers on the white board.*

*Prompts:*

- You may read nutrition related articles in the news telling you about the miracle health benefits*

*of certain vegetables or the benefits of a diet that completely eliminates a certain food*

- *Your friends may be trying a specific diet where they don't eat specific kinds of food or eat at certain times of the day*
- *You may see ads on TV or in magazines for nutrition products or diet programs*  
*...how do you know when the information you're receiving is reliable?*

#### Slide 27 How do you know if you're getting reliable information?

Unproven remedies give people false hope and may even be dangerous, either because they can keep you from getting proper medical attention or because their ingredients are harmful. They can also cost a lot of money.

You know you are getting good information if it comes from a reliable source.

Always question what you see on TV or the internet, read in an ad or hear from a friend. Depend on the sources that you know are objective and have nothing to gain from whether you buy a product or not, including your doctor, a registered dietitian, HealthLink BC, Health Canada or a non-profit foundation.

Watch out for personal testimonials, such as "this oil cured my husband's Alzheimer's disease" or "I was diabetic, but taking this pill cured me in five days." They are usually not scientifically proven, and may be completely made up.

Remember, too, that just about anybody can set up a website. Look for websites from reputable sources.

It's important to be critical of this information.

#### Slide 28 How do you know if you're getting reliable information?

##### Truths:

- Aging is a fact of life. There is no cure for it and no treatment will slow it down. Healthy eating, staying active and not smoking are the only things experts know for sure can help prevent the diseases that happen more often with age.
- There is no proven way to prevent all types of cancer. There are, however, treatments that can help once you get cancer, but talk to your doctor first.
- Drinking a particular type of juice, eating a low-protein diet or embarking on treatments that claim to "cure" cancer can be harmful, especially if you delay starting on treatments that are proven to work.
- There is no cure for most types of arthritis. Arthritis symptoms can come and go, so it is easy to be tricked into thinking that a special diet, pill or oil has made it disappear. Talk to your doctor about what may work for you.
- Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight takes effort and it takes time. It is not safe to lose weight too quickly, or follow a low-carbohydrate or a liquid diet for any length of time. It's most important to maintain a healthy lifestyle of balanced eating and regular physical activity.
- "Natural" does not automatically mean safer. Some plants can be harmful and even deadly, especially if you are already taking medication for a condition such as heart disease.

For more information on anything you read in the news, see on TV or hear from a friend, talk to a dietitian. A dietitian will provide you with the evidence-based information you need to make decisions for your health.

## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



### Slide 29 Information you can trust

HealthLink BC provides access to non-emergency health information and advice in British Columbia. Services and resources include:

#### HealthLink BC Files

Easy-to-understand fact sheets on a range of public health and safety topics. Copies are available at [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles) or at your public health units. Most files are available in Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese.

#### Call 8-1-1

- Nursing Services provides non-emergency, confidential, health education and advice. HealthLink BC's registered nurses can help you check your symptoms, determine if you should seek medical attention and provide education about your illness. Nurses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Translation services are available in over 130 languages. Call **8-1-1** (or **7-1-1** for deaf or hearing-impaired assistance), or visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca/nursing-services](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/nursing-services).
- Dietitian Services: Registered dietitians at HealthLink BC offer telephone, email and web-based based nutrition services to support the nutrition information, education and counselling needs of B.C. residents and health professionals. This service does not replace the medical counsel of your doctor. Translation services are available in 130 languages.
- Physical Activity Services provides general physical activity information and professional guidance to the residents of British Columbia. Qualified exercise professionals are also available at certain days and times. Translation services are available in over 130 languages. Call **8-1-1** (or **7-1-1** for deaf or hard of hearing assistance), or visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca/physical-activity-services](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/physical-activity-services).
- Pharmacist Services can provide you with information about medications and answer your medication related questions. Pharmacists are available every evening from 5 p.m. to 9 a.m. Pacific Time. Translation services are available in over 130 languages. Call **8-1-1** (or **7-1-1** for deaf or hard of hearing assistance), or visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca/pharmacist-services](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/pharmacist-services).

### Slide 30 Information you can trust

For information about health and other government services for British Columbia seniors, refer to your handbook.

#### Healthy eating

Canada's Food Guide is a great source of information on healthy eating (discussed in first presentation: see Appendix B of your handbook for more information).

For more information, you might also want to try Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC.

