

Northwestern Health Unit



Series 3 – Nutrition in the Workplace

Part E: Nutrition and Shift Work



Introductions

Julie Slack, Public Health Nutritionist
Northwestern Health Unit
jslack@nwhu.on.ca

or

Jenn Maki, Public Health Nutritionist
Northwestern Health Unit
jmaki@nwhu.on.ca



Audio and PPT

This presentation is part E of a series by the Northwestern Health Unit.

Should you choose, an audio presentation accompanies these slides. Please follow along.



Nutrition in the Workplace



The purpose of this presentation is to highlight the benefits of healthy eating for shift workers



Outline

- What is shift work?
- Shift work and healthy eating
- Healthy eating tips
- Meal planning
- Fighting road blocks to healthy eating
- Helpful websites

What Is Shift Work?





Shift Work...



- Non-standard work schedule
- Includes evening or night shifts, rotating shifts, split shifts and extended duty hours
- Work hours commonly or always worked outside the period between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Shift Work...

- often requires eating at night
- may disturb “normal” eating schedules
- can make shift workers more susceptible to stomach and digestive problems

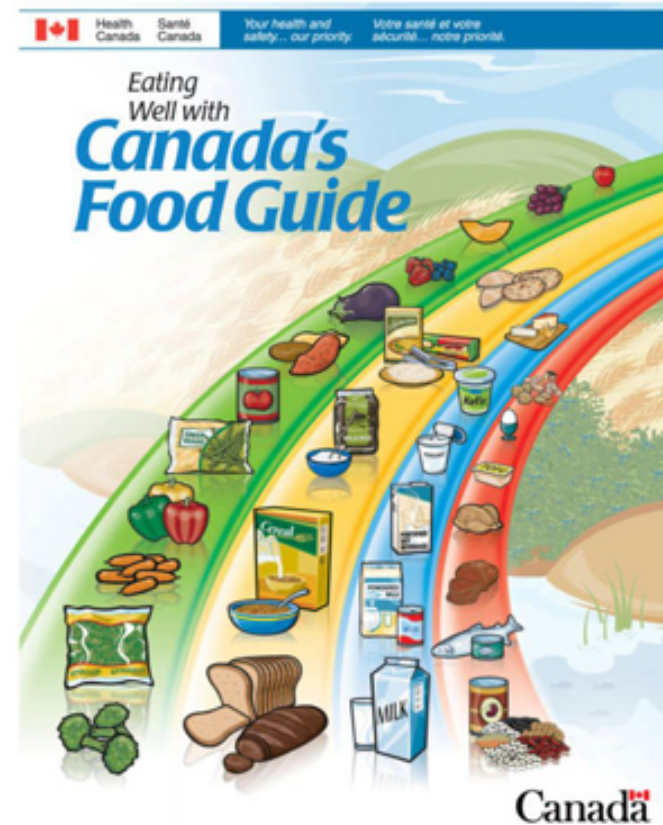


Did You Know?

- 1 in 4 Canadians work outside of the 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. scheduled work period
- The cost of shift work to the Canadian economy could be anywhere between 7 to 15 billion dollars a year
- The number of shift workers appears to be increasing



Shift Work and Healthy Eating



Why is healthy eating important for shift workers?



Healthy Eating...

reduces the risk of:

- Digestive problems
- Constipation
- Loss of appetite
- Weight problems
- Heart disease



Healthy Eating...

Improves:

- Overall well-being
- Sleep patterns
- Mood
- Job performance



Healthy Eating Tips



Tip #1

Schedule regular meals

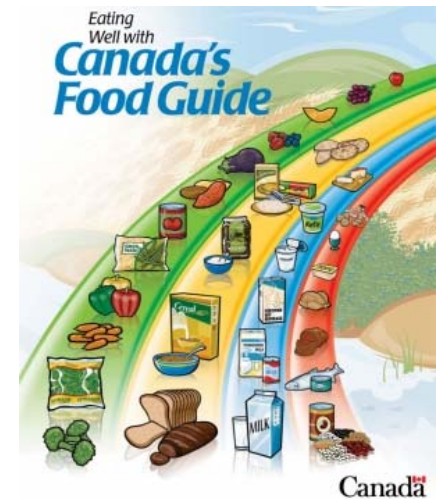
- Try to eat **3** meals in each 24-hour period
- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day



Tip #2

Choose healthy snacks at work

- Choose nutritious snacks
- Limit your number of snacks to about 3 each day
- Choose a variety of snacks



Snack Ideas

- hard-boiled egg or deviled egg
- yogurt mixed with plain cereal
- any fruit...grapes, bananas, cantaloupe, and apples
- pita pocket with vegetables, sliced meat, cheese, salsa, or hummus





Tip #3

Cut back on highly seasoned foods

- For some individuals, spicy meats, sauces, salad dressings and hot pickles irritate the stomach
- Choose fresh unprocessed meats, mild sauces and oil and vinegar dressings

Tip #4

Choose lower fat foods

CHOOSE...

whole grain breads

roasted potatoes

skim, 1% or 2% milk

chicken or turkey
without skin

INSTEAD OF...

croissants

French fries

homogenized milk

bacon/sausage

Tip #5

Limit caffeine containing foods and beverages like coffee, pop, and chocolate

- These foods can cause distress *to* the digestive tract



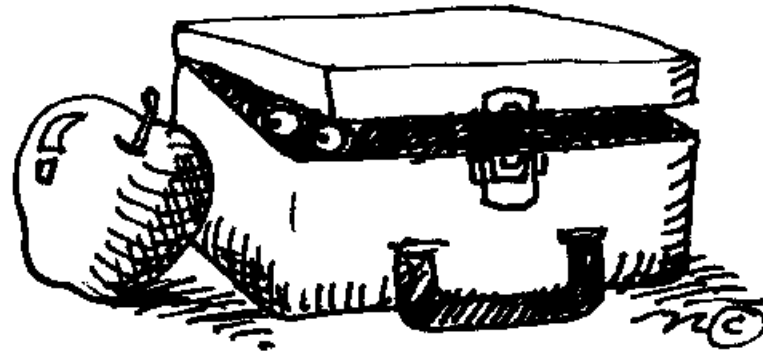
Tip #6

Drink lots of water!

- Try to drink at least 8 cups of water a day
- It helps your body to digest and absorb vitamins and minerals



Planning Your Meals



Afternoon or Evening Shift

Breakfast

- Most important meal of the day
- Usually between 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.



Main Meal

- Try including a light protein (chicken, turkey, fish, legumes) along with carbohydrate (vegetables, fruits, bread, pasta, potato)
- Usually between 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Work Meal Break

- Light and small meal such as: soup and salad-or-soup and sandwich OR poultry or fish and vegetables
- Usually between 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Night Shift

Main Meal

- Breakfast or “traditional” dinner
- Usually between 5:00-7:00 p.m.



Work Meal Break

- Light meal such as a sandwich/wrap and soup
- Try having a hot meal before midnight and snack thereafter

Snacks (before and during work)

- Suggestions: fruit, popcorn, pretzels, baked crackers, dried fruit

Packing Your “Lunch Bag”

Remember...

- Practice safe lunching...keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Get the gear...invest in a collection of insulated containers, reusable drinking containers, etc.
- Do it yourself...try to create a more nutritious, less expensive version of pre-packed lunches



Packing Your “Lunch Bag”

Try these ideas...

- Whole-wheat bagel, fresh fruit, raw carrots, and low-fat yogurt
- Swiss cheese, lettuce and mustard on rye bread, 100% orange juice, green pepper strips and dried fruit and nut mix



Coffee Break!

- Caffeine affects people differently
- It acts on the brain and may affect co-ordination, concentration, sleep patterns, and behaviour
- Try to avoid caffeine for at least 4-5 hours before going to sleep
- Limit intake to no more than four 6-ounce cups of coffee per day



Fight Road Blocks to Healthy Eating





Having Trouble Staying Awake?

- To stay alert include protein foods in meals and snacks during your shift
- Protein foods tend to have the opposite effect of carbohydrates, which can make you sleepy
- Avoid eating large amounts of protein foods before you go to bed

Choose Healthy Protein Serving Sizes...

- 50 -100 grams meat, fish, or poultry (about the size of a deck of cards)
- 1/2 –1 cup beans, peas, lentils
- 1-2 eggs
- 1/3 cup tofu
- 50 grams lower-fat cheese



Need Help Getting to Sleep?

- To promote sleep after a shift, enjoy a high carbohydrate meal or snack
- Foods high in carbohydrates (CHO) increase serotonin, a brain chemical that promotes sleepiness
- High CHO foods include whole-wheat pasta, bagels, breads, cereals, crackers, and fruit



Boredom

Tips to avoid overeating when bored...

- Ask yourself if you are really hungry. If not, drink a glass of water
- Choose a healthy snack if you must eat
- Sit down while you eat...standing at your workstation will only lead to more eating



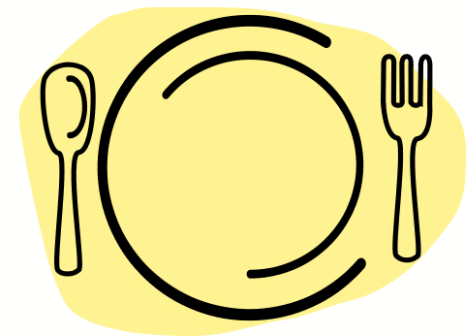
Remember!

Afternoon and Evening Shifts:

- Main meal at midday instead of the middle of your shift

Night Shift:

- Main meal in the late afternoon or early evening rather than in the middle of the night



Remember!

Eating healthy during shifts may mean making some changes in the **type** of food you eat and the **timing** of your meals





Helpful Websites

The National Sleep Foundation
www.sleepfoundation.org

Dietitians of Canada
www.dietitiansofcanada.ca

Experts in Shift Work and Extended Hours
www.circadian.com

Managing Shift Work. Saskatchewan Labour.
<http://fpse1.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety/shiftwork/printpage.htm>



References

Sources used to complete this presentation include:

- Canada Health Network. Shift work. Public Health Agency of Canada. 2006.
- City of Hamilton Public Health and Community Services Department. Nutrition and Shiftwork. 2004.
- Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. Shift Work giving you problems? There's help...on nutrition. 2006.
- Sudbury District Health Unit and Porcupine Health Unit. Shiftwork. 1998.
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Shiftwork and Nutrition. 2000.