NOVEMBER 2026

Get Your Body Ready for the Holidays

Immune Health • Energy • Digestion
Stress Resilience • Winter Wellness

A four-week holistic nutrition and clinical herbal education guide

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Calgary, Alberta | Complimentary client edition

Practical food, movement, herbal preparations and routines for November - with a realistic plan for December gatherings, travel and busy schedules.

Educational guidance for generally healthy adults. Not a diagnosis or individualized treatment plan. See the safety chapter before beginning herbal products or supplements.

How to use this guide

November is an opportunity to establish habits before December becomes busy. This program uses food-first nutrition, thoughtfully selected herbal preparations, sleep consistency, enjoyable movement and practical planning. It is not a cleanse, a treatment for infection or a promise of perfect immunity.

Your four-week route	What changes
Week 1 - Establish	Build regular meals, sleep anchors, hydration and a baseline.
Week 2 - Nourish	Increase dietary diversity, fibre, protein and winter-appropriate foods.
Week 3 - Practise	Rehearse routines for late nights, meals out and demanding workdays.
Week 4 - Prepare	Set up December food, movement, rest and social-event plans.

Start here

• Read the medication and safety chapter first if you take prescription medicines, have a chronic condition, are pregnant or breastfeeding, or are planning surgery.

• Choose two or three foundational habits rather than trying every herb and supplement in the guide.

• Use the seven-day meal plan as a flexible template; portions must be adjusted to appetite, needs and preferences.

• Repeat the movement plan at an appropriate intensity. Skip exercise when acutely unwell.

• Track what is useful: sleep, meal consistency, bowel habits, energy and how manageable your schedule feels.

What the evidence labels mean

Label	Meaning
Established nutrition	Essential nutrient roles or broadly supported dietary/lifestyle guidance.
Human clinical evidence	Controlled human research exists, but results may vary by dose and preparation.
Traditional herbal use	Recognized historical use and professional monograph; not equivalent to proof from large trials.
Preliminary / mixed	Mechanistic, animal or small human findings; clinical effect is uncertain.

Practical note: Herbal species, plant part, extraction method and standardization matter. A study on a proprietary extract cannot automatically validate every loose-leaf tea or powder.

1 | Why November matters

In Calgary, November usually means shorter daylight, colder weather and more time indoors. For many people, December also brings travel, social meals, disrupted routines, extra spending and family obligations. Rather than waiting until exhaustion sets in, this guide builds practical capacity now.

Five priorities

System	What we can realistically support
Immune function	Adequate energy, protein, micronutrients, sleep and appropriate infection-prevention practices. No food or herb makes someone immune to viruses.
Digestive comfort	Regular meals, gradual fibre intake, hydration and individual identification of trigger foods.
Stable energy	Balanced meals, sleep, movement and investigation of persistent fatigue when appropriate.
Stress response	Predictable recovery time, relaxation, boundaries and consistent routines.
Holiday flexibility	A plan for late dinners, alcohol choices, leftovers, travel and the morning after.

What success might look like

At the end of four weeks you may have a more regular breakfast, a dependable grocery routine, improved confidence around festive meals, a realistic exercise pattern and a better understanding of which herbs suit your circumstances. Symptom changes are individual; persistent or severe fatigue, digestive symptoms or recurrent infections warrant medical assessment.

The holistic nutrition perspective

Holistic nutrition considers the interaction of meals, digestion, sleep, movement, stress, social circumstances and access to food. It is not a substitute for clinical evaluation. In this guide, food patterns are the foundation; botanicals are selected for specific purposes rather than prescribed as a large daily stack.

2 | Understanding the body: immunity, digestion and stress

Immune function is coordinated, not simply “boosted”

Innate immunity provides rapid responses through barriers, immune cells and signalling molecules. Adaptive immunity develops targeted responses through B and T cells. Adequate protein supports antibody and tissue production; zinc and vitamins A, C and D participate in normal immune functions. Excess supplementation does not reliably improve outcomes in people who already meet their needs. [1, 2]

The gut barrier and microbiome

The intestinal lining helps regulate what enters circulation. Dietary fibre is fermented by some gut microbes into short-chain fatty acids, which participate in intestinal physiology. Microbiome research is active, but a stool-test result or bloating alone cannot establish a specific microbial deficiency. Gradual fibre changes are often better tolerated than sudden large increases.

Stress, sleep and appetite

The autonomic nervous system coordinates alertness and recovery. Sleep restriction can alter hunger cues, decision-making and immune responses. Holiday stress can affect meal timing and digestion, but it does not mean that every symptom is caused by cortisol. Consistent wake times, adequate sleep opportunity and enjoyable movement are useful starting points.

Energy regulation

Cells make ATP through interconnected metabolic pathways. Meals supply carbohydrates, fats and amino acids; micronutrients act as cofactors. Feeling tired is not proof that mitochondria are “underpowered.” Anaemia, thyroid disease, sleep apnoea, depression, infection and medication effects are among the reasons persistent fatigue deserves assessment.

2 | What most people do not know

1. More supplements are not necessarily better

Excess zinc can reduce copper status; high-dose vitamin D can be harmful.

2. Botanical preparations are not interchangeable

A water infusion, alcohol tincture and standardized extract may deliver different constituents.

3. Warm drinks help comfort more than immunity

Warm fluids may ease throat discomfort and support hydration; they do not kill respiratory viruses.

4. Fibre increases should be gradual

A sudden jump in legumes, bran or inulin can worsen gas and abdominal discomfort.

5. Protein distribution can be useful

Including protein across meals can make adequate daily intake easier.

6. The gut–brain relationship works both ways

Stress can affect bowel patterns; uncomfortable symptoms can increase stress.