In addition, Health Canada's website offers information on such topics as food safety, food labeling and genetically modified foods.

The First Nations Health Authority provides useful health information in their BC Elders' Guide. You can access the guide online or give them a call.

Details for these organizations and several other reliable resources across BC are available in Chapter 9 of your handbook.

### Slide 31 What is the difference between a dietitian and a nutritionist?

Another way to assess whether the information you're receiving is reliable is if it is from a registered dietitian.

The title "dietitian" is regulated by law in all Canadian provinces, just like physician, pharmacist or nurse. Only people who have met national standards for education and training can use these titles. A dietitian will have at least a bachelor's degree (and many will have a master's or a doctorate) with a specialty in foods and nutrition. All dietitians in British Columbia are registered with the College of Dietitians of BC and are responsible for ensuring the information they provide in their practice is evidence-based.

The title "nutritionist" is not regulated by law in all provinces, which means anybody could use the title even if they are not formally trained in foods and nutrition.

What about titles like Registered Holistic Nutritionist or Certified Nutritional Practitioner?

These titles do not mean that the person is a provincially regulated health professional. They are used by those who have completed training programs that vary in length and rigour and are privately owned. Such training programs are not delivered or accredited by a recognized institution. To learn more about the difference between a dietitian and a nutritionist, visit [www.dietitians.ca/thedifference](http://www.dietitians.ca/thedifference).

To find a dietitian, please refer to your handbook for more information.

### Slide 32 Thinking critically about nutrition

*Let's look at some examples of "nutrition news." For each one, let's try to think about the following:*

#### **What is the source?**

*Who is writing this information and where is it coming from?*

*Are they qualified to do so?*

*Who is funding this research or article?*

**Most importantly, are they trying to sell you something?**

#### **What is the message?**

*What is the overall article/ad trying to say/have you buy?*

*Does it make sense?*

#### **What is the context?**

*Often nutrition news will elaborate upon a certain aspect of nutrition, such as a specific food, and make inflated claims about its effects. The actual impact can be much smaller within an overall balanced diet.*

*Identifying the context of these claims helps put them into perspective.*

#### **What do you think?**

*Overall, how do you feel about this information? Can you trust it?*

*Does the context of the information make sense?*

*Do you have questions? Where can you go to get more information or discuss further?*

## PRESENTATION 2

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



### Slide 33 Is this information reliable? Weight loss ad

**What is the source?**

We don't know who specifically is promoting this ad but are they trying to sell you a diet?

**What is the context?**

This is an ad likely meant to sell a type of diet to help lose weight. It contains a testimonial and doesn't look like it has any scientific background.

*Ask audience:*

**What is the message?**

*This diet can guarantee weight loss of at least 10 pounds in just 6-7 days.*

**What do you think?**

### Slide 34 Is this information reliable? HealthLink BC healthy aging page

**What is the source?**

HealthLink BC

**What is the context?**

HealthLink BC is a government funded service to provide free health information to the residents of British Columbia to support healthy living.

*Ask audience:*

**What is the message?**

*Advice on how to eat for healthy aging for adults*

**What do you think?**

### Slide 35 Is this information reliable? New pill will reverse aging article

**What is the source?**

While we do not know who authored this article, the article is in a daily newspaper.

**What is the context?**

The article appears in what looks like a tabloid paper, and is making a very sensational claim

*Ask audience:*

**What is the message?**

*A new pill will be able to reverse aging.*

**What do you think?**

### Slide 36 Is this information reliable? Food sources of vitamin B12

**What is the source?**

Dietitians of Canada

**What is the context?**

Dietitians of Canada is a national professional association for dietitians in Canada. Dietitians are regulated health professionals through their respective provincial/territorial colleges.

*Ask audience:*

**What is the message?**

*This is an article describing the vitamin B12 requirements of individuals over the lifespan and what foods include vitamin B12.*

**What do you think?**

## NOTES

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# PRESENTATION 3

## Recipe for Success



This presentation reflects the content in chapters 6 and 7 of the Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook on putting healthy eating recommendations into practice with tips, suggestions and resources related to meal planning, grocery shopping, label reading and cooking for one or two people.

The presentation should take one hour: 45 minutes for discussion of the slides and 15 minutes for questions and an interactive activity. Schedule 90 minutes to allow time for set-up, take-down, and additional one-on-one questions.

### Learning Objectives

After attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

- understand the benefits of meal planning for the week
- make better choices in each section of the grocery store
- understand the information on food labels and how to interpret it
- cook more easily at home
- modify their recipes
- make better choices when eating out.

### Recommended Handouts to Provide:

1. Healthy Eating for Seniors handbook
2. *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (adapted version available in Appendix B of handbook)
3. The Eat Well Plate (Appendix C of handbook)

\*See the learning activities section at the end to determine which fits best for your presentation—there may be additional supplies required.

**\*It would be useful to have a white board set up for the learning activities**

### Presenter Notes by Slide:

<b>Slide 1</b>	<b>Recipe for Success</b>
	<i>Recommended:</i> Introduce yourself as the presenter and speak briefly about the audience expectations for the presentation and any housekeeping information (e.g., where the washrooms are located).
<b>Slide 2</b>	<b>Today's Session</b>
	Overview of the presentation. <b>Plan:</b> making a weekly meal plan and building a healthy pantry <b>Shop:</b> tips at the store and label reading <b>Cook:</b> cooking for one or two people and modifying recipes <b>Eating out:</b> making healthy choices while eating out

### Slide 3 Question: Do you face any challenges shopping and cooking as a senior?

*Ask audience: "Do you face any challenges shopping and cooking as a senior?"  
Keep answer period to 2 minutes. Consider writing answers on the white board.*

Many seniors find it challenging to cook, especially if they are living and eating alone. It may be difficult to get to the grocery store, or easier to skip a meal than find the time or energy to prepare something healthy.

This presentation is devoted to the idea that cooking and eating healthy food does not have to be difficult, time consuming or expensive. It will guide you to put healthy eating recommendations (which you may have heard in the *Eat Well Age Well* presentation) into practice by providing helpful tips and ideas for the way you plan, shop and cook.

### Slide 4 PLAN: A week of meals

- Plan for a week's worth of meals at a time, thinking about what you want to eat and the activities in your calendar. Look at what's in your fridge and freezer and try to use up what you have first, before buying fresh. Be versatile! Think outside the box—maybe search for a recipe for an ingredient you can't seem to use and try something new.
- Plan your meals using the Eat Well Plate concept (in Appendix C of the handbook), with vegetables and fruit taking up half your plate, and smaller amounts from the other food groups filling up the rest of your plate.
- Check the weekly grocery flyers for good buys that may inspire your menu planning.
- For meal planning ideas, check out our one-week meal plan for one week's worth of healthy meals and snacks (see Appendix A).
- Try making at least one meal a week that you can break into smaller portions and freeze for another easy meal, such as a soup, chili or stew.

### Slide 5 PLAN: Healthy pantry ideas

Having healthy foods in your cupboards and freezer can make a meal come together quickly, even if you haven't been to the grocery store in a while...

#### **In your cupboards, keep:**

- ✓ whole grains (e.g., oats, brown rice, whole grain pasta, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, bulgur, whole grain crackers)
- ✓ canned fish (salmon, sardines, tuna—choose ones without added salt or oil)
- ✓ canned and dried legumes (peas, beans and lentils are great for when you have more time; canned for convenience—preferably with no added salt)
- ✓ canned vegetables (tomatoes, pumpkin, corn) and fruits with no added salt or sugar (e.g., unsweetened applesauce)
- ✓ oils (olive, canola, sesame), vinegars (red wine, apple cider, balsamic, rice wine), herbs and spices (basil, chili powder, cinnamon, cloves, turmeric, dill, garlic powder, marjoram, nutmeg, oregano, pepper, red pepper flakes, thyme)
- ✓ nuts (unsalted peanuts, almond, walnuts, cashews), seeds (sunflower, sesame, pumpkin) and nut butters with no added salt, sugar or hydrogenated oils
- ✓ baking supplies—choose whole grain flours
- ✓ root vegetables including potatoes, sweet potatoes, onion and garlic are affordable options that don't go bad quickly – they should be kept in a dark, cool cupboard.

# PRESENTATION 3

## Recipe for Success



\*if buying nuts, seeds and whole grains in larger quantities, consider storing them in the fridge or freezer to keep them from going bad.

### Slide 6 PLAN: Healthy freezer ideas

Frozen vegetables and fruits can be just as healthy as fresh, if the ingredient list shows only the vegetables or fruits, and not any added salt, sugar, sauces, or syrups.

