

# MENU ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Establishment: \_\_\_\_\_

Read each statement carefully and add a checkmark in the box for each item met:

## MEAL PATTERNS

1. Vegetables/fruits make up the largest part of the meal (e.g., two checkmarks at mealtimes).
2. Whole grain foods are offered at every meal.
3. Protein foods are offered at every meal.

## SNACK PATTERNS

4. Vegetables/fruits are offered at all snacks.
5. Whole grain foods are offered at least once per day at snacks.
6. Protein foods are offered at least once per day at snacks.

## VEGETABLES/FRUITS

7. A variety of fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables/fruits are offered, limiting repetition within the week as much as possible.
8. Orange vegetables (e.g., carrots, pumpkin, red or orange bell peppers, butternut squash or sweet potato) are offered at least four times per week.
9. Dark green vegetables (e.g., kale, spinach, broccoli, bok choy, green peas, brussels sprouts) are offered at least once per day.

## WHOLE GRAIN FOODS

10. A variety of whole grains and whole grain foods (e.g., barley, brown rice, oats, quinoa, and whole grain couscous, pasta, tortilla, pitas, crackers, bread) are offered, limiting repetition within the week as much as possible.
11. Pre-packaged grain foods include whole grains as the first ingredient listed on the food's label.

## PROTEIN FOODS

12. A variety of protein foods (e.g., eggs, lean meats and poultry, nuts and seeds, fish and shellfish, lower fat dairy products, beans, peas and lentils, fortified soy beverages, tofu, soybeans and other soy products) are offered, limiting repetition within the week as much as possible.
13. Nuts or seeds (including nut or seed butters) are offered at least once per day.
14. Legumes, lentils or tofu are offered at least once per day.
15. When offered, dairy products are low in fat (e.g., lower fat cheeses, unsweetened lower fat yogurt, unsweetened lower fat milk).

## NUTRIENT SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

16. A [food source of vitamin D](#) (e.g., egg yolk, fatty fish (e.g., salmon, arctic char, rainbow trout), unsweetened lower fat milk or unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages) is offered daily.
17. A [food source of calcium](#) (e.g., tofu, some fish and shellfish, some dark green vegetables, lower fat unsweetened milk, yogurt and kefir, many cheeses that are lower in fat and sodium, legumes, unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages) is offered at all meals and at least one snack per day.



## HIGHLY PROCESSED FOODS

- 18. Processed meats/poultry are offered no more than twice per week (e.g., bologna, mock chicken, bacon, chicken burgers, fish sticks, hot dogs, pepperoni, sausages, deli meats and ham).
- 19. Desserts or snacks high in calories, fat and sugar are offered no more than three times per week (e.g., cakes, pastries, ice cream, frozen desserts), including special occasions (e.g., birthdays).
- 20. Other highly processed foods, or foods containing saturated fats are offered no more than twice per week (e.g., processed cheese slices, cheese spreads, deep fried foods, cream, canned coconut milk).

## BEVERAGES

- 21. Water is the drink of choice and available throughout the day.
- 22. Unsweetened, healthy drink options other than water are offered with meals and snacks (e.g., lower fat milk, fortified plant-based beverages (e.g., soy or almond beverage), coffee and teas).
- 23. Sugary drinks (e.g., soft drinks, iced tea, sports drinks, energy drinks, hot chocolate and chocolate milk, specialty coffee and teas, flavoured waters with added sugars, 100% fruit juice, fruit-flavoured drinks like fruit punch, sweetened plant-based beverages) are replaced with water or healthy drink options.

## PREPARATION AND COOKING METHODS

- 24. Foods are flavoured with herbs, spices, citrus, onion, garlic, etc. instead of using pre-seasoned foods, salt, gravy, or sauces.
- 25. Foods are prepared using cooking methods (e.g., baking, broiling, steaming, roasting, stir-frying) which require little or no added saturated fats, sodium and sugars.
- 26. When offered, lean cuts of meat and poultry (without the skin) are used, visible fat is trimmed off as much as possible, and fat is drained from cooked ground meat.
- 27. Unsaturated fats (e.g., canola, soybean and olive oils, soft margarines) are used most often in cooking or baking (as opposed to butter, coconut oil, hard margarine, lard and shortening).
- 28. Canned vegetables and legumes have little to no sodium, are drained and rinsed before use.
- 29. Canned fruits are in their own juices and are drained before use.

Assessment completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