7. Sleep timing matters alongside duration

A consistent schedule can be easier to maintain than a dramatic weekend catch-up.

8. Reishi and other fungi are not interchangeable

Different species, extracts and polysaccharide measurements complicate evidence comparisons.

9. An “immune boost” is not a clinical endpoint

Research should measure outcomes such as symptom duration, incidence or validated markers.

10. December resilience is logistical

Prepared meals, transport plans and boundaries may have more impact than another capsule.

3 | Clinical herbology: how to select a preparation

Clinical herbology evaluates the plant's identity, the part used, constituent chemistry, extraction, intended indication, dose, quality and interactions. Traditional use and controlled clinical studies are both important, but answer different questions. Health Canada natural health product monographs and the European Medicines Agency herbal monographs are useful professional reference points. [3-9]

Preparation	Why it matters
Infusion	Leaves and flowers steeped in hot water; suitable for many aromatic herbs.
Decoction	Tough roots, bark or seeds simmered or otherwise prepared as directed.
Cold maceration	Room-temperature steeping may be preferred for some mucilage-rich botanicals.
Tincture	Alcohol-water extracts differ in concentration; follow the exact product label.
Standardized extract	Designed to deliver specified markers; trial evidence applies to the studied preparation.
Medicinal mushroom extract	Species, fruiting body vs mycelium, beta-glucan content and extraction should be checked.

Quality checklist for clients

- Check Latin binomial, plant part and ingredient identity.
- For licensed Canadian natural health products, look for an NPN and follow its labelled indication, dose and warnings.
- For loose herbs, use a reputable supplier with appropriate identity, contamination and storage controls.
- Do not consume raw or unripe elderberries, stems or leaves; use properly processed products.
- Avoid ingesting essential oils as a substitute for herbal tea.
- If you take medicines, have surgery planned or have complex health conditions, request a pharmacist or clinician interaction review.

3 | Botanical profiles 1-4

Elderberry | Sambucus nigra, processed fruit

Constituents and use: Anthocyanins; mixed small trials for respiratory symptom relief; not proven to prevent infection.

Preparation: Commercially prepared syrup/extract: follow NPN label; no universal clinical dose.

Safety: Avoid raw/unripe fruit; discuss immunosuppressants and pregnancy; product quality matters.

Evidence: Human preliminary / traditional [3, 10]

Elderflower | Sambucus nigra, flower

Constituents and use: Flavonoids; traditional use in cold-related symptoms.

Preparation: Infusion commonly used; use verified monograph/label for medicinal dosing.

Safety: Allergy possible; pregnancy data limited.

Evidence: Traditional [3]

Thyme | Thymus vulgaris, aerial herb

Constituents and use: Thymol/carvacrol; traditional use for productive cough.

Preparation: Tea from dried herb or labelled product; not thyme essential oil by mouth.

Safety: Seek care for persistent cough, fever or breathlessness.

Evidence: Traditional [4]

Marshmallow root | Althaea officinalis, root

Constituents and use: Mucilage; traditional soothing use for throat irritation and mild digestive discomfort.

Preparation: Cold or warm aqueous preparation per monograph; separate from oral medicines by about 2 hours as a precaution.

Safety: May affect absorption of oral medicines; pregnancy data limited.

Evidence: Traditional [5]

Practical note: The profiles are an educational formulary, not a recommendation to combine all listed herbs. For medicinal use, verify the exact product label, NPN and interaction profile.

3 | Botanical profiles 5-8

Lemon balm | Melissa officinalis, leaf

Constituents and use: Rosmarinic acid and aromatic constituents; traditionally for mild stress, sleep and bloating.

Preparation: Leaf infusion; choose label-guided medicinal strength.

Safety: Possible drowsiness; discuss sedatives and thyroid therapy with clinician.

Evidence: Traditional; limited human [6]

Peppermint leaf | Mentha x piperita, leaf

Constituents and use: Menthol-rich aromatic leaf; traditional use for mild dyspepsia and gas.

Preparation: Infusion after meals; not interchangeable with enteric-coated peppermint oil.

Safety: Can aggravate reflux; caution with gallbladder problems.

Evidence: Traditional [7]

Ginger | Zingiber officinale, rhizome

Constituents and use: Gingerols/shogaols; human evidence for certain nausea indications; traditional digestive use.

Preparation: Food or tea; studied nausea preparations are specific and not equivalent to any tea.

Safety: Caution with anticoagulants and gallstones; concentrated products require review.

Evidence: Human for nausea; traditional digestive [8]

Chamomile | Matricaria chamomilla, flower

Constituents and use: Apigenin and volatile oils; soothing tea tradition; clinical evidence for sleep remains limited.

Preparation: Gentle flower infusion; avoid if allergic to related Asteraceae plants.

Safety: Potential allergy; possible interaction with warfarin/sedatives.

Evidence: Traditional / preliminary

Practical note: The profiles are an educational formulary, not a recommendation to combine all listed herbs. For medicinal use, verify the exact product label, NPN and interaction profile.

3 | Botanical profiles 9-12

Nettle leaf | Urtica dioica, leaf

Constituents and use: Minerals and polyphenols; commonly used as a food-like herbal infusion.

Preparation: Food-level tea; mineral content varies by harvest and preparation.

Safety: Discuss diuretics, blood-pressure and diabetes drugs; pregnancy medicinal use not established.

Evidence: Traditional / compositional

Rosehip | Rosa canina, fruit

Constituents and use: Polyphenols, variable vitamin C; culinary tea ingredient.

Preparation: Dried fruit infusion; not a substitute for measured vitamin C dosing.

Safety: Caution with allergies; concentrated extract data limited.

