



# Is there a difference between a dietitian and a nutritionist?

## Sometimes yes, sometimes no!

You wouldn't ask a celebrity how to build a safe bridge, you'd ask a professional engineer. The same thinking should apply to nutrition advice. Dietitians are trained and regulated to ensure that you and your family receive safe and effective nutrition care, just as you would from your dentist or family doctor.

The title "dietitian" is protected by law across Canada. This means only people who meet certain criteria and standards can call themselves a dietitian. "Nutritionist" is also a protected title in Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, so in these provinces dietitian and nutritionist are equivalent. However, this isn't the case elsewhere in Canada where anyone can call themselves a nutritionist.

To be sure, you are working with a qualified nutrition professional look for the initials RD or PDt (DtP in French) after the person's name. You can also ask – are you a dietitian?

## Refer to the table below for details by province

Province	Protected titles and initials through provincial regulation
British Columbia	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, RD
Alberta	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, Registered Nutritionist, Nutritionist, RD, Dietetic Intern and Provisional Dietitian



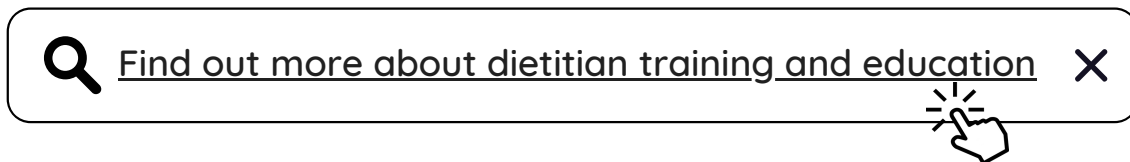
## Refer to the table below for details by province

Province	Protected titles and initials through provincial regulation
Saskatchewan	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, Professional Dietitian, RD, P.Dt
Manitoba	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, RD
Ontario	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, RD
Quebec	Dietitian, Nutritionist, Dietician, RD, P.Dt
New Brunswick	Dietitian, Dietician, Professional Dietitian, Registered Dietitian - Nutritionist, Registered Dietitian, P.Dt., R.D., RDN
Nova Scotia	Dietitian, Nutritionist, P.Dt
Prince Edward Island	Registered Dietitian, RD
Newfoundland and Labrador	Registered Dietitian, Dietitian, RD
Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut	Dietitians who live/work in the Territories are required to join a provincial regulatory body.



## Why should I choose a dietitian?

Dietitians are qualified to give you nutrition advice and information. They have a degree in food and nutrition from an accredited university program. They complete practical training and have to pass a national licensing exam\*. Like all regulated health professionals, dietitians must stay on top of new research, skills, and techniques. Dietitians do this by taking courses to improve their skills and knowledge every year. Dietitians are the best source for nutrition and food information.



\*Except in Quebec

## Why see a provincially regulated health professional?

It's one way you can be sure that the advice and information you are receiving is accurate and safe. You wouldn't ask your neighbour who has an interest in medicine to provide you with medical advice. Dietitians are educated and trained to work with you to give you safe and personalized nutrition advice and information.

Dietitians, like engineers and medical doctors, need to meet the education and ethical standards set by the provincial regulatory bodies. Dietitians need to be registered with their provincial regulatory body to legally practice in Canada. These provincial regulatory bodies are in place to protect the public. Members of the public can contact their provincial regulatory body if they have a concern or complaint about a dietitian.



To find out if your nutrition provider is registered, go to the website for the regulatory body in your province.

British Columbia	<a href="#">College of Health and Care Professionals of BC</a>
Alberta	<a href="#">College of Dietitians of Alberta</a>
Saskatchewan	<a href="#">Saskatchewan Dietitians Association</a>
Manitoba	<a href="#">College of Dietitians of Manitoba</a>
Ontario	<a href="#">College of Dietitians of Ontario</a>
Quebec	<a href="#">Ordre professionnel des diététistes du Québec</a>
New Brunswick	<a href="#">New Brunswick Association of Dietitians</a>
Nova Scotia	<a href="#">Nova Scotia Dietetic Association</a>
Prince Edward Island	<a href="#">College of Dietitians of Prince Edward Island</a>
Newfoundland and Labrador	<a href="#">Newfoundland and Labrador College of Dietitians</a>
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## Are Registered Holistic Nutritionists or Registered Nutritional Therapists the same as a Registered Dietitian?

There many people who claim to be nutrition experts and will offer nutrition advice without adequate training, education and safeguards. You want to make sure that you are getting the best advice and information from a qualified and experienced professional, especially if you have a medical condition or take multiple medications. Some nutrition providers use titles like:

- Registered Holistic Nutritionist (RHN),
- Certified Nutritional Practitioner (CNP),
- Registered Nutritional Therapist (RNT),
- Registered Nutritional Consulting Practitioner (RNCP),
- Natural Nutrition Clinical Practitioner (NNCP).

Titles like Registered Holistic Nutritionist and Certified Nutritional Practitioner are not the same as Dietitian. People using these titles are not provincially regulated health professionals. Dietitians are the only nutrition professionals regulated by law. Often people who have completed privately owned training programs use these titles. The length of training and education needed to use these titles vary.

## How do I find a dietitian near me?

It's easy to find a dietitian near you, visit [Find a Dietitian](#). You can search by postal code, city, and/or health condition.

Many dietitians offer services virtually and most employee benefit plans cover dietitian services. Check your plan today. If your benefits don't cover dietitian services, share this [resource](#) with your employer.