

Victoria Day indoor picnic

Canada • Monday before 25 May



For recreation therapists and activity aides in Canadian long-term care and personal care homes. Print what you need. Leave the rest.

Large type. Short steps. Dementia-safe language. Canadian spelling. One click PDF. No login required for this preview.

Pictures for this week

Use these on a screen or print one page for the program table. They are calm on purpose.



Simple picnic still life, created for BetterCare.

Victoria Day Indoor Picnic

May long weekend fun without fireworks. Safe, cosy, and calm for memory care.

Staff briefing

Hello friend. Happy Victoria Day week.

Victoria Day is in May. It is on the Monday before May 25. It is the May long weekend. Many Canadians call it May Two Four weekend.

Our plan is fireworks free. Loud bangs and flashes can frighten residents, especially those living with dementia. We will not use fireworks, sparklers, poppers, or loud videos of fireworks. We celebrate with an indoor picnic instead.

Why indoor:

- May weather shifts fast. Indoor means warm, dry, and calm.
- No bugs, no uneven grass, no long walks.
- We control sound and light.

What to say about fireworks: > Our home keeps Victoria Day quiet and cosy. No fireworks here. We have a picnic, music, and garden views instead. You are safe and comfortable.

Picnic setup:

- Tables with red and white cloths or paper covers.
- Checkered napkins, paper plates, cups with lids and straws.
- Battery tea lights or small faux flowers. No real candles.
- Blanket basket for laps. Sweater basket by door.

Food safety:

- Check diets, allergies, and swallowing plans first.
- Finger foods only. No skewers, no hard candy, no whole grapes.
- Keep cold foods cold. Ask dietary for help with timing.
- Hand wipes before and after eating.

Staff roles:

- One greeter at door.
- One drink helper.
- One floater for room visits and washroom trips.

Seven-day gentle calendar

Picnic is the highlight. Keep other days light and garden themed.

Monday: Welcome to May

- Morning circle: Pass a faux tulip. Say your name and favourite spring colour.
- Afternoon: Sort garden photos. Tulips, trilliums, lilacs.
- Room visits: Deliver tulip photo and say hello.

Tuesday: Porch Views

- Morning: Window bird watch. Count birds together. One, two, three.
- Afternoon: Easy craft. Colour a large maple leaf or crown. Thick markers only.

- Evening: Soft folk music. Low volume.

Wednesday: Picnic Prep

- Morning: Fold napkins together. Place faux flowers in cups.
- Afternoon: Make place cards. Large names. Residents can sticker their own.
- Room visits: Show menu card. Ask: Would you like lemonade or apple juice at the picnic?

Thursday: Indoor Picnic Day

- Late morning or lunch, 45 minutes max with quiet breaks. See Group script.
- Menu ideas: egg salad or tuna sandwiches cut small, cheese cubes soft, potato salad smooth, strawberries cut, lemonade.
- After: Rest hour. No other group. Soft music only.
- Room visits: Deliver picnic box to rooms with Room Card 1.

Friday: Garden Rest

- Morning: Hand and shoulder warm up. Gentle stretches seated.
- Afternoon: Smell herbs. Mint, basil, dill. Pass jars slowly.
- Evening: Short walk or wheel to windows. Look for new leaves.

Saturday of Long Weekend: Family Tea

- Set picnic tables again for visitors, simple style.
- Have photo spot with flowers and sign: Happy Victoria Day.
- Room cards ready for those staying in.
- Afternoon: Old garden show on TV, muted ads, or photo slides.

Sunday and Holiday Monday: Slow Close

- Sunday: Sing along, soft. Songs like You Are My Sunshine, Edelweiss. No loud brass.
- Monday holiday: Repeat mini picnic snack, 15 minutes. Juice and cookie if diets allow.
- Closing words: Thank you for our May week together.

If short staffed on holiday Monday, do room visits only with juice and flower. That still counts.

Group script

Use for Thursday indoor picnic. Welcome people as they arrive. Keep voice warm and bright.

Welcome, 3 minutes: > Welcome to our Victoria Day indoor picnic. Come in, come in. Find a sunny spot. My name is [your name]. We are so glad you are here. No need to bring a thing. Lunch is ready.

Help each person sit. Place napkin. Offer wipe.

> We will eat together, listen to soft music, and enjoy spring. Stay as long as you like. If you need a rest, tell me and we will walk with you.

Picnic blessing, 1 minute, optional: > Before we eat, a short thanks. Thank you for good food. Thank you for kind neighbours. Thank you for spring in Canada. Enjoy your lunch.