Evidence: Food / preliminary

Astragalus | Astragalus membranaceus, root

Constituents and use: Polysaccharides and saponins; traditional East Asian tonic; human prevention evidence insufficient.

Preparation: Do not assign a universal dose across powders and extracts.

Safety: Avoid without review with immunosuppressants, autoimmune disease or pregnancy.

Evidence: Traditional / preliminary

Reishi | Ganoderma lingzhi / G. lucidum complex

Constituents and use: Beta-glucans and triterpenes; immune-marker research does not prove prevention of winter infections.

Preparation: Extract doses vary by species and standardization; label-guided only.

Safety: Possible bleeding risk, liver concerns and interactions with immunosuppressants.

Evidence: Preliminary / mixed [10]

Practical note: The profiles are an educational formulary, not a recommendation to combine all listed herbs. For medicinal use, verify the exact product label, NPN and interaction profile.

3 | Botanical profiles 13-16

Turkey tail | Trametes versicolor

Constituents and use: Polysaccharides PSK/PSP studied in specific clinical contexts; not a general cold-prevention claim.

Preparation: Do not extrapolate oncology extracts to retail powders.

Safety: Immune-related therapies and pregnancy need clinician review.

Evidence: Context-specific / preliminary

Lion’s mane | Hericium erinaceus

Constituents and use: Hericenones/erinacines differ by preparation; small human cognition/mood studies.

Preparation: No established preventive winter-wellness dose.

Safety: Allergy or gastrointestinal upset possible; pregnancy evidence lacking.

Evidence: Preliminary

Chaga | Inonotus obliquus

Constituents and use: Polyphenols; human benefit evidence very limited.

Preparation: Not a core daily recommendation.

Safety: Oxalate/kidney concerns and possible anticoagulant interactions.

Evidence: Insufficient human evidence

Echinacea | Echinacea purpurea / angustifolia

Constituents and use: Alkamides and polysaccharides; trials vary by species and product; modest/mixed cold outcomes.

Preparation: Only preparation-specific labelled dosing.

Safety: Asteraceae allergy; discuss immunosuppressants/autoimmune disease.

Evidence: Mixed human [10]

Practical note: The profiles are an educational formulary, not a recommendation to combine all listed herbs. For medicinal use, verify the exact product label, NPN and interaction profile.

3 | Botanical profiles 17-20

Licorice root | Glycyrrhiza glabra

Constituents and use: Glycyrrhizin; traditionally soothing, but can raise BP and lower potassium.

Preparation: Not included as a routine tea ingredient in this program.

Safety: Avoid with hypertension, kidney/heart disease, diuretics, digoxin and pregnancy.

Evidence: Traditional; significant safety caveats

Cinnamon | Cinnamomum verum / cassia, bark

Constituents and use: Cinnamaldehyde; flavour and polyphenols; glucose effects inconsistent.

Preparation: Culinary amounts in food and drinks.

Safety: High cassia intake adds coumarin exposure; caution liver disease.

Evidence: Food / mixed human

Turmeric | Curcuma longa, rhizome

Constituents and use: Curcuminoids; clinical studies depend on formulation and indication.

Preparation: Culinary spice in meals; concentrated extracts optional only after review.

Safety: Caution gallbladder disease, anticoagulants; rare liver injury with supplements.

Evidence: Human indication-specific

Holy basil | Ocimum tenuiflorum, leaf

Constituents and use: Eugenol and phenolics; small studies for perceived stress, heterogeneous quality.

Preparation: Optional product-specific tea, not essential.

Safety: Caution anticoagulants, glucose-lowering drugs and pregnancy.

Evidence: Preliminary human

Practical note: The profiles are an educational formulary, not a recommendation to combine all listed herbs. For medicinal use, verify the exact product label, NPN and interaction profile.

3 | Nutrients, supplements and the sensible core

Nutrient	Evidence and practical role	Important limits / cautions
Vitamin D	Supports normal immune and bone function; Canadians should have a daily dietary source. Adults 51+ are advised to take 400 IU daily under current Canadian food guidance. [1, 2]	Adult RDA 600 IU through age 70, 800 IU after 70; UL 4,000 IU/day. Higher dosing needs clinical context; excess causes hypercalcaemia.
Vitamin C	Essential for collagen, antioxidant and immune functions. Food-first via peppers, kiwi, citrus, potatoes.	Routine megadoses do not reliably prevent colds; high doses may cause diarrhoea; caution kidney stone history.
Zinc	Needed for immune-cell function; deficiency matters. Some specific lozenges may modestly shorten colds when started early, but results vary. [10]	Adult UL 40 mg/day total; excess can cause nausea and copper deficiency. Interacts with certain antibiotics and penicillamine.
Magnesium	Supports muscle, nerve and energy metabolism; nuts, legumes and whole grains provide it.	Supplemental magnesium can cause diarrhoea; kidney disease requires clinician review; separate from some antibiotics.
Iron / B12	Deficiency may contribute to fatigue; supplementation should follow dietary assessment and appropriate testing.	Do not self-treat unexplained fatigue with iron; excess is harmful and may mask diagnosis.
Probiotics	Strain-specific research for some gastrointestinal outcomes; general “immune boosting” is not established.	Use caution in severe immune compromise or serious illness; not a substitute for fibre-rich foods.
Omega-3	Fish, flax, chia and walnuts support overall dietary quality; certain products have indication-specific evidence.	Concentrated doses require review with anticoagulants and relevant medical history.

What belongs in the core plan?

Core: adequate food, dietary vitamin D source, fibre diversity, protein, sleep, movement and hydration. Optional: one purpose-specific tea or labelled product when suitable. Clinician-guided: high-dose vitamin D, iron, complex mushroom extracts, immunomodulating herbs and multi-ingredient stacks.

