

Meal Planning Made Easy



Benefits of Family Meal Planning

There are many benefits to family meal planning, not only will you save time and money, but it will improve you and your families health and relationship with food.

Save Time: When you make a meal plan, you can select quick and easy recipes that don't require extensive prep work. You can purchase items in bulk that can be used for numerous meals and use leftovers for other meals.

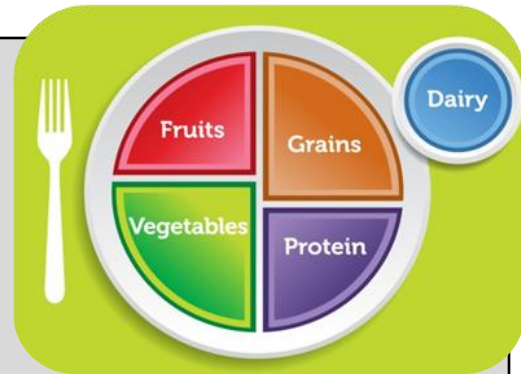
Cost Effective: Planning ahead allows you to look at the sales in the grocery store, buy only what you need and make multiple meals from your grocery items. Also preparing and eating meals at home is more economical than eating at a restaurant or ordering take out.

Healthy Eating: When you plan to eat at home, you have more control over the ingredients in your meals and the ability to determine appropriate serving sizes. Not only will this ensure that your family is getting proper nutrition but it's also a way to prevent your family from overeating.

Increased Family Time: Studies show that the more often families eat together, the more likely children are to do well in school, eat their vegetables, learn about cooking and partake in conscious eating habits.

Getting Started . . .

- ✓ Designate a time each week to sit down with your kids and plan the weekly dinner menu.
- ✓ Discuss different recipes and meal ideas that incorporate healthy family favorites.
- ✓ Educate your kids on the importance of consuming a balanced meal using visuals such as MyPlate.
- ✓ Plan meals according to your schedule. On busy weeknights plan something quick and easy to make.
- ✓ Write the weekly menu on a calendar, chalkboard or dry erase board and put it on the refrigerator for everyone to see.
- ✓ Have your children help write the grocery list so they learn which ingredients are needed for each recipe.
- ✓ If you can, bring your kids grocery shopping so they can learn how much to purchase for each meal.
- ✓ Get everyone involved in meal preparation, whether it be chopping, seasoning or setting the table.



Kid Friendly Menu



MONDAY	Taco salad with lean ground turkey, lettuce, avocado, black olives, salsa, low-fat sour cream and flaxseed tortilla chips
TUESDAY	Whole wheat bowtie pasta with roasted vegetables and ground turkey topped with parmesan cheese served with a green salad
WEDNESDAY	Black bean burger on a whole wheat roll with homemade sweet potato fries and steamed broccoli
THURSDAY	Grilled chicken breast with orzo, roasted corn, black bean, green pepper and tomato salad
FRIDAY	Homemade Hawaiian pizza with lean ham, caramelized onion and pineapple
SATURDAY	Shrimp and vegetable stir-fry served with brown rice and soy sauce
SUNDAY	Homemade chicken vegetable and rice soup served with a whole wheat rolls and green salad

*Be sure to add a glass of water, skim or 1% milk with dinner!

The Grocery List

1. When writing your grocery list, categorize items according to store aisles or food type.
2. Check your grocery stores website for printable shopping lists or phone apps to help you get organized.
3. Organizing your grocery list before entering the store will make shopping quick and easy.
4. Planning ahead will save you time and money, allowing you to focus on all of the other things you have to fit into your day.



Check out these helpful websites for more information :

- www.choosemyplate.gov
- www.mealmakeovermoms.com
- www.wholefoodsmarket.com/recipes
- www.foodonthetable.com