

# LifeWorks Nutrition Policy

## Rationale:

Nutrition is one of the key modifiable risk factors in the prevention of chronic diseases such as stroke, heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. Many of us spend a significant amount of time in meetings, workshops and events where food is served. In order to help guide healthy food and beverage choices and to promote healthy eating behaviours LifeWorks has adopted a Nutrition Policy.

## Goal:

To provide a supportive environment where LifeWorks partners, volunteers, and guests have access to healthy food and beverage choices at meetings, workshops and other LifeWorks events.

## Objectives:

- To increase knowledge on how to make healthy food and beverage choices.
- To promote healthy eating behaviours.
- To role model healthy eating behaviours.
- To encourage LifeWorks partners to adopt the policy.

## Policy:

1. Where LifeWorks meetings, presentations and seminars are of shorter duration (1.5 hours or less) or held during the evening after supper hours, consider not offering food (unless it is for education purposes). Offer beverages, particularly water. If it is decided to provide food, offer only foods from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide (for a copy visit: [www.canadasfoodguide.org](http://www.canadasfoodguide.org)).
2. Where food and beverages are served at meetings, workshops and other LifeWorks events, LifeWorks partners will use the *Healthy Food and Beverages List* (please see attachment).
3. Where LifeWorks is not the primary sponsor, efforts will be made to advocate for healthy food and beverage choices to the sponsoring agency.

## Definitions

### ***Healthy food and beverages***

- Foods and beverages from one of the four food groups according to Canada's Food Guide.
- Food and beverages that are emphasized and encouraged in Canada's Food Guide but may not belong to one of the four food groups (e.g. water, small amounts of unsaturated fats).

# Healthy Food and Beverages List

***Use this list to make healthier food and beverage choices at LifeWorks meetings, workshops and other events. If you are working with a caterer, fax the appropriate pages to your caterer - the sections have been placed on separate pages for your convenience.***

## **Beverages**

- Offer ice water or bottled water.
- Instead of soft drinks, offer any of the following:
  - lower fat milk: skim, 1%, or 2%, white or chocolate
  - 100% fruit or vegetable juices: unsweetened. Avoid individualized large-size bottles (no more than 300 mL). Note: cocktails, drinks or punches are not 100% juice.
  - fortified soy-based or rice-based drinks
  - fruit-based smoothies: made with lower fat milk and/or yogurt, where milk or yogurt is used.
  - yogurt drink: 2% M.F or less
- If coffee and/or tea are served, offer the option of decaffeinated coffee/tea, where possible.
- Provide skim, 1% or 2% milk as options with coffee/tea.
- If milk is served to children, provide whole/homogenized milk (3.25% M.F) to children less than two years of age who are already drinking milk.

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## Snacks

- Provide at least one choice from two of the four food groups.
- 75% of snacks should be healthy choices. For example:
  - vegetable sticks with low-fat dip
  - fruit: whole or cut-up
  - fruit salad
  - fruit cups: unsweetened, packed in juice (avoid those packed in syrup)
  - low-fat fruit crisp
  - crackers: whole grain, lower fat content (e.g. whole wheat soda)
  - air popped popcorn: unflavoured or lightly sprinkled with parmesan cheese
  - salsa and baked tortilla chips
  - bagels served with hummus or light cream cheese
  - low-fat mini-muffins or low-fat muffins that have been halved or quartered
  - low-fat fruit or vegetable loaves (e.g. banana, zucchini)
  - angel food cake served with fruit
  - milk pudding
  - yogurt: 2% M.F or less

## Special Requests

- Request bagels and sandwiches to be served in quarters or halves.
- Where unhealthy snack or dessert choices are served (e.g. cakes, cookies, pies) offer smaller portion sizes.

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## **Breakfast**

- Offer at least one choice from three of the four food groups including at least one choice from the vegetables and fruit group. Examples of breakfast items include:
  - bread, English muffins, bagels (e.g. whole grain, cracked wheat, rye, bran, multigrain, pumpernickel or white).
  - cereal: whole grain, low-fat, source of fibre (at least 2 grams of fibre per serving) and not more than 8 grams of sugar per serving (e.g. Cheerios, All Bran Flakes, All Bran Honey Nut, All Bran Buds, Shredded Wheat, Regular Instant Oatmeal, etc)
  - fruit: whole or cut-up
  - fruit salad
  - fruit cups: unsweetened, packed in juice (avoid those packed in syrup)
  - 100% fruit or vegetable juices: unsweetened. Avoid individualized large-size bottles (no more than 300 mL). Note: cocktails, drinks or punches are not 100% juice.
  - cheese, cheese strings: 20% M.F or less
  - cottage cheese: 2% M.F or less
  - yogurt: 2% M.F or less
  - yogurt drink: 2% M.F or less
  - yogurt cheese: made from yogurt, 2% M.F or less
  - eggs: poached, hard-boiled, or scrambled
  - nut butters: peanut, almond, cashew
  
- If grain products are offered, at least 50% of the bread products must be whole grain or contain at least 2 grams of fibre per serving.

## **Special Requests**

- Request bagels and sandwiches to be served in quarters or halves.
- Request portions of cooked meat, fish and poultry that are 2.5 oz or less.

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### **Lunch/Dinner**

- Offer at least one choice from three of the four food groups including at least one vegetable: fresh or cooked, with no added butter or cream sauces.
- Where green salads are served, request mixed greens, romaine, or spinach. Provide dressing on the side. Offer at least one low-fat or calorie-reduced dressing.
- Where meat, fish or poultry-based entrees are served, at least one must be prepared using a low-fat cooking method such as steaming, poaching, broiling, roasting, baking, barbecuing or grilling.
- Where sandwiches are served, at least 50% of sandwiches must be made with whole grain bread products or bread products that contain at least 2 grams of fibre per serving.
- Where sandwiches are served, offer leaner meats such as roast beef, ham, turkey, roast chicken breast and/or request that prepared sandwich fillings such as salmon, tuna, chicken salad, and egg salad be made with lower fat mayonnaise.
- Where soup is served, choose broth, vegetable or milk-based soups instead of cream soups.
- Offer at least one vegetarian entrée such as a vegetable stir-fry, vegetarian pasta, vegetarian chili, grilled vegetable sandwich.

### **Special Requests**

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## **Desserts**

- Consider not offering dessert.
- Where dessert is served, offer at least one fruit choice. For example:
  - fruit: whole or cut-up
  - fruit salad
  - fruit cups: unsweetened, packed in juice (avoid those packed in syrup)
  - low-fat fruit crisp
- Where dessert is served, 75% of the desserts should be healthier choices. For example:
  - fruit (as listed above)
  - air popped popcorn: unflavoured or lightly sprinkled with parmesan cheese
  - milk pudding
  - low-fat mini-muffins or muffins that have been halved or quartered
  - low-fat fruit or vegetable loaves (e.g. banana, zucchini)
  - angel food cake served with fruit
  - yogurt with fruit

## **Special Requests**

- Where unhealthy snack or dessert choices are served (e.g. cakes, cookies, pies) offer smaller portion sizes.