Meal Planning Made Easy

Healthy Utah

Welcome!
- Housekeeping
- Webinar polling
- Recording will be available
Picture This!

What’s for dinner?
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Objectives
- Learn how to plan meals in four easy steps
- Learn techniques to save time and prepare healthy meals that are budget friendly
- Identify resources to simplify the meal planning process

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Why plan meals?
- Reduces stress
- Saves money
- Helps you better meet your nutrient needs
- Helps you better manage your caloric intake
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Meal Planning in Four Simple Steps

- **Step 1:** Take Inventory
- **Step 2:** Create a Meal Plan
- **Step 3:** Make a Shopping List
- **Step 4:** Shop Strategically

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**Step 1: Take Inventory**

- Check your refrigerator, freezer and pantry to find out what items you have available.
- Keep a list of spices and seasonings you have to avoid buying a product you may already have at home.
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Step 2: Create a Meal Plan

- Plan your meals for one or more weeks at a time
- Know your schedule and your family’s schedule if applicable
- Remember, the key concepts of a healthy diet when planning
- Use a meal planning calendar if desired

http://www.healthyutah.org/programs/seminars.php

Step 2: Create a Meal Plan

Key Concepts of Healthy Diet:

- Low in harmful fats (e.g. saturated and trans)
- Is rich in fruits and veggies
- Incorporates complex carbohydrate
- Includes lean protein and low-fat dairy
- Limits concentrated sweets
- Is low in sodium
Step 2: Create a Meal Plan

Recipe Search Engines:
- All Recipes and Google Base Recipe Searches
- Allows you to enter the ingredients you have on hand and generates a list of recipes you can choose from
- Exclude specific items from your recipe search if desired
- All Recipes Ingredient Search
- Google Base Recipe Search
  [http://base.google.com/base/s2?n0=recipes&a_y0=9&hl=en&gl=US](http://base.google.com/base/s2?n0=recipes&a_y0=9&hl=en&gl=US)
Step 2: Create a Meal Plan

**Easy and Healthy Meal Ideas**

- Meal Matters
  - [http://www.mealsmatter.org/Search/](http://www.mealsmatter.org/Search/)
- Spark People Recipes
  - [http://www.sparkrecipes.com/](http://www.sparkrecipes.com/)
- Eat Better America

Step 2: Create a Meal Plan

**Go-To Meal List**

- Consider creating a master list of meals or Go-To Meal List to speed up the meal planning process in the future
Go-To Meal List

How to create a Go-To Meal List:
A: Using your computer, make a list of EVERY meal you prepare and enjoy
   ● Even if it doesn’t seem like a healthy choice include it

Go-to Meal List

A: Example Meal List
   ● Chicken fajitas with rice and salad
   ● Tuna on toast served with fruit, yogurt and carrots
   ● Salmon with red potatoes and frozen vegetables
   ● Pita pizza (veggies/cheese) served with salad
   ● Baked chicken with mashed potatoes and green beans
   ● Fresh shrimp with baked potato and frozen vegetables
   ● Sesame tofu with broccoli and corn served with rice
   ● Spaghetti with meat sauce served with salad
   ● Low-fat veggie lasagna with green salad
   ● Hamburger and fries
Go-To Meal List

B: Using your list, group all of the meals by their main entrée

- Fish and Seafood
  - Salmon with red potatoes, frozen veggies
  - Fresh shrimp with baked potato and frozen veggies
- Chicken
  - Chicken fajitas with rice
  - Baked Chicken with mashed potatoes and green beans
- Vegetarian
  - Pita Pizza (veggies and cheese) served with green salad
  - Low-fat Veggie Lasagna

Go-To Meal List

C: Review your list for “double duty meals”

- These are meals that you can enjoy on more than one occasion
  - Meals you like enough to have as leftovers the next day
  - Or meals that freeze well and be perfect for “homemade” frozen meals
  - Make some sort of notation (e.g. D) next to these meals to indicate they are a double duty meal
Go-To Meal List

C: Review your list for “double duty meals”

- Fish and Seafood
  - Salmon with red potatoes, frozen veggies
  - Fresh shrimp with baked potato and frozen veggies
- Chicken
  - Chicken fajitas with rice (D) (like enough to have the next day)
  - Baked Chicken with mashed potatoes and green beans
- Vegetarian
  - Pita Pizza (veggies and cheese) served with green salad
  - Low-fat Veggie Lasagna with green salad (D) (freezes well)

D: Review your list again and indicate with some sort of notation (e.g.) H the healthy options

- Fish and Seafood
  - Salmon with red potatoes, frozen veggies (H)
  - Fresh shrimp with baked potato and frozen veggies (H)
- Chicken
  - Chicken fajitas with rice (D) (like enough to have the next day) (H)
  - Baked Chicken with mashed potatoes and green beans (H)
- Vegetarian
  - Pita Pizza (veggies and cheese) served with green salad (H)
  - Low-fat Veggie Lasagna with green salad (D) (freezes well) (H)
**Go-To Meal List**

