



# Healthy Eating Challenge

A 5-day contest  
that helps children  
understand the value  
of healthy food choices

Sponsored By

A Public Service Division of  
Keep Canada Slim Inc.

## **Welcome to the Keep Canada Slim Healthy Eating Challenge**

Keep Canada Slim has created a program for school children that is easy and fun to do.

Raising our children to enjoy healthy foods and to take responsibility for their health choices is a major interest of all parents and teachers. In today's world of highly-promoted fast foods and convenience junk foods it is more difficult than ever to achieve this. The Keep Canada Slim Healthy Eating Challenge is an exciting and effective way to help teach children these important lessons while at the same time improving their habits.

We appreciate your support in this Challenge. If you have any questions or feedback, please email us at [info@keepcanadaslim.com](mailto:info@keepcanadaslim.com).

## **The Keep Canada Slim Healthy Eating Challenge**

**Objective:** A game designed to help kids recognize the value of healthy food choices. By relating food to a scoring system children will perceive that they “win” when they make healthy choices and “lose” when they make poor choices. This makes teaching nutrition a game instead of a lecture and drives home the message in a way that directly relates to their everyday lives.

Healthy food choices naturally translate into healthier bodies, which in turn provide the fuel for better physical and mental development. This translates into better study habits, improved learning and improved performance in all areas of life - sports, math, reasoning, and artistic pursuits.

The Challenge is a graduated game. Each level requires an increased knowledge of nutritional choices and encourages the student to think more deeply about their food choices. Each level offers teachers an opportunity to add details to the knowledge base they have gained in the previous level.

This segment for Grade 3 students is the introduction to the program. It focuses on the basic rudiments of healthy eating as suggested by Canada's Food Guide and Nutrition Pyramid.

**Method:** Kids track their school lunches and snacks for 5 days (Mon-Fri). They get points for healthy food choices and lose points for poor choices. Top scores in each class receive recognition awards and prizes. In addition the students who show the highest score increases during the contest receive prizes.

### **Notes to Parents:**

The Keep Canada Slim Healthy Eating Challenge was designed to be an interactive game for the whole family. Depending on the age of your child, they may require your active participation to get the most benefit from the Challenge. This Challenge starts on Monday and ends on Friday. Please take some time during the weekend before the Challenge begins to go through the scoring summary with your child. We suggest you identify common foods in your house and explain how each one generates (or loses) points in the Challenge. Encourage your child to help plan the week's lunches – to maximize their score!

Each day at school your child will write down everything that they have to eat or drink and then tally the daily score. The teacher may need to help them with this at first, but we expect each child to be able to record and score their totals by the end of the week.

### **Notes to Teachers:**

We suggest you use a day in the week before the challenge as a trial run. This can be done as part of the initial presentation. Have each child take their lunch and snack contents out of their bags and help them to score their food according to the Challenge scoring system. Some scoring will be obvious to them, such as fresh fruit, but others such as processed cheese or packaged foods may require some explanation. In addition to helping children understand the Challenge scoring system and teaching the value of everyday food choices, you may want to use the game to expand your students' understanding of the food industry and

the role it plays in our world. Here are some suggestions of additional study topics that you may want to consider. If you create and develop other teaching ideas, we would love to hear about them so we can pass them on to other teachers! Please email any suggestions or comments to [info@keepcanadaslim.com](mailto:info@keepcanadaslim.com).

- **Map search.** Check the country of origin of various fruits and vegetables on a map of the world. Assign teams of students to produce a report on various countries.
- **Food path trace.** Trace the path that food takes to reach Canada. What are the growing conditions? (Soil, temperature, rainfall, etc.) How are they harvested, packed and shipped? How long does transport take?
- **Compare fruits and vegetables.** Are they picked ripe or unripe? Which ones ripen after picking? What is their shelf life? What do they weigh?
- **Canadian produce.** What do we grow here? Which fruits and vegetables come from which provinces?
- **Local relations.** Are there any fruits or vegetables grown locally? Is there a farm which can be visited?
- **Favourite foods.** Each student makes a graph showing their food choices during the Challenge. Divide the graph according to Canada's Food Guide and see how closely they can come to achieving balance of food groups.

## **How to Score Points:**

You receive points for eating “winning” foods (Plus Points) and lose points for eating “losing” foods (Minus Points). Some foods are considered “neutral” and have no points. Combination foods including home-made pasta dishes, stir-fries, casseroles etc., and store-bought pre-packaged meals such as frozen “convenience” dinners are calculated based on their ingredients. You may have to make some adjustments for these. One serving of a casserole for instance may accumulate multiple points since it may include several different food servings - vegetables, grains (rice, barley, millet) chicken, etc., but be sure to consider serving size. A few pieces of carrot in a vegetable soup may not equal one serving, for instance.

Food or drinks must be consumed to count. Be sure to have students check their bags before going home to subtract for foods that were not consumed.

Using the score sheets enclosed, at the beginning of the day have each student write down everything that they brought with them to school and then list their points in the Plus or Minus columns. Total them at the end of each day and at the end of the week.

### **Neutral foods**

All fresh or frozen whole meats; butter, oils and fats; homemade baked goods (these are neutral because there are many variables of quality). Granola bars with chocolate ingredients.

