

# Safe Eating and Drinking

## COVID-19 Prevention in the Workplace

With the festive season upon us and workplace food traditions underway, extra precautions need to be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### Shared Food

Avoid the display and self-service of shared food. Consider alternatives to potlucks, shared food trays, etc. to make food available in a safe manner.

- ✓ Ensure hand hygiene supplies are available
- ✓ Provide individually packaged meals and snacks on a clean surface so recipients can easily and safely pick them up
- ✓ Divide food into individual portions rather than sharing from one dish
- ✓ Use shelf-stable items, if items are to be on display for extended periods of time (e.g. whole fruit)
- ✓ Food service and eating area must be large enough to allow for physical distancing



### Eating Together

Eating together can be a riskier activity because face coverings are removed, people relax, and the conversation is lively. Taking precautions is important.

- ✓ Wash your hands prior to preparing or consuming food
- ✓ Stagger lunches and breaks; keep track of who you eat with
- ✓ Ensure lunch and break rooms are sized to allow for physical distancing
- ✓ Keep at least two metres from others while you eat
- ✓ If you're not eating/drinking, keep your mask or face covering on
- ✓ Keep music at a low volume to permit regular conversation (i.e. to avoid talking loudly or shouting)
- ✓ Use approved sanitizers to sanitize your spot once you have finished eating

## Remember the Basics of Food Safety

During these busy times, we all need to do what we can to keep ourselves healthy and safe. Whether you are preparing food for others or yourself, there are basic food safety principles to remember.

- ✓ Cook and reheat food to the appropriate internal temperature (most foods will be safe to eat after reaching an internal temperature of 74°C)
- ✓ Keep hot food at 60°C and above and cold food at 4°C or below
- ✓ Keep raw food separate from ready-to-eat food
- ✓ Protect food from contamination by keeping it covered and in food grade containers
- ✓ Wash fruits and vegetables prior to consumption
- ✓ Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces and utensils with a detergent and water, followed by a sanitizer safe for food preparation (e.g. 100ppm chlorine bleach solution: ½ tsp 5% bleach in 1 litre of water)



## Eat Well, Live Well

With the festive season comes many different cultural and traditional treats that offer a sense of normalcy and comfort. **Mindful eating** can prevent overindulging and can increase your enjoyment of food without judgment. Take time to pay attention to the taste, texture and smell of your food, your current feelings, and your body's cues telling you how hungry or full you are. Eat slowly, thoughtfully and without distractions like screens.

Consider the following checklist to promote balance and variety when food is offered at your workplace:

### Prior to this meeting/event, I have:

- Thought about whether food is necessary (consider celebrating without food e.g. compiling favourite recipes into a workplace cookbook).

### When planning the Food Menu, I have:

- Considered Participants' dietary restrictions due to cultural, personal or health needs
- Referred to [Canada's Food Guide](#) and considered the balanced plate (Vegetables and Fruit, Protein Foods, Whole Grains)
- Ensured that **Snacks** offer foods from at least two food groupings, one being a vegetable or fruit
- Ensured that **Meals** offer foods from at all **three** food groupings
- Included **whole grain** foods (if serving grains)
- Included meat alternatives such as beans and legumes and/or lean meat low in added fat and salt (if serving protein foods)
- Included fruit as a choice (if offering dessert)