During picnic, 25 minutes: Walk table to table. Use these prompts:

- > How is your sandwich? Would you like water or juice?
- > That flower colour suits you. Red is cheerful today.
- > Tell me about picnics you liked. Park? Backyard? Lake?

Tips:

- Cut food smaller on request. Offer straw.
- Clear plates promptly to reduce clutter.
- If noise rises, lower music. One conversation per table.

Memory care support:

- Seat residents with a buddy or staff nearby.
- Keep exit path clear. Allow wandering breaks with escort.
- Offer fidget cloth or flower to hold for restless hands.

Closing, 3 minutes: Hold up a faux tulip.

> Thank you for picnicking with us. Happy Victoria Day long weekend. Wishing you rest and sunshine. Our team will visit rooms this afternoon with tea. Wave if you see us.

No balloons release. No outdoor sparkler send off. End with music and smiles.

Three room-bound cards

Large print. Include picnic so no one misses out.

Card 1: Picnic Box in Room > Hello [Name]. Picnic came to you. > Step 1. Wash hands with me. Wipe, wipe. > Step 2. Pick juice or water. > Step 3. Try one small sandwich. Nice and soft. > Step 4. Smell this flower. Spring is here. > Happy Victoria Day. We are glad you are here. Staff note: Stay while they eat first bites. Check swallowing. Remove box when done. Offer tea after.

Card 2: Garden Window Visit > Hello [Name]. Spring watch with me. > Step 1. Look out with me. Find green. > Step 2. Hold this soft blanket on your lap. > Step 3. Listen to birds or soft music for two minutes. > Step 4. Name one spring smell. Rain? Flowers? Fresh air? > Lovely to sit with you.

Staff note: Describe scene if vision is low. Keep window closed if chilly. Offer cardigan.

Card 3: Quiet Evening After Noise > Hello [Name]. Quiet time now. > Step 1. Sip warm water or tea if allowed. > Step 2. Hold this warm cloth on your hands. > Step 3. I will read one short spring poem. > Step 4. Rest. I will dim the light. > Sleep well. See you tomorrow.

Staff note: Ideal for residents who skipped group due to noise. Ten minutes max. Tell night staff visit went well.

Dementia-safe notes

- Fireworks free means fully free. Do not show phone videos with bangs. Do not tell loud Victoria Day stories. Keep talk on picnics, gardens, and spring.
- One instruction at a time. Sit down first. Then napkin. Then drink. Then food.
- Offer two clear choices. Say: Lemonade or apple juice? Not: What do you want to drink?
- Keep tables simple. Plate, cup, napkin. Remove extra decor before eating to avoid confusion.
- Watch for exit seeking when music plays. Keep door buddy in place. Redirect kindly: Let us get more juice together.

- Check temperature. May sun through windows can overheat. Have water ready. Offer shade seat.
- Avoid quizzing royalty history. No test on Queen Victoria facts. Share one simple line if asked: Victoria Day honours Queen Victoria and celebrates spring in Canada. Then move to flowers and food.
- Note coughing, pocketing food, or fatigue. Stop tastes and tell nurse.
- French tip: Joyeuse fete de la Reine is not common. Say Joyeuse fete de Victoria or Bonne longue fin de semaine de mai.

Print list

Print the week before the May long weekend.

For picnic room:

- [] 2 red tablecloths and 2 white tablecloths, paper is fine
- [] 20 place cards with large names
- [] 5 menu cards, large print: Sandwich, Cheese, Fruit Cut Small, Lemonade or Apple Juice
- [] 1 sign: Welcome to Our Indoor Picnic, Happy Victoria Day
- [] 1 sign: Fireworks Free Home, Quiet and Cosy, with flower image

For activities:

- [] 15 large crown or maple leaf colouring sheets
- [] Thick markers, stickers, glue sticks
- [] 12 faux tulips or daffodils for passing and tables
- [] Herb jars: mint and basil, lids secure

For rooms:

- [] 20 copies each of Room Card 1, 2, 3
- [] 12 picnic boxes ready with dietary, labelled by room

For staff:

- [] 4 copies of this briefing
- [] Diet and allergy list from nursing and dietary
- [] Clean up checklist: trash, wipes, leftover temps, lost sweaters

After: Save flowers and cloths in Spring bin. Log what menu worked. Ask dietary what to repeat next May.

How to use this PDF

Print the cover in colour if you can. Print the rest in black and white. Leave room cards at the bedside. You do not need to run every program.