3.3: The Nursing Process

The nursing process (see Figure 3.1) is an important framework to guide you when collaborating with clients and families, especially to help them make sense of Canada's Food Guide 2019 and healthy eating practices. There are versions of the nursing process, but the iterative steps generally include:

1. Assessment
2. Analysis/Diagnosis
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation

![Figure 3.1: The nursing process](https://med.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Nursing/Book%3A_Interpreting_Canada's_2019_Food_Guide_and_Food_Labelling_fo...)

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As the first step of the nursing process, a **subjective assessment** provides data about the client’s eating patterns, social determinants of health, and personal resources. It can be useful to provide a copy of Canada’s Food Guide: Food Guide Snapshot so that they can discuss it with you, ask questions, and reflect on how it might be taken up in the context of their lives. For example, you may initiate a discussion using interview probes with the client such as:

- Tell me what you see when looking at the plate (in the snapshot).
- What questions do you have for me that are important to you?
- In what ways do your eating patterns align with this food plate?
- In what ways do your eating patterns not align with this food plate?

During this phase, you should also assess their personal concerns and goals surrounding their eating patterns and healthy eating. Using a **relational approach** and **unconditional positive regard**, you can focus on what is important to them in terms of eating and nutrition in the context of their own lives.

This **baseline data** provides an important starting point as you begin to analyze the client’s strengths, areas for improvement, and their own concerns and goals. Some clients and families may have a limited understanding of healthy eating and Canada’s Food Guide while others may have extensive knowledge. You can use a conversational and collaborative approach with the client as you are analyzing their eating patterns, knowledge, and goals before you arrive at a diagnosis.

The next phase is to **work collaboratively with the client** to develop a plan of care that is created **with them** as opposed to **for them**. As part of the planning phase, you help the client identify goals that are relevant and important to them, achievable in a specific time period, and measurable. It is important that you understand the client’s life and what is important to them in order to position the client for success in the implementation phase. During the planning phase, you should also collaborate with the client on developing an evaluation plan. During the evaluation, you will be able to make comparisons with the baseline data.