



Rhode Island Department of Education's Child & Adult Care Food Program

Meal Patterns for Adults

Welcome to the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE's) Child and Adult Care Food Program, also known as the "CACFP." RIDE administers the CACFP on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In this presentation, we will cover meal patterns for adults, paying particular attention to food groups and portion sizes.

This presentation is one in a series of trainings on the nutrition program. Other presentations in the series include:

- An overview of the CACFP program, including eligibility requirements
- Appropriate meal patterns for infants and children
- Planning healthy meals and snacks, and
- Ensuring the civil rights of adults and children in CACFP programs

It is a goal of the CACFP to provide tasty, nutritious meals to adults 60 and older, and to disabled adults. Following the meal patterns will help you carefully plan your menus.

Today we will address the following:

- **What is a meal pattern?**
- **What counts as a reimbursable meal?**
- **What does "Offer versus Serve" mean? and**
- **Using the CACFP Meal Patterns**

But first,

What does the CACFP do to support adult day care programs?

- The CACFP plays a vital role in improving the quality of adult day care.
- CACFP provides reimbursement to participating care providers, called sponsors, for serving approved meals to participants.
- Serving nutritious foods is vital to the health and well-being of these adults.



- Sponsors may provide and be reimbursed for up to two meals and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, to an adult each day.

What is a meal pattern?

The CACFP meal pattern is specially designed to meet the nutritional needs of adults. It helps you plan well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks.

A meal pattern has two parts:

Part 1 outlines the required groups of foods that are offered in meals.

There are four *Food Groups (or Component Food Groups)* in the CACFP. The groups are:

- Fluid milk
- Fruits and vegetables
- Bread and bread alternates
- Meat and meat alternates

Part 2 defines the required minimum serving (or portion) size served to adults.

Together, the food groups and the portion sizes make up the meal pattern.

What counts as a reimbursable meal for adults?

A reimbursable meal is one that meets all the meal pattern requirements of the CACFP. In other words, the participant is served a meal that has all the correct food groups in the right portion sizes.

What is the Offer Versus Serve Option?

In adult daycare centers, there is an option called offer versus served. The offer-versus-serve form of food service is a way to increase food consumption and decrease waste, as participants choose only those foods they wish to eat.

At the discretion of the adult day care center, adults may decline to take one or more of the food servings in a meal. The daycare still needs to offer all food servings to the participants.

Using the CACFP Meal Patterns



Each type of meal or snack has its own meal pattern. Let's look at the meal patterns for breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks.

Breakfast

The Breakfast meal pattern includes 3 food groups:

- Milk
- Fruits and vegetables
- Bread/bread alternate
- Here is more detailed information on the breakfast meal pattern. This information can be printed down at the end of this presentation.
- The adult meal pattern consists of 3 food groups:
 - 1 serving of milk
 - 1 serving of fruit or vegetable. If juice is offered, it must be 100% full strength fruit or vegetable juice.
 - And 2 servings of bread or grains.

Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain, or enriched or fortified.

Let's see how this meal pattern is used to plan breakfast.

This sample breakfast offers

- 1 serving of milk which is 1 cup of skim or 1% low fat milk
- 1 serving of fruit which is ½ cup of sliced banana
- 2 servings from the bread group or 2 slices of whole wheat toast

All together you have 3 food components and a total of 4 servings of foods being offered for breakfast

All four servings must be taken by the participant to make a complete reimbursable meal.

However, the adult day care may decide to use the offer vs. served option. This will allow the participant to refuse up to one of the 4 offered food servings.

In this example, because of offer vs. serve option, the adult refused to take one of the servings of whole wheat toast.



Although part of the meal was not taken, this would still be a complete and reimbursable breakfast in the CACFP.

Lunch

A lunch meal pattern consists of these four food groups:

- Milk
- Fruits and/or vegetables
- Bread/bread alternate
- Meat / meat alternate

We know that adults must be served milk that is low-fat (1%) or non-fat (skim).

Fruit or vegetable juice must be 100% full-strength.

Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

At lunch, a meat/meat alternate has been added to the meal pattern. A serving of meat consists of 2 ounces of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish. As you can see, there are other meat / meat alternate choices available.

A sample Lunch menu, based on this meal pattern, consists of:

- 1 serving or 1 cup of skim or 1% low-fat milk
- 1 serving of grilled chicken which is 2 ounces of edible chicken
- 2 servings of corn bread and
- 2 servings of fruit & vegetables: 1/2 cup of spinach and 1/2 cup of mashed sweet potatoes

All together you have 4 food groups and a total of 6 servings of foods being offered. For a reimbursable meal, all 6 servings of food would have to be served to participants at lunch.

However, under the offer vs. served option, an adult may refuse up to two of the offered food servings.

In this example, the participant has refused to take 2 of the 6 food servings offered: they refused the milk and the sweet potatoes.



Supper

A supper meal pattern is identical to the lunch meal pattern, EXCEPT the participant does not have to be offered milk.

As this chart shows, supper includes

- 2 servings of fruits and/or vegetables
- 2 servings of bread or bread alternate
- 1 serving of meat or meat alternate

This sample supper menu is:

- 1 serving of meat which is 3 ounces of tuna salad
- 2 servings of whole wheat bread
- 2 servings of fruits and/or vegetables which are ½ cup of cole slaw and ½ cup peaches

There are a number of beverage options including water, tea, and coffee. Although not required by the meal pattern, you could also offer juice or milk.

At supper, under offer vs. served, adults have the option of refusing up to two of the 5 offered food servings.

In this example, the participant has opted not to take 2 servings of food: they refused the 2 slices of whole wheat bread.

Snacks

CACFP's snack meal patterns for adults offers a number of possibilities.

There are four food groups from which to choose:

- Milk
- Fruits and/or vegetables
- Bread/bread alternate
- Meat / meat alternate

You can select any two of these food groups for a reimbursable snack.



The offer-versus-serve option does not apply to snacks, so the entire snack must be served to every adult.

You can mix and match your snacks as this sample menu shows:

Pumpkin muffin and applesauce

Or

Yogurt with berries.

Either is a complete snack in the CACFP.

Non-creditable Foods

Sometimes a sponsor wants to include a food that does not meet the requirements of any of the CACFP-approved Food Groups. Such foods are considered non-creditable foods: foods that cannot be counted or credited towards the meal pattern. Non-creditable foods may be served as an extra part of the meal but limit their use. They are often higher in fat, sugar and sodium and they add to the cost of your meals.

Examples of non-creditable foods:

- Ice cream or pudding
- Gelatin
- Fruit punch
- Potato chips

Want to know more?

“Meal Patterns for Adults” is one in a series of presentations the Rhode Island Department of Education provides to sponsors.

We encourage you to review “Planning Healthy Meals and Snacks Using the Meal Pattern” and our other presentations:

- “What is RIDE’s Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)?”
- “Meal Patterns for Infants”
- “Meal Patterns for Children”



RIDE Child
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- “Civil Rights Requirements for RIDE’s Child and Adult Care Food Program”