



Nutrition Tips for Shift Workers

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Overview: Meal Planning

- Challenges with shift work
- Nutrition for shift work
- Meal planning tips
- Sample menus
- Questions



Challenges with Shift Work

- Disruption in typical eating patterns:
 - Higher rates of stomach and digestive problems (constipation, diarrhea, gas, indigestion, heartburn, stomach ulcers)
 - Altered appetite (gain or loss of body weight)

What are some of your challenges?



Shift Work Challenges

- Eating in a rush
- Eating alone
- Eating poorly during the day
- Consuming too much caffeine
- Less exercise

The Good News!

The good news is that healthy eating can help you maintain good health and feel your best!



Benefits of Healthy Eating

Reduces	Improves
Stomach and digestive problems	Alertness
Risk for obesity	Quality of sleep
Risk for chronic diseases	Job performance
Feeling sluggish	Overall sense of wellbeing

Schedule Regular Meals



- Try to eat 3 healthy meals in 24 hours
- Space your main meals 4-6 hours apart

For example:

3:00 pm – 11:00 pm shift

- Eat at 8am, and 7pm

11:00pm – 7:00am shift

- Eat at , 2am and 8am



Nutrition and Shift Work

- Protein rich foods keep us alert
- Carbohydrate rich foods make us sleepy



Shift work Eating Tips

- **Balanced meals**
 - Whole grains/carbohydrate
 - Protein
 - Low fat
- **Portion Control**
- **Low sugar**
- **Limit stimulants (caffeine and alcohol)**



WHAT IS HEALTHY EATING?



Nutrients
(body needs)

+

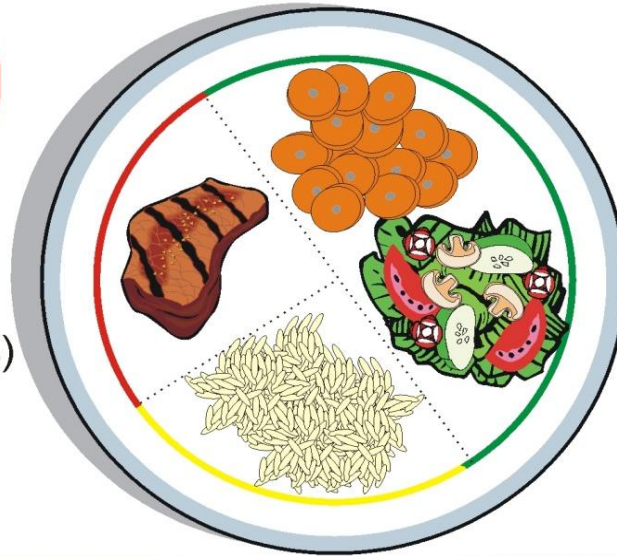
Energy Balance
(right amount)

Pulling it all together

Meat & Alternatives 1/4 Plate

Choose your favourite:

- fish
- legumes (dried beans & peas, lentils)
- eggs
- lean ground beef
- turkey slices
- tofu



Vegetables 1/2 Plate

Choose your favourite:

- green leafy salad
- sliced carrots
- sweet potato
- other colourful vegetables

Grain Products 1/4 Plate

Choose your favourite:

- pasta, rice & other whole grains
- whole grain bagel
- whole grain bread, roll, or cereal
- rice noodles

Milk Products

Choose your favourite to complete this meal:

- glass of milk
- yogurt
- milk-based pudding

Vegetables & Fruit

- Aim for 8-10 servings per day.
- Bring at least 3 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruit for each shift.
- Choose whole vegetables and fruits more often than juice.



Stay Hydrated



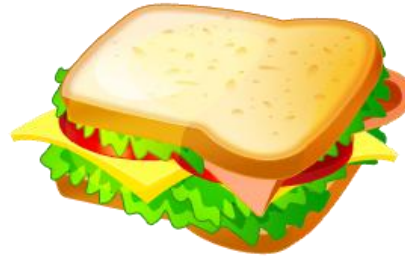
- Drink plenty of water during shift.
- Working in hot environment:
 - Increased sweating – need ↑ water intake
 - Cool water = best option
 - Most people get salt & electrolytes in food
 - Sport drinks are not necessary = calories/sugar
 - If sport drink – moderation is a key

Suggestions

Meal



Vegetable soup



*Turkey sandwich/
whole grain bread*



Fruit

Snack



Yogurt



Veggies & fruit



Nuts or grains

Sleep Busters

Avoid the following foods before you go to sleep, especially if you suffer from indigestion or heartburn:

- Spicy foods
- Caffeine-containing drinks and food like coffee, chocolate, colas
- High-fat foods
- Deep-fried foods



Staying alert



- To stay alert during a night shift, avoid having a large, heavy meal.
- Instead, have a smaller meal with lower-fat, protein rich foods and add healthy snacks when you get hungry.

Sample Afternoon Shift Menu

Meal	Example
<p>Breakfast</p> <p><i>A balance of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables within 1 hour of waking</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small bowl of cereal with low-fat milk and a piece of fruit <u>or</u> • A slice of wholegrain toast with an egg with a ½ cup of 100% fruit juice
<p>Main meal</p> <p><i>A balanced meal of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stir fry with vegetables and meat on whole grain noodles <u>or</u> • A roasted chicken breast with vegetable sticks, brown rice <u>and</u> • A glass of low-fat milk and a piece of fresh fruit
<p>Work Break Snack</p> <p><i>A balance of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables, no caffeine</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wholegrain bagel with peanut butter <u>or</u> • Low-fat yogurt with fresh berries <u>and</u> • Vegetable sticks with a glass of water
<p>After shift (if hungry)</p> <p><i>Low-fat carbohydrates and no caffeine</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small bowl of oatmeal with sliced strawberries <u>or</u> • Whole grain toast with jam and a piece of fruit

Sample Night Shift Menu

Meal	Examples
<p>When you wake <i>A balance of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables to help you wake up</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small bowl of cereal with low-fat milk and a piece of fruit <u>or</u> • A slice of wholegrain toast with an egg with a ½ cup of 100% fruit juice
<p>Main meal (before shift) <i>A balance of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A roasted chicken breast with brown rice and steamed vegetables <u>or</u> • Whole grain spaghetti with meat sauce and vegetable sticks <u>and</u> • A glass of low-fat milk with a piece of fresh fruit
<p>First work break <i>If hungry, choose carbohydrate rich foods</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fibre granola bar <u>or</u> • Lightly seasoned popcorn
<p>Second work break <i>A balance of protein and carbohydrate rich foods with fruit/vegetables</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wholegrain bagel with peanut butter <u>or</u> • Low-fat yogurt with fresh berries <u>and</u> • Vegetable sticks with a glass of water
<p>Pick-me-up snack (around 3-4 a.m.) <i>Protein rich food</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat yogurt <u>or</u> • ¼ cup almonds
<p>After shift (<i>if hungry</i>) <i>Low-fat carbohydrates and no caffeine</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole grain toast with jam or a muffin and a piece of fruit <u>or</u> • Low-fat blueberry bran muffin

Quick Tips

- Make large batches of meals, use leftovers
- Have a variety of healthy snack options available
- Eat in a pleasant environment with co-workers when possible



Resources

- Eat Right Ontario
www.eatrightontario.ca
- Dietitians of Canada
www.dietitians.ca



Any Questions?