4 | The four-week implementation plan

Week 1 - Establish

Objective: Eat at regular times; note your usual sleep and bowel patterns.

Nutrition and movement: Protein at breakfast, two vegetables at dinner, 10-20 minutes walking most days.

Daily practice: Choose a consistent wake time; prepare one simple soup and a grocery list.

Troubleshooting and safety: Do not start several new supplements at once.

Week 2 - Nourish

Objective: Build variety without restrictive rules.

Nutrition and movement: Add one bean/lentil meal, one oily-fish or alternative meal, and fruit daily.

Daily practice: Try one optional well-tolerated culinary herbal tea; increase fibre gradually.

Troubleshooting and safety: If bloating worsens, reduce the speed of fibre changes.

Week 3 - Rehearse

Objective: Practise the December scenarios before they happen.

Nutrition and movement: Eat a balanced meal before a late event; prepare a non-alcoholic option.

Daily practice: Keep two short resistance sessions and a sleep recovery plan.

Troubleshooting and safety: Do not “compensate” for restaurant meals by fasting.

Week 4 - Prepare

Objective: Make December easier through planning.

Nutrition and movement: Freeze two meals, stock breakfast foods, plan transport and alcohol choices.

Daily practice: Set a 15-minute evening wind-down and schedule movement.

Troubleshooting and safety: Check for persistent symptoms that need professional evaluation.

Repeatable day template

Morning	Midday	Evening
Water to thirst; protein-containing breakfast; daylight exposure when possible.	Balanced lunch; brief walk or mobility; planned snack if hungry.	Vegetables plus protein at dinner; prepare tomorrow; screen-light reduction before bed.

4 | Your 28-day checklist: days 1-14

□ Day 01: Write down your baseline: sleep hours, energy, digestion and stress.

□ Day 02: Plan three simple breakfasts and buy ingredients.

□ Day 03: Walk 15 minutes at a comfortable pace.

□ Day 04: Add a vegetable to lunch and dinner.

□ Day 05: Check the labels on products already in your cupboard.

□ Day 06: Cook a large soup; refrigerate promptly or freeze portions.

□ Day 07: Review the week; choose one habit to retain.

□ Day 08: Add a fruit or vegetable colour you rarely eat.

□ Day 09: Prepare lentils or beans; start with a modest portion.

□ Day 10: Schedule a 20-minute strength session.

□ Day 11: Eat a protein-containing breakfast before a busy morning.

□ Day 12: Try a non-caffeinated herbal drink if appropriate.

□ Day 13: Plan a screen-free wind-down period.

□ Day 14: Review sleep, bowel comfort and food variety.

Week 1 and 2 reflection

Question	Your notes
Which meal was easiest to repeat?	_____
What triggered digestive discomfort?	_____
What improved your sleep opportunity?	_____
Which changes felt unnecessary?	_____

4 | Your 28-day checklist: days 15-28

□ Day 15: Choose a realistic holiday gathering scenario to rehearse.

□ Day 16: Build a balanced plate at a restaurant or family dinner.

□ Day 17: Take a short walk after a meal if comfortable.

□ Day 18: Practise a 10-minute breathing or relaxation routine.

□ Day 19: Plan alcohol-free drinks and safe transportation.

□ Day 20: Complete the second strength session of the week.

□ Day 21: Review which strategies are realistic in December.

□ Day 22: Write down three December non-negotiable habits.

□ Day 23: Make and freeze two servings of a favourite dinner.

□ Day 24: Restock breakfast, snack and tea supplies.

□ Day 25: Choose a bedtime boundary for busy evenings.

□ Day 26: Plan a travel-day meal and water strategy.

□ Day 27: Set a reminder to move during long workdays.

□ Day 28: Review the month and decide what to continue.

Your personal December commitments

- My easiest breakfast: _____
- My movement minimum: _____
- My recovery routine after a late night: _____
- One herb or tea I enjoy and tolerate: _____
- One symptom I will seek medical advice about if persistent: _____

5 | Seven-day meal plan at a glance

The meals below are examples, not a calorie prescription. Adjust portion sizes and add snacks according to hunger, health needs and activity. All recipe quantities are for one adult serving; double or batch-cook as needed. Nutrition estimates are approximate, based on generic ingredients, and vary by brand and cooking method.

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Day 1	Greek yoghurt oat bowl	Lentil vegetable soup	Salmon, quinoa and broccoli
Day 2	Spinach egg toast	Chicken barley salad	Tofu ginger stir-fry
Day 3	Apple chia porridge	Tuna chickpea wrap	Turkey bean chilli
Day 4	Cottage cheese pear bowl	Roasted squash quinoa bowl	Cod, potato and green beans
Day 5	Berry kefir smoothie and toast	Egg and avocado sandwich	Chicken lentil tray bake
Day 6	Mushroom tofu scramble	Mediterranean bean bowl	Beef and vegetable stew
Day 7	Pumpkin overnight oats	Turkey vegetable soup and bread	Baked chickpea pasta

Daily optional snacks and drinks

Day	Snack options	Functional beverage
1	Apple + 20 g almonds; carrot sticks + hummus	Warm ginger-lemon infusion
2	Plain yoghurt; kiwi + pumpkin seeds	Peppermint tea if no reflux
3	Pear + cheese; roasted chickpeas	Lemon balm tea in the evening
4	Banana + nut butter; cucumber + cottage cheese	Rosehip-cinnamon tea
5	Orange + nuts; hummus + crackers	Warm apple-ginger drink
6	Berries + yoghurt; whole-grain toast	Chamomile infusion if suitable
7	Edamame; fruit + cheese	Caffeine-free citrus-herb water

5 | Day 1: complete recipes

Breakfast: Greek yoghurt oat bowl

Ingredients (1 serving): 200 g plain Greek yoghurt; 40 g oats; 80 g berries; 15 g walnuts; cinnamon.