Consider portioning your protein into individual servings before freezing.

Slice breads and bagels before freezing so you can pull out one or two pieces at a time. It will keep much longer than on the counter.

### Slide 7 PLAN: Healthy fridge ideas

In your fridge, keep:

- Milk, cheese and yogurt or fortified soy beverage
- Eggs
- Ready-to-eat vegetables like snap peas or cherry tomatoes and pre-washed leafy greens
- Ripe avocados (store on counter until just softening and blackening, then in the fridge for a week or more)
- Fresh fruit, such oranges, grapefruit, pears and apples
- Tofu—try smoked or baked tofu which is ready-to-eat
- Condiments (e.g., salsa, mustard, low-sodium soy sauce)

### Slide 8 SHOP: Grocery shopping tips

- Shop with a list! This will encourage you to make healthier choices, tailored to your time and budget. Check grocery store flyers and plan your meals around the items that are on sale. Be smart and realistic. Include healthy snack foods (e.g., unsalted nuts, popcorn or whole grain crackers) and a special treat on your shopping list.
- Don't shop while hungry. Have a snack before you go to avoid buying less healthy, convenience foods to satisfy your hunger.
- Some grocery stores may offer discount days for seniors. Check with your local stores.

### Slide 9 QUIZ: True or False? Healthy Eating has to be expensive.

**False.** Some of the least expensive foods are also the most nutritious. Vegetables and fruit, whole grain breads, cereals and pasta, brown rice, baked beans are all low in fat, high in fibre and cost less than some processed or packaged foods.

Your grocery bill can add up quickly, which is especially tough if you have a limited income. Let's look at some ways to save when you shop.

### Slide 10 SHOP: Minding your budget

- Look for store (generic) brands. They are usually cheaper than name brands, but always check the prices.
- Be cautious of sales that ask you to buy multiple items, like "four for \$5." Often you can get the same discount buying only one or two, but check first as each store may be different.

- Buy from the bulk section if available. These bins let you choose exactly how much you need, so you avoid wasting food. Some bulk items may be cheaper, but be sure to check the price.
- Check the “best before” dates on all fresh foods, and especially items such as milk and yogurt, to make sure you will be able to eat all you’ve bought before it spoils.
- Be cautious of convenience foods, such as flavoured grain side dishes compared to just the grains. A lot of these foods are higher in fat, sodium and sugar, and they often cost quite a bit more than cooking from scratch.

#### Slide 11 SHOP: Buying vegetables and fruit

- Buying what’s on sale is a great way to get a variety of fresh vegetables and fruit to fill half your plate. Consider trying some you may not have had before.
- Keep the spoilage of different produce in mind. Apples and oranges will keep better than bananas; root vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes don’t go bad quickly; cabbage lasts much longer than lettuce and is often sold in halves.
- Local vegetables and fruit that are in season can be less expensive than those that are imported.
- Canned and frozen vegetables and fruit are convenient, can save you money, and are cheaper than (and just as nutritious as) out-of-season fresh vegetables and fruit.
- Try to buy low-sodium or no-sodium-added canned vegetables, and canned fruit packed in water or juice instead of syrup.
- Unseasoned, bagged frozen vegetables are lower in fat and sodium and half the cost of vegetables that are boxed and packaged with added sauces.

#### Slide 12 SHOP: Buying whole grains

- Buy whole grains such as brown rice, oats, barley or bulgur (cracked wheat), in bulk or when on sale. Keep them in the freezer if you don’t use them up quickly.
- Buy whole grain pasta when it’s on sale. It’s a healthier choice than refined white pasta and it stores well in your pantry for a quick and easy meal.
- Buy whole grain more often than white bread, checking the packaging for “100% whole grain.” Look for ingredients such as whole grain flour or whole grain whole wheat flour. We’ll talk more about this in our label reading discussion.
- Bread freezes up to three months.
- Choose hot and cold breakfast cereals with less sugar most often. Both plain, rolled oats (a very affordable option) and shredded wheat have no added sugar.

