

Utah State University Extension
Create Better Health Adult Nutrition Education
4 Lesson Curriculum

CREATE BETTER HEALTH™

SNAP-ED



CREATE BETTER HEALTH™ SNAP-ED

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Welcome to the Create Better Health (CBH) Curriculum

Create Better Health (CBH) is a comprehensive nutrition education curriculum designed to teach adult and older adolescent SNAP-Ed participants how to eat well and be active on a budget. CBH was developed and evaluated by a team of SNAP-Ed program specialists, registered dietitians, and Utah State University Extension nutrition faculty. It is available in English and Spanish with all supporting materials. All handouts referred to in the lessons are available on the Create Better Health Staff Menu. <https://extension.usu.edu/fscreate/>

If you are a partnering SNAP-Education or EFNEP program and would like technical assistance in implementing the Create Better Health curriculum, you can contact the Create Better Health office at 435-797-3923.

CBH emphasizes the nutrition and physical activity recommendations from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Based on the social cognitive theory, the goal of the curriculum is to teach participants the knowledge and cooking skills necessary to lead an active and healthy life on limited resources.

Each lesson has three components:

- 1) a nutrition topic based on the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- 2) a physical activity discussion based on the current Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Physical Activity Guidelines for American
- 3) a Create method recipe demonstration

The layout of these components throughout the four lessons is designed to keep participants engaged and actively learning the skills needed to create a healthier lifestyle.

CBH includes four lessons that are to be taught consecutively, with one lesson per week. Many adult learners retain information for longer periods of time when they hear a message multiple times, can relate to the messages, and are able to apply the messages. This curriculum was designed with this in mind, each lesson building upon knowledge that was taught in previous lessons.

In a 2022 dosage study, CBH studied the long-term impact of the former eight-lesson CBH curriculum. We found significant improvements in long-term health behaviors correlated with the number of classes attended, up to four lessons. After those four lessons, however, no significant improvement was seen likely due to participant attrition and declined information-retainment. By the end of the study, we determined that reducing the series to four lessons would give a maximum long-term impact opportunity to participants, improve participant retention, and minimize the resources needed to provide one series. This four-lesson series is a result of this dosage study. We hope that you find the same value and benefits of a four-lesson series as we have in Utah.

Note: The 6 and 8-lesson CBH series are still available for advanced groups that would like more in-depth training on all 5 food groups of MyPlate.

Create Better Health Lesson Outline

LESSON	NUTRITION TOPIC	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TOPIC	CREATE RECIPE DEMONSTRATION & TALKING POINTS
Lesson 1	Introduction to MyPlate and Dietary Guidelines	Introduction to HHS Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans	Any Create Recipe. Using Creates handouts and utilizing foods on hand.
Lesson 2	Nutrition Facts Label	Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity	Any Create Recipe. Food safety.
Lesson 3	Menu Planning and Grocery Shopping, Increasing Fruits and Vegetables Consumption		Any Create Recipe. Stretching food dollars.
Lesson 4	Establishing Healthy Eating Patterns	Physical Activity Review	Any Create Recipe. Limiting calories from fats, sodium and added sugar.



Teaching Create Better Health

- The detailed outline format is designed to ensure instructors feel confident in their understanding of the material for each lesson. It is not intended to be a script. We encourage you to bring your teaching personalities to the material.
- The instructor may choose the Create method and recipe they feel will best reflect the information taught in each lesson. Choose the demonstration that is most appropriate for your audience, teaching location, season, etc.
- Discussion starters are included throughout each lesson. These are open-ended questions designed to get participants engaged. Feel free to use the questions included or develop your own open-ended questions. These discussion starters are a great way to see what information your participants remember from the previous lesson, and what changes they made because of your class.
- Success story prompting questions are also included. These questions are intended to get participants talking about behavior changes they have made because of what they learned in previous classes. Listen closely to the responses to these questions, as they may make great success stories. Be sure to enter success stories shared into the PEARS reporting system.
- Encourage participants to set a goal at the end of each class and follow up the next week. If necessary, assist participants in revising their goals. A common mistake in goal setting is to overestimate the amount of time or frequency with which they can do something. Perhaps they realized there was more they could do. Small changes may help them be more successful while still nudging them forward. Knowing that we can make changes and move forward encourages people to continue establishing minor objectives to accomplish larger ones. Use goal reminder cards for a visual cue to help accomplish the goal they set.
- To include all key topics of the original, Create Better Health curriculum, talking points have been included in each lesson. These should be shared during the recipe demonstration. An instructor is not expected to share every point, but they should provide a demonstration that best leads to a natural conversation where this instruction can be given. Share additional information using the Cutting Grocery Expenses handout and Food Safety handout.
- Invite class members to follow the Create Better Health social media sites.
- Invite participants to learn more about all the USDA MyPlate food groups by participating in the CBH online course. This provides more in-depth information, recipe ideas, and additional Creates methods.
- USDA MyPlate apps. These apps should be introduced as useful tools to help implement the lessons and support efforts to reach goals.

Reference guide for educators



Be on the look out for icons and italicized writing. These are discussion starters, handouts, media or other actions that support your teaching.

Tips in Green boxes are tips that may be helpful for the educator to be familiar with or aware of while teaching.

F.R.E.S.H

Use these FRESH guidelines to ensure the recipes being shared with populations meet program goals. Recipes shared should be flavorful, relevant, economical, simple, and healthy.

Recipe Guidelines



Flavorful

Share recipes that look and taste good! Encourage the use of common and inexpensive spices to decrease the need for salt in dishes. If recipe samples taste good, participants are more likely to make the recipes at home. When sharing a new recipe, be sure to test the recipe at home first.



Relevant to audience preferences

Make sure recipes are appropriate and interesting for your audience. Keep recipes fun, easy and simple so they appeal to many lifestyles and ages of participants. If participants have dietary restrictions, mention possible substitutions. Use accessible and in-season ingredients.



Economical

Share recipes that feature inexpensive ingredients. When choosing a recipe, keep in mind not only cost per serving, but also the cost to purchase the required ingredients to make a recipe. Focus on ingredients that are store-brand, or often on-hand. Offer other low cost solutions for fancy equipment.



Simple

Time or effort is often a barrier for people to choose healthier food. Share recipes with short lists of common ingredients, and that require minimal labor. Make sure recipes contain few ingredients and have simple instructions. Explain different variations that use canned or frozen ingredients that may be easier or faster.



Healthy

Make sure that the recipes shared follow the dietary guidelines. Recipes should encourage low sodium and lower fat ingredients, such as low sodium canned goods and low fat dairy products. Make sure recipes state proper food safety practices, such as cooking to proper temperatures.



Accessibility Checklist

Use this checklist to choose facilities and educational spaces that are accessible to all.

Consider barriers that may affect those with a wide range of disabilities (e.g., visual, hearing, and mobility) in a variety of areas.

OUTSIDE THE FACILITY

- Accessible parking
Handicap spaces
- Pick up/drop off areas
Sidewalk cutouts
- Accessible path
Paved and smooth
- Accessible door
Automatic door opener

PREPARING FOR CLASS

- Schedule ASL interpreters, if needed
- Screen reader accessible handout information
Take a QR code participants can scan and download screen reader versions
- Verify scheduled accommodations the Create Better Health state office
- Ensure videos you plan on using are captioned
- