

1-Efficient and Healthy Meal Planning



Why Meal Plan?

- **A menu plan saves money.** Less trips to the supermarket = less impulse spending.
- **A menu plan saves time.** Eliminate any 5:00pm dashes to the supermarket.
- **A menu plan improves nutrition.** More time to prepare vegetable side dishes and salads means more nutrition for the family.

7 Steps for Quick and Easy Meal Planning

- 1. Find out what's on hand and what's on special.**
 - ✓ Check the fridge, cupboard and freezer.
 - ✓ Note what needs to be used up soon so it does not go to waste.
 - ✓ Keep the pantry well-stocked with healthy basics.
 - ✓ Scan the food ads (flyers or online) for specials and sales.
- 2. Accumulate a collection of healthy recipes.**
 - ✓ Great cookbooks: Dieticians of Canada "Simply Great Food" and "Great Food Fast", "SupperTime Survival" by Lynn Roblin or "Crazy Plates" by Janet and Greta Podleski or "Light Kitchen" by Rose Reisman.
 - ✓ Have your "go to" recipes for those hectic nights.
- 3. Ask for ideas and share the work.**
 - ✓ Ask others for lunch or dinner ideas.
 - ✓ Give everyone a job – planning, shopping, cooking and clean-up too!
- 4. Post an ongoing grocery list where it's easy to see.**
 - ✓ Let everyone know to add items to the list as you run out.
 - ✓ Make shopping easier. List foods under headings (Refer to **Grocery Shopping Checklist**)
- 5. Start planning! List 3 meals and 2 snacks per day.**
 - ✓ Keep meals simple during the busy work week.
 - ✓ Post menu plans in a visible spot. First home starts cooking!
 - ✓ Store menus in a binder to use again.
- 6. Eat healthy.**
 - ✓ Plan meals and snacks using healthy basics prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt. Limit the processed or prepared foods.
 - ✓ Serve at least one serving of vegetables and/or fruit with each meal. Aim for at least two colors!
- 7. Save time.**
 - ✓ Use leftovers for lunches or as part of another meal.
 - ✓ Use time-saving appliances: slow cooker, rice cooker, toaster oven.
 - ✓ For a cook's night off, make your own healthy frozen dinners.



Top 10 Grocery Store Tips

1. Buy lots of bright coloured fruits and vegetables (dark greens, bright oranges, etc.).
2. Choose leaner cuts of meat and poultry (flank steak, extra-lean ground beef, turkey).
3. Buy fish such as salmon, trout, sardines, albacore tuna and herring.
4. Choose healthier nuts (almonds and walnuts).
5. Buy high-fibre cereals (2-6 grams of fibre/serving).
6. Buy 1% or Skim Milk
7. Buy yogurt with less than 2% milk fat (MF).
8. Buy lower fat cheeses - 20 % MF or less.
9. Stay away from pre-packaged meals, packaged snack food, pastries and cookies and crackers that contain trans fat.
10. Stock up on low sodium canned goods (canned tomatoes, chicken stock, beans, chickpeas).



Smart Swaps

Buy This	Limit This
Yams/Sweet Potatoes	White Potatoes
Oven-roasted chicken/turkey breast, extra-lean ham	Bologna, salami
Brown, wild rice	White rice
Quinoa	Rice
Frozen Yogurt or sorbet	Ice Cream
Low-Sodium broth based soups	Cream based soup
Whole wheat wraps, pitas, crackers, bread	White wraps, pitas, crackers, bread
Frozen pizza with whole wheat, thin crust, chicken, vegetables	Deep dish pizza with pepperoni

Steps to Success

Step 1: Use **Grocery Store Checklist** and flyers whenever you start your shopping list.

Step 2: Write down foods from every column (especially if they're from the 4 food groups!).

Step 3: Formulate 3 meals and 2 snacks from these ingredients (refer to **Meal Reference Guide**).

Step 4: Write them in the **Weekly Meal Planner Guide**.

Resources

Need Ideas?

Excellent Cookbooks:

Simply Great Food – Dieticians of Canada

Crazy Plates or Eat, Shrink and By Merry – Janet and Greta Podleski

The Complete Light Kitchen – Rose Reisman

The Eat-Clean Diet Cookbook – Tosca Reno

Excellent Websites:

www.Foodfit.com

www.20minutesupperclub.com

www.Cookinglight.com