*E: Finally, review your list and strike those that are too costly or require extensive preparation*

- **Fish and Seafood**
  - Salmon with red potatoes, frozen veggies (H)
  - Fresh shrimp with baked potato and frozen veggies (H)

- **Chicken**
  - Chicken fajitas with rice (D) (like enough to have the next day) (H)
  - Baked Chicken with mashed potatoes and green beans (H)

- **Vegetarian**
  - Pita Pizza (veggies and cheese) served with green salad (H)
  - Low-fat Veggie Lasagna with green salad (D) (freezes well) (H)

**Other Tips:**

- When using your Go-To Meal List to plan your weekly meals take into account those dishes that can be cooked together

- Consider modifying the meals that aren’t healthy options and updating your list to reflect modifications
Go-To Meal List

- You now have a Go-To list! Your meals are categorized so you’ll be able to create future meal plans quickly

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**Step 3: Create a Shopping List**

- Using the information you’ve gathered from your inventory and based off of your meal plan make a list of items you will need from the store
- If you have coupons for products you would normally buy, clip them and put them in an envelope to bring with you
Step 3: Create a Shopping List

**Coupon Dos and Don’ts**

- Don’t clip coupons for unhealthy food items
- Do clip coupons for pantry staples
- Do check online for coupons
  - [http://www.coupons.com](http://www.coupons.com)
  - [http://www.smartsource.com](http://www.smartsource.com)
- Don’t be brand loyal
- Don’t clip coupons for items you will never use
- Do clip coupons for kitchen and personal supplies

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**Step 4: Shop Strategically**

- Try shopping only once per week (or less) to save both time and money
- Shop on a full stomach
- Don’t be afraid of store brands
- Shop the perimeter of the store first where you will find the less processed and often healthier items (i.e. produce, lean meats, low-fat dairy)
Step 4: Shop Strategically

*Easy Ways to Eat Healthy on a Budget*

- Buy produce in season and opt for the frozen variety if it is cheaper
- Buy grains in bulk and store in airtight containers
- Buy 90% lean meats instead of 95% lean and drain the fat after cooking
- Use powdered low-fat or fat-free milk for recipes and liquid milk for drinking

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Make it Easy Make it Healthy

*Healthy Cooking to Simplify Your Life*

- Try to incorporate at least one double duty meal per week (i.e. meals that can be enjoyed on more than one occasion)
- Freeze individual portions of the leftovers for “homemade” frozen meals
  - Ex: Chicken and whole grain rice, low-fat veggie lasagna
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Healthy Cooking to Simplify Your Life

- Save time with smart prep work
  - Brown lean ground beef to use for dinner tonight AND for tacos later in the week
  - Cook extra brown rice and refrigerate or freeze for later use
  - Bake a few extra chicken breasts to use in a healthy (and simple) stir-fry

Tips to Reduce Fat and Calories when Cooking:

- Use a cooking spray like Pam or pour olive oil into a spray bottle and use that to grease pans
- Non-stick pans are also a good option
- Use reduced fat cream cheese and sour cream to limit saturated fat
- Avoid butter or stick margarine and use spray margarine, soft tub margarine (that’s trans fat free) or olive oil for a healthier fat choice
Make it Easy Make it Healthy

Eat Your Veggies and Fruit Too!
- Multitude of health benefits
- Incorporate 5-9 servings of fruits & veg daily

Add Excitement to Any Veggie Dish
- Steam yellow squash and toss with pesto and sun dried tomatoes
- Carrots simmered in chicken broth (very low sodium), drained and tossed with dill weed
- Toss broccoli with a little lemon juice, Dijon mustard and a small amount of margarine (trans fat free)
Make it Easy Make it Healthy

*Add Excitement to Any Veggie Dish*
- Mix shredded red cabbage with diced granny apples and low-fat poppy seed dressing
- Sauté zucchini with fresh basil and add toasted walnuts
- Mix rice vinegar and a little dark sesame oil to steamed green beans

Meal Planning Made Easy

*Points to Remember*
- Planning meals ahead of time helps you save money, reduces stress and helps you better meet your nutrient needs
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Points to Remember

- Meal planning doesn’t have to be hard
- Use the four step method to simplify the process:
  - **Step 1:** Take Inventory
  - **Step 2:** Create a Meal Plan
  - **Step 3:** Make a Shopping List
  - **Step 4:** Shop Strategically

Questions?

Contact Us!
HealthyUtah@utah.gov
(888) 222-2542
Recording Available:
http://www.healthyutah.org/programs/seminars.php