

Healthy Eating for Seniors



Thank you.

The British Columbia Ministry of Health is grateful to all the seniors and dietitians who helped determine the content for this guide, provided recipes, stories and ideas, and generally contributed so much to making Healthy Eating for Seniors a useful resource. We would like to publicly acknowledge their contributions; their names are listed in Appendix F.

We couldn't have done it without you.



ActNowBC



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Foreword

The saying, “You are what you eat,” is true.

A healthy diet provides the ingredients to build and repair bones and tissues and keep the complex workings of the human body functioning optimally. It also provides the mental and physical energy necessary for daily life – work, recreation, relationships and time with family. It is clear that a healthy diet also protects us from infectious illnesses and chronic diseases so that we may age with a minimum of ill health, pain and disability.

A substantial number of people in British Columbia are considered to be malnourished, either through over-consumption of foods that should be consumed in moderation, or through under-consumption of nutritious food, or both. With British Columbia’s ever-expanding food choices, many people are not sure how to choose the best food for themselves and their families.

As people age, the need for calories decreases while the need for nutrients often increases. This can pose a challenge for seniors.

In my 2005 Annual Report, Food, Health and Well-being in British Columbia, I called for public education and health promotion regarding healthy eating and physical activity. I called for British Columbian consumers to be educated and encouraged to choose foods with high nutritional quality and to know the benefits of regular physical activity.

I am happy to introduce Healthy Eating for Seniors, to help seniors make decisions about healthy eating.

Healthy Eating for Seniors addresses many of the barriers to healthy eating: time, effort, knowledge and skills, taste and cost. Healthy Eating for Seniors also addresses food safety – which is key for promoting health. It includes information about supplements and how to eat with a chronic disease. And it offers you simple ways to eat with less fat and salt, to keep a healthy body weight, to shop for healthy food on a budget, and to read labels.

The handbook also includes tips and recipes from other seniors, many of whom are dealing with new ways of eating after learning they have a chronic disease.

Together with other societal efforts to promote active aging, Healthy Eating for Seniors will help seniors make the healthy choices that will enable them to enjoy more active and independent lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P.R.W. Kendall', written over a solid black horizontal line.

P.R.W. Kendall, MBBS, MSc, FRCPC

Provincial Health Officer