#### Slide 13 SHOP: Buying milk products and alternatives

- Buy milk or fortified soy beverage in larger jugs for the best value. If you can’t drink that much before its “best before” date, however, smaller cartons of these (one or two litres) are cheaper than the smaller plastic jugs.
- Buy cheese in blocks when it’s on sale. It’s cheaper to slice or grate it as you need it. Some cheeses, like parmesan, can also be frozen.
- Larger containers of yogurt are cheaper than single serving sizes. Choose plain, unsweetened most often.
- For those with lactose intolerance, choose products labeled “lactose-free” or milk alternatives such as fortified soy beverage. Almond beverage and other plant beverages besides soy do not contain protein, although they are usually fortified with calcium and some other vitamins.

## PRESENTATION 3

# Recipe for Success



### Slide 14 SHOP: Buying meat and alternatives

- Buy dried or canned peas, beans and lentils more often than meat. They are not only more affordable, but also lower in fat and a good source of fibre.
- Buy tofu more often. It is inexpensive and has a relatively long shelf life in the fridge, making it an ideal protein source for an easy meal. Look for smoked or baked tofu that doesn't need to be cooked and can simply be chopped up and added to salad, stir-fry, pasta or soup.
- Buy cheaper and leaner cuts of meat, such as blade, chuck, flank or rump roast. Marinate or slow cook these in low-sodium broth or tomato juice to make them tender.
- Buy a whole, small chicken instead of individually wrapped pieces. It's cheaper and you can cut it up the way you like it. Freeze in individual portions for easy meals. You can also cook a whole chicken in low sodium stock then remove the skin and bones. Add some meat back for a soup then save the rest for a meal the next day.
- Unseasoned frozen fish and canned fish, such as salmon, tuna and sardines, are inexpensive alternatives to fresh fish and just as nutritious. They make a convenient staple food to have on hand for a quick, protein-rich meal.

### Slide 15 QUIZ: Yes or No? Do you really need to read food labels?

Yes! You need to read food labels.

You need to know what you are eating to make informed and healthy food choices.

Understanding food labels is especially important if you have a chronic condition, such as heart disease or diabetes that you need to manage.

Packaged food—food that comes in a box, can, bag, carton, plastic container or heat-sealed wrap—has a lot of important information printed on the label.

But you might want to take your glasses with you to the store because the labels are small.

### Slide 16 SHOP: What's on a food label?

Food labels are found on packaged food to help you make informed food choices. They include:

- a Nutrition Facts Table
- an ingredient list
- possible nutrition and health claims.

### Slide 17 SHOP: The Nutrition Facts Table

The Nutrition Facts Table tells you a lot about a food. It's an important tool that you can use to compare foods and make healthier choices. Nutrition Facts Tables include:

#### 1. The serving size.

The information provided on a food label is based on the serving size, listed at the top of the label. In this example, the nutrients and calories are based on a serving size of one slice of bread. If you have two slices, you will eat twice the amounts listed on the label.

You should check the serving sizes and be mindful of how much you actually eat. Don't be

fooled by less healthy products with very small serving sizes. If you want to better understand portion sizes, try measuring your food for two or three days to see how much of these foods you are eating.

2. **The calories (energy)** in this serving of food. The label tells you how many calories you will consume if you eat that serving of food. If you eat twice the serving size listed, you will eat twice as many calories.
3. **The other nutrients** in this serving of food, such as fat, sugar, fibre and protein.
4. **The per cent daily value** of each nutrient. The per cent daily value (% DV) can tell you whether a food has a little or a lot of a certain nutrient. A serving with % DV of five per cent or less means this serving has a little of a particular nutrient, while 15 per cent or more means it has a lot. This information can be helpful when trying to limit a certain nutrient, such as saturated fat or sodium, or trying to increase an important nutrient such as fibre.

This may sound complicated, but once you know what to look for, it's relatively straightforward.

#### Slide 18 SHOP: Let's look together

*Ask audience: What's the serving size? How much fibre is in this bread? How does it compare to the last Nutrition Facts Table we looked at? How much sodium is in this bread?*

#### Slide 19 SHOP: Ingredient lists

In addition to Nutrition Facts Tables, food labels also include an ingredients list, which tells you the ingredients in a packaged food.

- Ingredients appear in this list in descending order, meaning the first ingredient on the list is what the food contains the most of, and the last ingredient on the list is what the food contains the least of. The ingredient list is just as important as the Nutrition Facts Table. By knowing that the ingredient list appears in descending order, you can better identify the primary ingredients of foods and use this information to compare products and make informed, healthy choices.
- You should generally choose products with fewer ingredients, and ones that you recognize or are familiar with. This is a good indication of how processed the food is.
- Watch out for sources of sugar or sodium in the top three ingredients—the food may be high-sugar or high-sodium.

