

# Advancing health through food and nutrition

*One of the largest organizations of food and nutrition professionals in the world*



## About Us

Dietitians of Canada (DC) is the professional association representing 6,000 members at the local, provincial and national levels with regional offices in British Columbia, Alberta and the Territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada. We are governed by a Board of Directors elected by members.

Our purpose is to advance health through food and nutrition. We:

- provide evidence-based food and nutrition information
- support easier access to adequate, safe and healthy food
- promote professional best practices
- advocate for better access to dietitians to meet the health needs of Canadians.

Dietitians of Canada has its roots in the Canadian Dietetic Association (CDA), established in 1935. After successfully advocating for the establishment of provincial dietetic regulatory bodies, in 1997, the provincial dietetic associations merged with CDA to form DC.

In 1991, DC established the Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research ([www.cfdr.ca](http://www.cfdr.ca)), a registered charitable foundation that grants funds for research to increase practice-based evidence in nutrition and food science.

We are the Secretariat for the International Confederation for Dietetic Associations (ICDA), an organization we

helped to found in 2000. There are more than 40 national dietetics association members representing 180,000 dietitians and nutritionists worldwide.

In 2009, we helped form the Partnership for Dietetics Education and Practice ([www.pdep.ca](http://www.pdep.ca)), an alliance of dietetics regulatory bodies, dietetics educators and DC that sets standards of competence for education and practice and accredits dietetics education programs across Canada.

*94% of Canadians agree dietitians are a credible source of food and nutrition information.*



## We provide easier access to trusted food and nutrition information

A 2014 Ipsos Reid poll conducted for DC revealed that 94% of Canadians agree dietitians are a credible source of food and nutrition information. Dietitians are university educated and regulated health professionals. As evidence-based practitioners, dietitians translate complex scientific evidence into practical solutions to promote health and well-being. Four key ways we reach Canadians:

**Bilingual websites and apps.** We have about 5 million visitors to our websites each year including [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca), eaTracker ([www.eatracker.ca](http://www.eatracker.ca)) and Eat Right Ontario ([www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)). Our three smart phone apps – Cookspiration, eaTracker, and eaTipster - boast 125,000+ downloads. Cookspiration was featured twice under ‘Best New Apps’ in the Apple Store.

**Media outreach.** You’ll find our 15+ media spokespersons positioned in all major centres in Canada. They contribute to our media presence with 600+ media stories and a reach of more than 250 million annually. Our social media reach approaches 22 million annually.

**Annual Nutrition Month campaign.** For more than 30 years we have hosted an annual campaign that engages hundreds of members in its planning and delivery. The annual media reach is 30-55 million. The 2015 Campaign won the Canadian Society of Association Executives - ‘Associations Make A Better Canada’ Award.

**Direct links with dietitians.** We house a database of almost 700 consulting dietitians at [dietitians.ca/find](http://dietitians.ca/find) to help the public find a private consultant near them.



## We provide leadership in shaping food and nutrition policy

At the national, provincial and local levels, we work collaboratively with governments and like-minded health organizations, sharing our expertise as:

- **Partners** to advance public policy on nutrition labelling, chronic disease prevention and management, food insecurity, and children’s healthy growth and development
- **Advocates** to promote access to healthy food for all
- **Appointed experts** on federal and provincial government working groups, panels and task forces to address issues such as prenatal, infant and school nutrition
- **Collaborators** on national and provincial alliances and coalitions to advance common objectives such as restrictions on advertising to children, a healthier food supply and health system improvements.

You’ll find the *Dietitians’ View* at [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca).



## We develop evidence-based standards and resources

We provide evidence-based standards, practice guidance and resources to support dietitians and other health professionals in their practice, including:

**A diverse portfolio of professional development** including an annual national conference held in a major Canadian city attended by up to 900 delegates and regional events attended by about 2500 delegates annually. We host 200+ e-learning products and online courses at [www.dietitians.ca/elearning](http://www.dietitians.ca/elearning) including the Critical Care Nutrition course approved by PEN<sup>®</sup> and two provincial dietetic regulatory bodies.

**PEN<sup>®</sup> - Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition**, the online global resource for nutrition practice, is a leading edge, comprehensive nutrition knowledge base that provides evidence-based practice guidance and tools for food and nutrition professionals around the world. It is certified by the HONCode. The global PEN<sup>®</sup> service is governed in partnership with the British Dietetic Association and the Dietitians Association of Australia. Details at [www.pennutrition.com](http://www.pennutrition.com).

**The Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research**, the official online peer-reviewed quarterly Journal of DC. [www.dcjournals.ca](http://www.dcjournals.ca).

**A Practice Blog** where members share practice stories.

**Online nutrition screening tools** for toddlers, preschoolers and seniors, at [www.nutritionscreen.ca](http://www.nutritionscreen.ca).

## We promote better access to dietitians

Reviews of the scientific literature reveal that including a dietitian on the health team can lead to better health outcomes and save health care dollars. Dietitians work collaboratively with a wide variety of health professionals including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, psychologists, rehabilitation professionals and social workers across the health system – in public health, primary care, home care, long term care and acute care. Some of the ways we increase access to dietitians include:

**As a provider of the EatRight Ontario Dietitian Contact Centre.** Since 2007, we have helped Ontario residents access trusted nutrition advice from dietitians through a toll-free telephone number, e-mail and an interactive website ([www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)) funded by the Government of Ontario. We also advocate for dietitian contact centres in provinces that do not have one in place.

**Inclusion of dietitian services in extended health care plans.** Most health insurance companies include dietitian services as an option for employee health care plans but employers don't always opt to include dietitian services. We're working to fix that. Details at [www.dietitians.ca/employeehealth](http://www.dietitians.ca/employeehealth).

**Malnutrition in hospitals.** In partnership with the Canadian Malnutrition Task Force, we are bringing attention to the issue of patient safety stemming from the high prevalence of malnutrition in Canadian hospitals.

**Workforce Planning.** We are collaborating with provincial dietetic regulatory bodies to assess the current dietetic workforce - a critical step in planning for a workforce that will meet the health needs of society.

**Dysphagia Management.** To support interprofessional care, we are partnering with the national associations representing occupational therapists and speech language pathologists to deliver joint professional development and practice guidance on dysphagia management.



## We recognize member leadership

Annually, we acknowledge member leadership and contributions to the profession through our Awards and Recognition Program. We recognize student achievement, the pursuit of advanced education, volunteer leadership and young researchers. Our Awards are noted at [www.dietitians.ca/awards](http://www.dietitians.ca/awards) and profiled during the annual Awards event held during the National Conference.



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