

Mental Wellbeing Guide: **Nutrition**



Discover ways to enhance your nutrition, manage dietary habits, and achieve a balanced diet during your university journey

NUTRITION

Your brain consumes about 20% of the energy from the food you eat, so choosing the right foods is crucial for staying focused, productive, and energized. However, eating well on a budget with limited time can be challenging. Therefore, learning to get enough nutrition and access to support resources on campus is important for students to maintain good physical and mental health.



FOOD INSECURITY & EATING DISORDERS

Both female and male students can have disordered eating patterns. In Canada, estimates of eating disorders (EDs) are around 17% for females and 8% for males. Addressing EDs requires normalizing eating and increasing food intake. However, food insecurity may compromise recovery. UNB provides nutrition consultation with Registered Dietitian Anna Jackson to help students manage their diets and aid recovery from EDs.

You can book an appointment with Anna through the Student Health Centre

STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

SHC@UNB.CA



TIPS



- **Eat Regular Meals:** Regular meals help control your appetite, regulate blood sugar, and improve concentration. Try to include all four food groups in each meal, aiming for half the plate filled with fruits and vegetables, one quarter with grains, and one quarter with protein.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Dehydration can impair concentration, reduce energy levels, and negatively affect your mood. Keep a water bottle nearby and aim for 2-3 liters of water daily.
- **Stock Up on Staples:** Keep budget-friendly, non-perishable items like canned tuna, brown rice, oats, beans, and frozen fruits and vegetables. These staples make it easier to avoid takeout during busy times.
- **Plan Ahead:** Plan your meals for the week, make a shopping list, and cook in bulk. Preparing large batches of staple items like hardboiled eggs or chicken breasts saves time. Pack lunches and snacks the night before to avoid relying on fast food.
- **Smart Snacking:** Choose snacks with protein, such as trail mix, Greek yogurt with high-fiber cereal, or an apple with peanut butter. These help you stay full and alert.
- **Manage Stress and Appetite:** Stress can disrupt normal eating patterns. Set reminders to eat every few hours, and opt for easily digestible foods like smoothies if stress affects your appetite. If stress leads to overeating, try stress management techniques like yoga or walking.
- **Follow the 80/20 Rule:** Maintain a balanced diet by eating nutrient-dense foods 80% of the time and indulging in your favorite treats the other 20%.



Summary

- The brain uses 20% of the energy from food, making nutrition key for focus and energy.
- Eating well on a budget and with limited time is challenging
- Addressing food insecurity and eating disorders (EDs) is crucial for student health
- UNB offers nutrition consultation with a registered dietitian at the Student Health Center.

Tips for better nutrition:

- Eat Regular Meals: Controls appetite, regulates blood sugar and improves concentration. Include all four food groups.
- Stay Hydrated: Aim for 2-3 liters of water daily.
- Stock Up on Staples: Keep budget-friendly, non-perishable items on hand to avoid takeout.
- Plan Ahead: Plan meals, make shopping lists, cook in bulk, and pack lunches/snacks the night before.
- Smart Snacking: Choose protein-rich snacks to stay full and alert.
- Manage Stress and Appetite: Set reminders to eat, choose easy-to-digest foods and use stress management techniques.
- Follow the 80/20 Rule: Eat nutrient-dense foods 80% of the time, and enjoy treats 20% of the time.

Additional resources



[Student Health Centre](#)



[Campus Food Banks](#)



[UNB Wellness HUB](#)