#### Slide 20 SHOP: Nutrition claims

Many packaged foods will also have nutrition claims on the package or label. There are two kinds of nutrition claims: nutrient content claims and health claims.

- Nutrient content claims, such as "low in fat," "high in fibre," "low in sodium," "no sugar added" or "an excellent source of vitamin C and E" describe the amount of a nutrient in a food. These claims must, by Canadian law, meet strict standards. For example, for something to be labeled "low in fat," it must contain no more than three grams of fat per serving. To be "high in fibre," the product must contain at least four grams of dietary fibre per serving.
- Watch out for claims like "less salt" or "lower in salt or sodium than our regular product." If the regular product was very high in sodium to begin with, the lower-sodium version may still have too much for someone on a sodium-reduced diet.

## PRESENTATION 3

# Recipe for Success



- Health claims, on the other hand, are a statement about the beneficial effects of a certain food in a healthy diet. For example, “a healthy diet containing foods high in potassium and low in sodium may reduce the risk of high blood pressure, a risk factor for stroke and heart disease.”

### Slide 21 COOK: Back to the kitchen

For seniors, finding the time and energy to shop, prepare and clean up after meals can be a challenge. You may also not have much of an appetite and would rather have a piece of toast or bowl of cereal.

But cooking can save you money and give you better control over what goes into your meals.

The good news is, there are ways for cooking to be more enjoyable. Here are some tips to make cooking a little easier in your kitchen.

### Slide 22 COOK: Helpful tips

- Prepare complete, balanced meals when you have the most energy. This may mean having your main meal at lunch time, and having a bowl of soup with whole grain crackers and cheese for dinner.
- Using a blender, chopper or food processor can sometimes help to save time preparing snacks and meals.
- Try to clean up and put things away while your food cooks, so you won't have as much to do later.
- Try cooking with a friend or family member. Enjoy making a nice meal with company, sharing the time to prepare, eat and clean up. However, eating alone can be just as enjoyable as eating with others. You can cook what you want to eat, and eat where and when you want. Sit near a window where you can watch the birds or perhaps take your lunch to the park or the beach for a picnic. Listen to music or the radio while cooking and eating if this makes meal times more enjoyable.

### Slide 23 COOK: Cook once, eat twice!

Plan for leftovers

- Make a large pot of soup, stew or chili and freeze in individual containers for easy meals.
- Add leftover cooked vegetables to a salad, pasta sauce, casserole, soup, omelette or stir fry.
- Use leftover fruit as a tasty topping for your oatmeal, whole grain pancakes or waffles, yogurt or a salad. You can also blend your leftover fruit with some milk and yogurt for a healthy fruit smoothie (see Chapter 10).
- Add leftover meat, chicken, tofu, and legumes to a casserole, salad, pasta sauce or soup.
- Add leftover meat and vegetables to a whole grain pita with some tomato sauce and cheese for a quick and easy personal pizza.
- If you have extra cooked ground beef, freeze it to use another in other recipes such as chili, pasta sauce or stuffed peppers.
- Add leftover whole grain pasta to a salad, soup or casserole.
- Use leftover rice for rice pudding or add it into soups or casseroles.
- Leftover bread makes great croutons for salads, or grind it up to make breadcrumbs for coating chicken, fish or tofu.

- Leftover spaghetti and meat sauce easily becomes a great chili if you add kidney beans, chopped vegetables and chili powder.

\*To ensure your food remains safe to eat, reheat leftovers once only.

#### Slide 24 COOK: The empty nest

It's harder to shop and cook for one or two if you've spent years cooking for a family. You may find you are buying and making too much food and a lot of it is going to waste. Or you may find that you are freezing too many portions of the same thing and it's boring to keep eating it!

Here are a few tips:

- Look for recipes intended for one or two, or revise larger recipes for four or six by cutting them in half.
- Buy from the bulk food bins, so you can choose exactly how much you want of essentials such as brown rice, bran, cereals, whole grain pasta, dried fruit and nuts. Store bulk foods in sealed plastic or glass containers.
- Buy fresh fruit at different stages of ripeness, so you don't waste any. Eat the ripe ones right away. Keep frozen fruit on hand as well to ensure you have your daily servings.
- Replace your big, family-style cookware with smaller pots, ovenproof dishes and baking pans. Your food will cook more quickly and the clean-up will be easier.
- Look for small portions of items like chicken and fish. Or buy larger portions and divide them into freezer bags when you get home (try to use within a few months) or share with a friend.

