

How does your Nutrition Services program work?

The Nutrition Services program is a short-term dietitian counseling service that supports health promotion, disease prevention, and treatment by co-creating an individualized nutrition care plan.

Nutrition Services includes Registered Dietitians and Registered Nurses who work collaboratively to provide patient education, treatment advice, and promote self-management. Most patients can self-manage their nutrition care plan within 3-6 appointments within a 6 to 12 months period. If more than 6 appointments are required, your dietitian will discuss other options available to you.

Initial appointments are scheduled for 45 minutes in length and follow-up appointments are scheduled for 20 minutes. Appointments may take less time depending on your needs. The frequency between follow up appointments is mutually determined by the patient and dietitian.

What does a Registered Dietitian do?

Registered Dietitians with the SCPCN are health professionals specifically trained in food and nutrition and are provincially regulated through the College of Dietitians of Alberta. Dietitians translate complex, up-to-date science into personalized advice that patients can understand. Dietitians also collaborate with other health professionals such as your family physician, nurses, social workers, and other community-based programs within each patient's circle of care to provide a comprehensive care plan.

Dietitians work in partnership with their patients to:

- Assess dietary intake and eating behaviours.
- Address food, energy, and nutrient needs and concerns.
- Provide knowledge and skills needed to make informed food decisions.
- Support healthy behavioural change through motivation and guidance.
- Increase understanding of the connection between food and health.
- Improve overall health to prevent or treat nutrition-related health conditions.
- Find practical solutions that are sustainable and take into consideration ones cultural and food traditions, personal needs, and challenges.

What can I expect from working with a Registered Dietitian?

Your dietitian will take the time to understand your specific concerns and will ask you questions about your medical and nutrition-related history. This allows your dietitian to complete a comprehensive nutrition assessment and develop a nutrition care plan. Your dietitian will determine if you are getting too much or too little of anything in your diet and provide education and individualized recommendations for improvement that align with your goals.

You will have the opportunity to ask your dietitian additional questions and review your progress with your individualized goals. Your dietitian will provide additional guidance based on your progression and adjust your nutrition care plan, as required.

How do I prepare for my appointment with a Registered Dietitian?

It is important to think about your nutrition and health goals. Good questions to ask yourself are:

- What do I want to change or improve regarding my food and beverage choices and eating behaviours?
- What do I want to learn more about related to food, nutrition, and health?
- What barriers do I have around healthy eating?
- How can the dietitian best support me in reaching my goals?

Come prepared for each appointment. You may want to:

- Keep a food journal which includes everything you eat and drink for 3-7 days prior to your appointment. Food journals include when, what, and how much you eat or drink. You can bring this with you to your appointment.
- Write down the questions you have for the dietitian, so you don't forget to ask them at your appointment.
- Consider bringing a list of your current medications and supplements with you, especially if there have been any recent changes.
- Consider attending a group workshop to increase knowledge and understanding in addition to your individual appointment. We offer many no-cost, self-registration workshops at the SCPCN. To learn more and to register, go to: www.scpcn.ca/workshops. Our nutrition related workshops include:
 - **Best Weight** – Applicable for those with excess weight.
 - **Craving Change** – Applicable for those with problematic eating behaviours.
 - **Understanding Diabetes** – Nutrition Foundations – Applicable for those with pre-diabetes or Type 2 Diabetes.
 - **Label Reading and Menu Planning** – Applicable to those that want to understand how to make informed choices at the grocery store and cook more at home.
 - **Health Basics** – Applicable to those that are looking to make overall lifestyle change to improve health.
 - **Group Medical Visits** – Applicable to those that want increased accountability and learn in a small group support setting with those that share the same health concern.