Method: Mix yoghurt and oats; top with berries, walnuts and cinnamon.

Approximate nutrition: ~420 kcal | P 27 g | C 43 g | F 16 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Lentil vegetable soup

Ingredients (1 serving): 150 g cooked lentils; 100 g carrots; 80 g celery; 80 g onion; 200 ml low-sodium broth; 5 ml olive oil.

Method: Soften diced vegetables in oil 5 min; add lentils and broth; simmer 15 min.

Approximate nutrition: ~330 kcal | P 17 g | C 48 g | F 8 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Salmon, quinoa and broccoli

Ingredients (1 serving): 120 g salmon; 150 g cooked quinoa; 180 g broccoli; 10 ml olive oil; lemon.

Method: Bake salmon at 200 C until cooked; steam broccoli; serve with quinoa, oil and lemon.

Approximate nutrition: ~570 kcal | P 39 g | C 42 g | F 27 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 2: complete recipes

Breakfast: Spinach egg toast

Ingredients (1 serving): 2 eggs; 60 g spinach; 2 slices whole-grain toast; 5 ml olive oil; 1 orange.

Method: Wilt spinach in oil, scramble eggs, serve on toast with orange.

Approximate nutrition: ~460 kcal | P 22 g | C 48 g | F 21 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Chicken barley salad

Ingredients (1 serving): 120 g cooked chicken; 150 g cooked barley; 100 g cucumber; 100 g tomato; 10 ml olive oil; lemon.

Method: Dice and toss all ingredients; refrigerate until serving.

Approximate nutrition: ~490 kcal | P 41 g | C 45 g | F 16 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Tofu ginger stir-fry

Ingredients (1 serving): 180 g firm tofu; 200 g mixed vegetables; 150 g cooked brown rice; 10 ml canola oil; 10 g ginger; 10 ml reduced-sodium soy sauce.

Method: Sear tofu; add vegetables and ginger; stir-fry; season and serve over rice.

Approximate nutrition: ~550 kcal | P 28 g | C 61 g | F 22 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 3: complete recipes

Breakfast: Apple chia porridge

Ingredients (1 serving): 50 g oats; 200 ml fortified milk; 100 g apple; 15 g chia; 10 g pumpkin seeds.

Method: Simmer oats in milk; stir in diced apple and chia; top with seeds.

Approximate nutrition: ~430 kcal | P 16 g | C 58 g | F 17 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Tuna chickpea wrap

Ingredients (1 serving): 100 g canned tuna, drained; 100 g chickpeas; 1 whole-grain tortilla; 60 g lettuce; 50 g tomato; 20 g yoghurt.

Method: Mash chickpeas lightly with yoghurt; combine with tuna and vegetables; wrap.

Approximate nutrition: ~510 kcal | P 42 g | C 56 g | F 12 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Turkey bean chilli

Ingredients (1 serving): 120 g lean ground turkey; 130 g kidney beans; 150 g crushed tomatoes; 70 g onion; 80 g pepper; 5 ml oil.

Method: Brown turkey and onion; add pepper, beans and tomatoes; simmer 20 min.

Approximate nutrition: ~480 kcal | P 43 g | C 42 g | F 15 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 4: complete recipes

Breakfast: Cottage cheese pear bowl

Ingredients (1 serving): 200 g cottage cheese; 1 medium pear (160 g); 20 g almonds; 1 slice whole-grain toast.

Method: Slice pear; serve with cottage cheese, almonds and toast.

Approximate nutrition: ~470 kcal | P 31 g | C 46 g | F 18 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Roasted squash quinoa bowl

Ingredients (1 serving): 200 g squash; 140 g cooked quinoa; 100 g chickpeas; 50 g kale; 10 ml olive oil; lemon.

Method: Roast squash at 200 C for 25 min; toss with warm quinoa, chickpeas, kale and lemon.

Approximate nutrition: ~500 kcal | P 17 g | C 75 g | F 17 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Cod, potato and green beans

Ingredients (1 serving): 150 g cod; 200 g potato; 180 g green beans; 15 ml olive oil; dill.

Method: Roast potato wedges 25 min at 200 C; bake cod until opaque; steam beans.

Approximate nutrition: ~490 kcal | P 39 g | C 49 g | F 16 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 5: complete recipes

Breakfast: Berry kefir smoothie and toast

Ingredients (1 serving): 250 ml plain kefir; 100 g berries; 1 banana (110 g); 25 g oats; 15 g peanut butter; 1 slice whole-grain toast.

Method: Blend kefir, fruit, oats and peanut butter; serve with toast.

Approximate nutrition: ~510 kcal | P 19 g | C 79 g | F 16 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Egg and avocado sandwich

Ingredients (1 serving): 2 hard-boiled eggs; 60 g avocado; 2 slices whole-grain bread; 60 g spinach; 100 g tomato.

Method: Slice eggs and avocado; layer on bread with greens and tomato.

Approximate nutrition: ~510 kcal | P 24 g | C 42 g | F 28 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Chicken lentil tray bake

Ingredients (1 serving): 130 g chicken thigh; 140 g cooked lentils; 150 g carrots; 100 g cauliflower; 10 ml olive oil; thyme.

Method: Roast chicken and vegetables at 200 C until fully cooked; serve with heated lentils.

Approximate nutrition: ~560 kcal | P 43 g | C 43 g | F 23 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 6: complete recipes

Breakfast: Mushroom tofu scramble

Ingredients (1 serving): 170 g firm tofu; 100 g mushrooms; 60 g spinach; 2 slices whole-grain toast; 5 ml olive oil.

