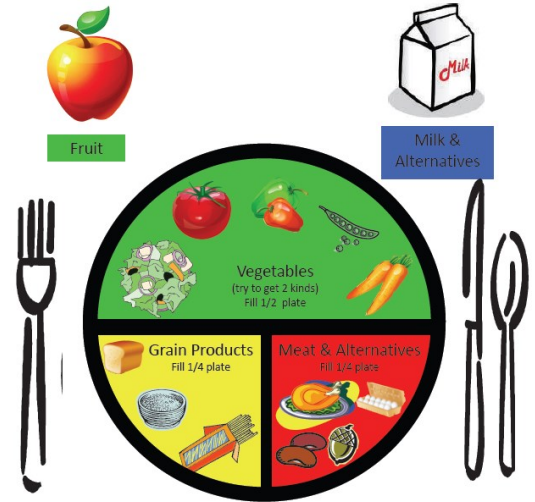


# Menu Planning

Menu planning can be a hard job when feeding a family of different ages and different food likes. Planning a menu ahead of time helps. Write out a weekly menu to help with shopping; save time and ensure you get all the ingredients.



## Basics:

- Use Canada's Food Guide to help you include food items from all four food groups.
- Vary your food choices within each food group to get a variety of nutrients.
- Plan the timing of snacks so that they do not affect your child's appetite at mealtime.

## When you have lots of time:

- Children can help plan the menu and offer veggie or entrée suggestions.
- Cook with children - they learn skills and eating habits by being part of the process.
- Cook larger dishes to save leftovers for days when you have little time.
- Wash, prepare, and store vegetables and fruit so they are ready to go later.
- Make your own freezer meals; re-heat or bake on days you are rushed.
- Make a list of family favourites to keep handy for when you run out of ideas.

## When you have little time:

- Pull out your washed vegetables and fruit or portions of leftover meat to make a sandwich with side veggies and fruit.
- Re-heat or bake a homemade freezer meal - rather than buy convenience food.
- Give children kitchen or dining responsibilities but if you are in a hurry, give them easy tasks that don't need much supervision.

**To help develop healthy eating habits, include many different tastes, textures and colours. Provide children with opportunities to try new foods and enjoy meals as a family.**

*Written by the Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan with support from Saskatchewan Health Regions (2015)*

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