**General Eating Guidelines & Meal Planning:**

- **Plate method**
  - 1/2 plate: fruits and vegetables
  - 1/4 plate: protein foods
  - 1/4 plate: whole grain foods
  - Make water your drink of choice

- **Meal Planning:**
  - unlockfood.ca
  - cookspiration App
  - choosemyplate.gov
  - healthymealplans.com
  - plantoeat.com
  - mealtime.com

**Weight Management:**

- Excessive weight gain can lead to:
  - Diabetes & heart disease
  - Breathing problems
  - Shoulder pain & possible injuries
  - Increasing difficulty with transfers
  - Incorrectly sized equipment
  - Pressure injuries

**Bowel & Bladder Management:**

- **Fluid:**
  - At least 8 cups/day ( > 1/2 water )
  - less than 3 cups/day coffee
  - Cranberry juice/pills not proven to prevent UTI

- **Fiber:**
  - Whole grains & cereals, fruits, vegetables, legumes and supplements
  - (*Aim for 25 - 38 g/day)

- **Bone Health:**
  - Important nutrients:
    - **Calcium:** 1000 - 1200 mg/day
      - Dairy products
      - Non-dairy fortified beverages: soy milk, almond milk, orange juice
      - Other non-dairy items: fish with bones, legumes, vegetables, tahini
    - *Aim for ~3 calcium-rich foods/day.
  - **Vitamin D:** 600 - 800 IU/day
    - *Often supplement is needed

- **Skin & Protein:**
  - Include a protein source at each meal & snack
    - Meat, poultry, fish & seafood, eggs, legumes, soy products
  - Protein needs do not increase long-term in SCI
  - Protein needs do increase for wound healing

- **Muscle & Protein:**
  - Eating a high protein diet will not prevent muscle wasting in SCI.

**Easy swaps:**

- White toast with whole wheat or whole grain toast.
- White pasta with whole wheat pasta.
- White rice with brown rice.
- Fruit juice with whole fruit.
- Cold cereal with oatmeal or high fiber cold cereal.