Method: Crumble tofu; sauté mushrooms and spinach; warm tofu and season; serve with toast.

Approximate nutrition: ~460 kcal | P 30 g | C 40 g | F 21 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Mediterranean bean bowl

Ingredients (1 serving): 160 g white beans; 100 g cucumber; 100 g tomato; 50 g peppers; 40 g feta; 10 ml olive oil; 1 small whole-wheat pita.

Method: Mix vegetables, beans, feta and oil; serve with pita.

Approximate nutrition: ~560 kcal | P 24 g | C 69 g | F 21 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Beef and vegetable stew

Ingredients (1 serving): 120 g lean stewing beef; 150 g potato; 100 g carrot; 80 g celery; 70 g onion; 250 ml broth.

Method: Brown beef; add vegetables and broth; simmer gently until beef is tender, about 75-90 min.

Approximate nutrition: ~480 kcal | P 36 g | C 43 g | F 17 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Day 7: complete recipes

Breakfast: Pumpkin overnight oats

Ingredients (1 serving): 50 g oats; 150 g plain Greek yoghurt; 100 g pumpkin purée; 100 ml milk; 15 g pumpkin seeds; cinnamon.

Method: Combine oats, yoghurt, pumpkin and milk; refrigerate overnight; top with seeds.

Approximate nutrition: ~440 kcal | P 28 g | C 50 g | F 15 g.

Purpose: Protein and fibre to support satiety and regular eating.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Lunch: Turkey vegetable soup and bread

Ingredients (1 serving): 100 g cooked turkey; 120 g mixed vegetables; 100 g cooked barley; 250 ml broth; 2 slices whole-grain bread.

Method: Simmer vegetables in broth 15 min; add turkey and barley; heat through; serve with bread.

Approximate nutrition: ~480 kcal | P 37 g | C 64 g | F 8 g.

Purpose: A balanced midday meal with vegetables and sustained fuel.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Dinner: Baked chickpea pasta

Ingredients (1 serving): 75 g dry whole-wheat pasta; 120 g chickpeas; 160 g tomato sauce; 100 g spinach; 20 g parmesan; 5 ml olive oil.

Method: Cook pasta; stir with chickpeas, sauce and spinach; top with cheese; bake 10 min at 190 C.

Approximate nutrition: ~650 kcal | P 30 g | C 100 g | F 15 g.

Purpose: A nourishing evening meal with protein, plant foods and variety.

Adaptations: For dairy-free use fortified unsweetened plant alternatives; for vegetarian meals replace meat/fish with tofu, beans or lentils and adjust portions for protein. Check allergens and personal dietary needs.

Storage: Refrigerate perishables promptly at 4 C or colder. Most cooked leftovers are best used within 3-4 days or frozen; reheat thoroughly.

Practical note: Macros are rough estimates, not lab-verified nutrient analyses. Specific nutrient values, cooking losses and brands will change the totals. Consult a dietitian for individualized calorie, carbohydrate or medical diet needs.

5 | Grocery list and batch-prep strategy

Approximate shopping amounts for one adult completing all 21 meals, excluding optional snacks; amounts are rounded up to common package sizes. Use freezer portions and reduce purchases if pantry staples are available.

Department	Approximate weekly quantity
Produce	Berries 300 g; apples 2; pear 1; orange 1; banana 1; lemon 3; pumpkin purée 100 g; squash 200 g; potatoes 350 g; carrots 450 g; celery 200 g; onions 300 g; tomatoes 450 g; cucumber 200 g; peppers 150 g; broccoli 180 g; cauliflower 100 g; green beans 180 g; spinach/kale/lettuce 350 g; mushrooms 100 g; avocado 1; ginger 30 g.
Proteins / dairy	Greek yoghurt 350 g; cottage cheese 200 g; kefir 250 ml; eggs 4; tofu 350 g; chicken 250 g; turkey 220 g; salmon 120 g; cod 150 g; tuna 100 g; lean beef 120 g; feta 40 g; parmesan 20 g; milk or fortified alternative 300 ml.
Beans / grains	Dry oats 165 g; dry whole-wheat pasta 75 g; cooked quinoa 290 g; cooked barley 250 g; cooked brown rice 150 g; cooked lentils 290 g; chickpeas 440 g; kidney beans 130 g; white beans 160 g; whole-grain bread ~9 slices; tortilla 1; pita 1.
Pantry / extras	Olive/canola oil ~110 ml; walnuts 15 g; almonds 20 g; chia 15 g; pumpkin seeds 25 g; peanut butter 15 g; broth ~700 ml; crushed tomatoes/sauce 310 g; low-sodium soy sauce 10 ml; thyme, dill, cinnamon and preferred seasonings.

One-hour preparation session

- Wash and chop vegetables; store separately.
- Cook quinoa, barley and lentils; cool promptly and refrigerate or freeze.
- Prepare one soup or chilli for 2-3 meals.
- Portion nuts and fruit for easy snacks.
- Move frozen fish or meat to the fridge to thaw safely, never on the counter.

6 | Seven-day movement plan

Aim for a manageable starting point, not exhaustion. Talk with a clinician before a new program if you have significant cardiovascular symptoms, unstable disease, recent surgery or other exercise restrictions. Stop for chest pain, faintness or unusual breathlessness.