#### Slide 25 QUIZ: True or false? You have to spend time cooking to make a healthy meal.

**False.** There are many ways to eat a healthy meal with little or no cooking. Everyone deserves a night off from cooking now and then. Just make sure you read the labels carefully and pick convenience foods with the most nutrients (such as frozen dinners or canned soups that are low in sodium and contain healthier fats, fibre and protein).

But you can also prepare a simple meal with healthy ingredients that don't require a lot of time in the kitchen.

#### Slide 26 COOK: Keep it simple sometimes

Eating well doesn't always mean spending a lot of time in the kitchen. A balanced meal can come together very quickly and easily:

- peanut butter and banana on whole grain bread, with a glass of milk
- cottage cheese and fruit, with a whole grain muffin
- low-fat, low-sodium vegetable soup, with whole grain crackers and yogurt for dessert
- plain yogurt mixed with granola and topped with fruit
- green salad with pumpkin or sunflower seeds, cheese slices or canned tuna and a piece of fruit
- half of an avocado spread on toast with an egg.

#### Slide 27 COOK: Can you make your favourite recipes healthier?

*Ask audience: Can you make your favourite recipes healthier? What foods or ingredients might you want to adjust?*

There are many easy ways to modify your favourite recipes to be lower in sodium and sugar and made with healthier fats. You can also easily increase the fibre. Experiment a bit to find what tastes best to you.

## PRESENTATION 3

# Recipe for Success



### Slide 28 COOK: To use healthier & less fats...

- For baking, use three-quarters of what recipe calls for. For example, if a recipe calls for one-quarter cup of shortening or butter (four tablespoons), use three tablespoons of olive or canola oil instead. Or, try substituting half the butter for half olive or canola oil.
- Use two-thirds of the liquid fat in recipes—or example, if your recipe calls for one cup of oil, use two-thirds of a cup instead.
- Use skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Try steamed or boiled brown rice instead of fried rice, pilau or biryani.
- Use canned evaporated skim milk instead of either whipping cream or regular evaporated milk.
- Use low-fat sour cream, cheese, mayonnaise and yogurt instead of regular products. Or, instead of sour cream, substitute buttermilk, cottage cheese or Greek yogurt.
- Make yogurt cheese by draining plain yogurt overnight. Use it in recipes calling for cream cheese.
- Replace some of the fat in your baking recipes with an equal amount of applesauce, mashed bananas, pureed prunes, pureed pumpkin or grated zucchini.
- Use two egg whites for one egg or make a 'flax egg' by mixing 1 tablespoon of ground flax seeds with 3 tablespoons water and allowing it to sit for 10 minutes.
- Choose lean red meats more often and trim off the excess fat. Trim the fat and skin from chicken and turkey.

### Slide 29 COOK: To use less salt...

- Choose low-sodium packaged foods for using in your recipes.
- Replace (or reduce) the salt with other flavourful ingredients, such as herbs, dry mustard, spices, lemon juice, ginger or garlic.
- Choose fresh or unsalted frozen or canned food to use in your recipes.
- Use salsa and oyster or soy sauce in smaller amounts.

Choose less often:

- processed cheese and processed, cured or smoked meats, such as sausage, hot dogs, ham, bacon and pepperoni
- pickles, pickled foods, relishes, dips and olives
- store-bought dips and salad dressings.

### Slide 30 COOK: To use less sugar...

- Cut the sugar in your baked goods by one-quarter to one-third. Your cookies and muffins will still taste the same. However, do not decrease sugar in yeast breads because sugar feeds the yeast.
- Add spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg or vanilla to your recipes to give them more flavour.
- Have sweet sauces in your recipes, such as sweet plum, barbeque or hoisin sauce in smaller quantities.

### Slide 31 COOK: To boost fibre...

- Choose whole grains, such as whole wheat pasta and brown rice, instead of white or refined products.
- Use whole wheat flour, oats (these can be ground into flour in the blender) and whole cornmeal in your recipes instead of all-purpose or enriched white flour.
- Add ground flax seeds or bran from oats and wheat to recipes like muffins.

### Slide 32 QUIZ: True or false? You cannot make healthy choices at restaurants.

**False.** You can eat out and still eat a healthy meal, if you just follow a few simple rules: try to include vegetables; ask for the butter and sauce on the side to control how much you add; opt for small portions; take the extra home for another day; and save fried foods for special occasions.

Let's look at some more tips.

### Slide 33 Eating well when eating out

- To start your meal, choose vegetable soup or salad rather than a heavier, deep-fried appetizer like mozzarella sticks or spring rolls.
- Ask for dressings and sauces on the side, so that you control how much you add.
- Instead of fries, ask for extra vegetables or salad, steamed rice, or baked potato with sour cream on the side.
- Look for entrées that are steamed, baked, broiled, braised, poached or grilled. Avoid anything sautéed, pan-fried or deep-fried.
- If you can't find what you want, tell your server how you would like your meat or fish cooked: grilled or broiled, for example, without added salt or high-fat sauces. Restaurants want your business and most chefs are very accommodating.
- To reduce the serving size, ask for a small or senior's portion, share your meal with a friend, or eat half and take the other half home for leftovers tomorrow.
- Choose tomato instead of cream sauce for your pasta, and sauces without cream for your curry.
- For pizzas, skip the pepperoni, sausage and bacon; veggie pizza is still a treat! Ask if thin and/or whole wheat crust is available.
- When at a salad bar, choose mostly vegetables and use dressing sparingly. Limit salty toppings like bacon bits, croutons, olives and pickles.
- Order fresh fruit, sorbet or frozen yogurt for dessert. Save ice cream, sherbet pie and dessert soups (such as red bean) and South Asian sweets (such as barfi, gulab jaman and jalabi) for special occasions. Order your chai with low-fat milk. If there is something on the dessert menu that you just can't resist, share one order for the whole table so everyone just has a couple of bites.

### Slide 34 Make informed choices when eating out

In addition to the eating well tips in the previous slide, you can also take advantage of Informed Dining, a program developed by the Province of British Columbia, in collaboration with the restaurant industry.

Informed Dining gives you the nutrition information you need to make informed choices when eating out at a participating restaurant. The nutrition information is based on the portion size served, with a focus on calories and sodium.

## PRESENTATION 3

# Recipe for Success



- Look for the Informed Dining logo on the menu or menu board at participating restaurants.
- Check the nutrition information before ordering to make an informed choice.
- Visit [www.InformedDining.ca](http://www.InformedDining.ca) to find out if your favourite restaurant is an Informed Dining participant. You can also check the nutrition information for each participating restaurant.

### Learning Activity

*There are two possible learning activities that build on the knowledge gained in this presentation. Choose based on facilitator preference and/or timing.*

#### **1. Label Reading exercise:**

*Before the presentation, compile enough clean food packaging for each audience member or have enough for two people to share. Items to collect include:*

- *bread packaging to discuss fibre*
- *drink containers to discuss sugar*
- *soup cartons or cans to discuss sodium*
- *breakfast cereal boxes to discuss fibre and sugar*
- *yogurt containers to discuss sugar and protein*
- *cookies or chocolate bar packages to discuss sugar and fat*
- *legume cans to discuss fibre and protein*
- *milk containers to discuss protein, fat and calcium.*

*Distribute clean food packaging to everyone in the audience. Lead a discussion by asking questions like, “who has a food or drink with more than 10% Daily Value for sodium?” or “who has a food with more than 3 grams of fibre per serving?”*

*When the audience member puts up their hand, ask them to tell the other participants what their food is and whether they think it is a healthy choice or one to be mindful of choosing too often.*

#### **2. Meal Planning exercise:**

*On a white board, go through the process of planning a week’s worth of meals. Appendix A in the *Healthy Eating for Seniors* handbook can provide some inspiration to lead the discussion. Form two columns: one labeled “meals” and the other labeled “grocery list”.*

*Ask Audience “What might we plan for two or three different breakfasts through the upcoming week?” “What food might we start with as a base for one of our meals?”*

*If the answer is eggs, ask what might go alongside to balance the meal. Whole grain toast? Vegetables? Fruit? A glass of milk or piece of cheese?*

*Now, if you were at home, you would check the fridge to see if you need eggs, bread, etc. Let’s assume you do need them and put those on our grocery list as they are likely items you need to buy most times you shop.*

*Continue on with lunches or dinners as time allows.*

**NOTES**

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