## **Scoring Summary for Winning Foods (These generate Plus Points):**

### **Fruit and Vegetables**

**Serving size = 1 whole fruit, 4 large strawberries, 10 grapes, 5 celery sticks, 5 red/green peppers cut in sticks or 5 carrot sticks or baby carrots, 6 cucumber slices, ½ of a tomato, 4 cherry tomatoes**

5 Points for each serving of any fresh (raw) fruits or vegetables

3 Points for each serving of unsweetened fruit juice

3 Points for each serving of cooked fruits or vegetables cooked – including frozen or canned.

### **Grains – Cereal, breads, rice, pasta, etc**

3 Points for each serving of any 100% whole grain bread, brown rice, pasta (fresh-cooked, not canned or pre-cooked packaged meals such as pizza pockets), cereal, tortillas, pitas, etc. This would be 100% whole wheat, whole rye, multi-grain, etc. These must not include “enriched” white flour as an ingredient.

2 Points for each serving of any grain product that has both whole grains and “enriched” white flour.

1 Point for each serving of any grain product with only “enriched” white flour as a grain ingredient.

1 Point for each serving of white rice

### **Dairy Products**

4 Points for each serving of yogurt or yogurt drink

3 Points for each serving of milk (**not** including chocolate milk)

3 Points for each serving of white cheese

2 Points for each serving of yellow cheese **not** including processed cheese products (Cheese slices, cheese whiz)

1 Point for each serving of cream cheese

### **Fish & Chicken**

3 Points for each serving of fish e.g. salmon or tuna, (not deep fried) turkey or chicken cooked at home (not including chicken nuggets).

## **Combination Foods – Pizza, Soup & Stew**

3 Points for any fresh pizza slice with tomato sauce and cheese

### **Additional points:**

Add 1 point for each vegetable topping;

Add 2 points for whole grain or whole wheat crust. Deduct points for pepperoni and other animal deli meats (see Losing Points). Sliced turkey or chicken is neutral.

5 Points for any 1-cup serving of home-made soup

7 Points for any 1-cup serving of home-made stew

## **Eggs**

3 Points for each egg

## **Granola Bars**

Granola bars range from excellent to poor, depending on ingredients. As a general rule, score 2 points for a typical grocery-store granola bar that does not have chocolate chips or chocolate coating. Add an additional point if it has no white sugar, and another if it says “organic” on the label. Granola bars are neutral if they contain chocolate.

## **Sandwiches & Subs**

For sandwiches, add individual points for bread type, vegetable, cheese etc.

e.g. Turkey sandwich with cucumber, sprouts, white cheese on whole wheat bread would be 6 points for each slice of whole wheat bread, 3 points for cucumber (based on 3 slices, or ½ of a serving, 3 for sprouts (1 serving) and 3 for white cheese (1 slice) for a total of 15. Turkey (or chicken) is worth an additional 3 points if home-cooked (no nitrates, added salt, preservatives), but is neutral if it is deli meat (slightly better than pepperoni and other animal-meats). Half a sandwich eaten would be half the points.

### **Bonus Points:**

Get 2 bonus points for each 8 ounce cup or glass of water (must drink the whole thing)

Get 4 bonus points for each 500ml bottle of water (must drink the whole thing)

Get 5 bonus points if you have 3 or more servings of fruit and vegetables combined in one day

Get 5 bonus points if you have an entire day with no products that Lose points

## **Scoring Summary for Losing Foods (These generate Minus points and are subtracted):**

### **Processed and Pre-cooked Foods**

1 Point for each serving of chicken nuggets

1 Point for each serving of processed cheese (cheese slices, Cheese Whiz, etc.)

1 Point for each serving of bacon, sausages or deli meat (i.e. sliced ham, bologna, wieners, etc.)

1 Point for each serving of pizza “products” such as Pizza Pops

2 Points for any breakfast “substitute” (Pop Tarts, frozen waffles)

### **Desserts, Candy, Potato Chips, etc.**

1 Point for each serving of pie

2 Points for each serving of cookies, donuts, cake, milk chocolate or chocolate bars

3 Points for each serving of candy

2 Points for each serving of chips, bits ‘n bites, pretzels, etc

## **Liquids**

2 Points for each serving of chocolate milk or hot chocolate

2 Points for each serving of sweetened fruit juice or fruit-based drink with sugar added

3 Points for caffeine-free iced tea

4 Points for iced tea with caffeine

5 Points for each serving of pop or Kool-Aid

6 Points for diet pop

## Keep Canada Slim Healthy Eating Challenge -- Score sheets

<b>Monday</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Plus Points</b>	<b>Minus Points</b>
		<i><b>Total: Plus – Minus =</b></i>
<b>Tuesday</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Plus Points</b>	<b>Minus Points</b>
		<i><b>Total: Plus – Minus =</b></i>
<b>Wednesday</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Plus Points</b>	<b>Minus Points</b>
		<i><b>Total: Plus – Minus =</b></i>

<b>Thursday</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Plus Points</b>	<b>Minus Points</b>
		<i>Total: Plus – Minus =</i>
<b>Friday</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Plus Points</b>	<b>Minus Points</b>
		<i>Total: Plus – Minus =</i>
<b>Weekly Total</b>		
<b>Day</b>	<b>Points</b>	
<b>Monday</b>		
<b>Tuesday</b>		
<b>Wednesday</b>		
<b>Thursday</b>		
<b>Friday</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>		