Day	Plan	Prescription	Technique and purpose
Mon	Brisk or comfortable walk	20-30 min; talk-test pace	Walk tall, relaxed shoulders; start with 10 min if needed. Cardiorespiratory fitness and routine.
Tue	Strength A	2 rounds: chair squat 8-10; wall push-up 8-10; band row 10; calf raise 12; rest 60 sec	Use stable chair and smooth controlled motion. Strength, function, glucose regulation.
Wed	Mobility + easy walk	10 min mobility + 15 min walk	Ankle circles, gentle spinal rotation, shoulder rolls. Joint comfort and recovery.
Thu	Steady aerobic session	20-30 min walk, bike or swim at moderate effort	You should still be able to speak in sentences. Endurance and stress regulation.
Fri	Strength B	2 rounds: hip hinge 10; step-up 8/leg; band press 10; bird dog 8/side; rest 60 sec	Hold a railing for step-ups; avoid pain. Strength, balance and functional movement.
Sat	Longer enjoyable movement	30-45 min easy walk, dance or hike	Take breaks; dress for Calgary weather and ice. Enjoyment and consistency.
Sun	Recovery and breathing	10-20 min gentle mobility + 5 min slow breathing	Try a comfortable inhale and longer relaxed exhale; never strain. Recovery and self-regulation.

Progression

Week 1: choose the lower duration or one strength round. Week 2: add 5 minutes to two walks if comfortable. Week 3: add one strength set or modest resistance. Week 4: maintain what feels sustainable. Rest during fever or acute systemic illness. Winter footwear and indoor alternatives are part of the plan.

7 | Herbal infusions and functional drinks

The following are adult culinary-scale recipes, not standardized medicinal dosing instructions. They do not replace the approved directions of an NPN product. Start with one new botanical at a time and consider allergies, pregnancy, medications and medical conditions.

Evening lemon balm infusion

Recipe: 1.5 g dried Melissa officinalis leaf; 250 ml water at 90-95 C; steep covered 8-10 min.

Taste: Light lemon-herbal flavour; add a thin slice of apple.

Clinical context and cautions: Traditionally used for mild stress and sleep; avoid combining with sedatives without review. [6]

After-dinner peppermint

Recipe: 1.5 g dried Mentha x piperita leaf; 250 ml water at 90-95 C; steep covered 7-10 min.

Taste: Cooling and minty; dilute if too strong.

Clinical context and cautions: Traditional use for mild gas/dyspepsia; avoid if reflux worsens. [7]

Ginger citrus warmer

Recipe: 5 g sliced fresh Zingiber officinale; 250 ml hot water; steep 10 min; add 10 ml lemon juice.

Taste: Bright and gently spicy; use orange peel for aroma.

Clinical context and cautions: Culinary warming beverage; ginger has preparation-specific nausea research. [8]

Thyme and lemon tea

Recipe: 1 g dried Thymus vulgaris herb; 250 ml hot water; steep covered 8 min; add lemon.

Taste: Savory and aromatic; optional 5 ml honey for adults.

Clinical context and cautions: Traditional use for productive cough; persistent symptoms require care. [4]

Marshmallow root cool infusion

Recipe: 2 g dried Althaea officinalis root; 250 ml potable cool water; steep refrigerated 1-2 hours, strain and drink promptly.

Taste: Mild, soft mouthfeel; add a little apple juice if desired.

Clinical context and cautions: Mucilage-rich traditional soothing preparation; separate from medicines by about 2 hours. [5]

Rosehip cinnamon cup

Recipe: 2 g crushed dried Rosa canina hips; small 0.3 g piece of Cinnamomum verum bark; 250 ml hot water; steep 10 min.

Taste: Tart and gently sweet; add sliced orange.

Clinical context and cautions: Enjoyable caffeine-free plant beverage; do not rely on it for a measured vitamin C dose.

Holiday apple-spice mocktail

Recipe: 150 ml unsweetened apple juice; 100 ml sparkling water; 5 g ginger; 1 cinnamon stick; orange slice; chill or gently warm juice with spices, strain and dilute.

Taste: Festive apple-citrus profile; no alcohol.

Clinical context and cautions: Practical party alternative; portion juice according to dietary needs.

Practical note: For in-store sampling, identify ingredients and allergens, use food-safe preparation, and avoid implying that a tasting is a treatment. Do not sample medicinal blends to pregnant clients or people with complex medication histories without individual screening.

8 | Daily routines for working adults

Time	Simple routine	Why it helps
7:00-8:00	Wake at a consistent time; water; breakfast with protein; outdoor light when feasible.	Supports routine and adequate morning fuel.
10:30	Stand, stretch or walk 3-5 minutes.	Breaks prolonged sitting.
12:00-13:00	Lunch with vegetables, protein and a fibre source.	Supports food variety and energy intake.
15:00-16:00	Planned snack if hungry; reduce late caffeine if sleep-sensitive.	Helps avoid arriving at dinner excessively hungry.
17:30-19:00	Walk or strength session; dinner; prepare one item for tomorrow.	Makes movement and food preparation manageable.
21:00 onward	Lower light, limit work messages, choose a quiet activity.	Creates a consistent sleep opportunity.

Breathing exercise

Sit comfortably. Breathe gently through the nose if possible for about 3-4 seconds, then exhale without strain for about 4-6 seconds. Continue for 3-5 minutes. Stop if dizzy. This is a relaxation practice, not a treatment for asthma, panic disorder or cardiovascular disease.

November in Calgary

Use layers, winter footwear and indoor walking options when icy. During shorter days, take daylight breaks when practical. A light box may be helpful for some people with seasonal depression but needs appropriate clinical advice, especially with bipolar disorder or eye conditions.

