

Choosing Foods & Beverages for Healthy Meetings & Events

The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region (RQHR) works to make the healthy choice the easy choice for staff and people within our communities. It is recognized that food is more than fuel for our body; it plays a large role in our social lives, provides comfort and is often used with celebrations. When hosting an RQHR sponsored meeting or event, it is important to recognize that the food provided at these meetings or events impacts staff's or client's food choices. By role modeling a positive food environment, we can:

- Encourage healthy behaviours that can increase productivity and energy levels;
- Create a consistent message between our actions and what we teach our staff and clients;
- Support staff and clients to manage chronic disease and meet their own nutritional goals.

Following the guidelines below shows the public that RQHR is truly a role model for positive health behaviours and committed to improving the health and quality of life for employees and clients.

When planning an event, consider the following guidelines:

- ✓ Is providing food at the event necessary?
- ✓ Does the food provided support healthy lifestyles and positive nutrition messaging?
- ✓ Check with participants to determine if anyone has special dietary needs or restrictions.
- ✓ Consider your target audience. Are there any cultural food restrictions/considerations?
- ✓ Ensure vegetarian options are offered.
- ✓ Ensure water is provided at breaks and meals.
- ✓ If coffee is ordered, include both regular and decaffeinated.
- ✓ Most foods and beverages served or sold should fall within the “*choose most often*” category. Foods that do not meet the nutrition standards for at least a “*choose sometimes*” food or beverage should not be offered at RQHR sponsored events.
- ✓ Keep food portions moderate. If offering a “*choose sometimes*” or “*choose least often*” food such as cookies or muffin, ask for ½ portions.
- ✓ Schedule a stretch or exercise break.

Here are some suggestions when ordering food for a meeting or event:

Food tips for healthy meetings and events

Meal	Choose Most Often	Choose Sometimes	Choose Least Often
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water ○ Skim or 1% milk ○ 2% is appropriate for children ○ Sparkling water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coffee – regular and decaffeinated ○ Tea – regular and herbal ○ 100% unsweetened juice ○ Whole, flavoured or chocolate milk ○ Fortified, flavoured soy beverages ○ Hot chocolate made with milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coffee or tea with sweetened with sugar, coffee mate or flavoured syrups ○ Regular or diet pop ○ Fruit drinks with less than 100% fruit juice ○ Energy drinks ○ Vitamin waters 
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oatmeal station (oatmeal, cinnamon, skim milk, dried fruit, nuts, low fat granola) ○ Fresh or frozen fruit with no added sugar ○ Yogurt – selection of low fat, unsweetened, or plain with fresh fruit ○ Whole grain baked bannock, mini-bagels or ½ bagels with hummus, low fat cream cheese, or unsweetened peanut butter and jam ○ Hard-boiled egg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fruit canned in water, juice and light syrup ○ Pancakes & waffles ○ Muffins & loaves ○ Sweetened yogurt ○ Granola 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fruits canned in heavy syrup ○ Croissants, doughnuts and sweet rolls ○ Hash browns and fried potatoes ○ Sweetened breakfast cereals ○ Bacon or sausage 
Sandwiches & Boxed Lunches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whole grain breads, baked bannock or wraps with a small amount of sauce or ask for sauce on the side ○ Low fat cheese ○ Lean meat/poultry ○ Canned tuna or salmon with no salt/oil added ○ Ensure vegetarian options are offered ○ Include vegetable toppings such as tomatoes, lettuce/spinach ○ Fresh fruit such as an apple or banana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fruit canned in water, juice and light syrup ○ Enriched white bread, buns, tortillas, pita bread, bannock ○ Lean deli meats ○ Fish canned in oil ○ Juice boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lunch meats ○ Potato chips ○ Cookies 

<p>Lunch/ Dinner & Catered Receptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entrees should have no more than 15 grams of fat per serving ○ Consider serving baked or broiled fish or chicken ○ Ensure vegetarian options are offered ○ Avoid fried foods and cream sauces ○ Include fresh vegetables without butter or sauce ○ Ask for salad dressings on the side ○ Include whole grain breads ○ Include fresh fruit as dessert or as one of the dessert options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables with added sugar, salt, fat or sauce ○ Baked French fries ○ Baked breaded fish, meat and chicken ○ Low sodium canned vegetable soup ○ Enriched pasta, white rice ○ Pizzas, soft tacos, quesadillas or fajitas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deep fried French fries ○ Deep fried vegetables ○ Regular ground beef ○ Ribs or chicken wings ○ Chicken nuggets ○ Fried fish/shellfish ○ Regular fat cream soups and sauces ○ Cheesecake ○ Ice cream 
<p>Snacks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fresh fruit with low fat yogurt dip or fresh fruit cup ○ Whole grain crackers and cheese ○ Raw vegetables with hummus or low fat dip ○ Pinwheel wraps, ¼ sandwiches with whole grain bread ○ yogurt parfait (yogurt, fresh or frozen fruit, nuts and low fat granola) ○ unsalted & unsweetened seeds, nuts and nut butters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fruit canned in water, juice and light syrup ○ Dried fruit, 100% fruit leathers, 100% fruit or vegetable bars ○ Cheese & cheese strings ○ Muffins & loaves ○ Granola bars (not coated) ○ Plain popcorn, rice cakes or crackers ○ Salted & sweetened seeds, nuts and nut butters ○ Sweetened yogurt ○ Pudding made with milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Crackers made with trans fat ○ Cookies ○ Pies & cakes ○ Candy, chocolate ○ Potato chips ○ Buttered microwave popcorn ○ Popsicles, freezies and other frozen novelty items 

Adapted from: Government of Saskatchewan (September 2014), *Healthy foods for my school, nutrition standards for Saskatchewan schools*.

Retrieved from: www.health.gov.sk.ca/healthy-foods-for-my-school.