9 | Medication interactions and safety

Ingredient / situation	What to check before use
Warfarin / anticoagulants	Review chamomile, concentrated ginger, reishi, turmeric extracts and multi-herb products with pharmacist. Do not change anticoagulant dosing.
Immunosuppressants / autoimmune conditions	Avoid starting astragalus, echinacea, reishi or immune-directed extracts without clinician review.
Hypertension, diuretics, digoxin	Avoid medicinal licorice root; it can cause sodium retention, low potassium and blood-pressure elevation.
Diabetes medicines	Concentrated ginger, cinnamon, holy basil or other products may complicate glucose management; monitor only under appropriate advice.
Antibiotics / thyroid medication	Minerals can impair absorption of certain drugs; spacing depends on the medicine. Ask a pharmacist.
Reflux / gallbladder conditions	Peppermint may aggravate heartburn; ginger and some extracts may not suit gallbladder disease.
Kidney disease / kidney stones	Avoid indiscriminate magnesium, high-dose vitamin C, chaga and mineral products.
Pregnancy / breastfeeding	This guide is not a medicinal herb protocol for pregnancy; obtain individualized professional advice.

When to seek medical assessment

Seek urgent help for chest pain, severe breathing difficulty, confusion, fainting, severe dehydration or signs of serious allergic reaction. Arrange medical assessment for persistent fatigue, unexplained weight change, recurrent infections, persistent fever, blood in stool, prolonged cough, progressive abdominal pain or ongoing bowel changes.

A clinician may consider tests such as CBC, ferritin, B12, TSH, glucose/A1c or vitamin D when clinically indicated; the correct selection depends on symptoms and history. No laboratory panel is appropriate for everyone.

10 | Progress tracking and practical FAQs

Measure	Baseline	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Sleep opportunity (hours)	___	___	___	___	___
Energy (1-10)	___	___	___	___	___
Stress (1-10)	___	___	___	___	___
Digestive comfort (1-10)	___	___	___	___	___
Days with movement	___	___	___	___	___
Meals with produce/day	___	___	___	___	___

Do I need all 20 herbs?

No. The formulary is for education. Choose none or one appropriate preparation, after safety review.

Can elderberry prevent flu?

Evidence is insufficient to promise prevention. Some trials suggest possible symptom benefit, but results are mixed.

Is vitamin D essential in Calgary?

A daily dietary source is recommended in Canada; supplement needs depend on age, diet and medical context.

Should I detox before December?

No special cleanse is necessary. Regular meals, hydration and sleep are safer and more practical.

What if beans cause bloating?

Start with small portions, rinse canned beans and increase fibre gradually.

What if I work shifts?

Anchor routines to your wake and sleep periods rather than a fixed clock time.

Can I skip meals before a party?

Usually a balanced meal earlier is more comfortable than arriving ravenous.

Is alcohol-free always better?

Avoiding alcohol reduces alcohol-related risks; choose drinks that fit your needs.

Can mushrooms replace medical treatment?

No. Retail mushroom extracts are not replacements for evidence-based care.

What if I feel worse on a tea?

Stop it, review ingredients and seek care if symptoms are concerning. Do not call this detoxification.

How much exercise is enough?

Begin below your capacity and build gradually; consistency matters more than perfection.

When should fatigue be checked?

If persistent, worsening or accompanied by other symptoms, discuss it with a healthcare professional.

11 | Your December survival plan

Scenario	Before	During / after
Holiday dinner	Eat regular meals and hydrate; decide on transport.	Enjoy the meal; take leftovers safely; resume normal eating next day.
Late evening	Protect the next morning where possible.	Keep water available; prioritize sleep rather than “detox” products.
Busy retail workweek	Pack breakfast, lunch and a portable snack.	Take short movement breaks; use frozen meals.
Travel day	Bring water, shelf-stable snacks and medication list.	Maintain prescribed medication timing; walk when feasible.
Alcohol at a party	Consider no alcohol; plan limits and safe ride.	Do not drive impaired; avoid combining alcohol with sedating herbs or medicines.
Stressful family gathering	Set time boundaries and an exit plan.	Use a brief walk or quiet decompression; ask for support when needed.

The five habits to carry into December

- Eat breakfast or your first meal at a predictable time.
- Include protein and produce in most meals.
- Move in short, realistic sessions.
- Protect a regular sleep opportunity where possible.
- Keep botanical and supplement choices simple and safe.

11 | Joy & Vitality Centre: continued support

This complimentary November guide is available by email or for pickup at Joy & Vitality Centre. You do not need to purchase anything to use it. If you would like help understanding botanical forms, ingredient labels or product selection, visit us in Willow Park, Calgary.

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What we can help with

- Understanding differences among whole herbs, tea blends, powders, tinctures and standardized extracts.
- Discussing food-first wellness routines and suitable botanical options.
- Identifying when a pharmacist or prescriber should review medication interactions.
- Exploring herbal teas, superfoods and relevant wellness products.
- Finding optional supportive services without treating them as substitutes for medical care.

Supplements are available in-store only. Selected herbs, superfoods and teas are available through shopjoyandvitalitycentre.ca. Stock and specific product licensing should be confirmed before purchase.

A personal note from Eugenia

I created this November guide to make the weeks before the holidays more manageable. You do not need a complicated routine or a cupboard full of supplements. Good food, useful information, sensible herbal choices and a little planning can make everyday decisions easier. Take what is practical for your life, and ask questions when something does not feel right.

12 | Clinical herbology and nutrition references

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[10] NIH Office of Dietary Supplements. Dietary Supplements for Immune Function and Infectious Diseases: Health Professional Fact Sheet.
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How to interpret this bibliography

Regulatory monographs document accepted traditional uses, quality and safety considerations for defined preparations. They are not a claim that every commercial product has equivalent clinical evidence. The NIH review summarizes human research and its limitations. For individualized dosing, review the actual Canadian licensed product label and seek professional advice where indicated.

Editorial and safety statement

This document is general adult wellness education. It does not diagnose, prevent or treat disease; replace vaccination or medical care; or provide individualized prescribing. Nutrition estimates are approximate. Product availability and licensing were not independently verified. Prepared October 2026.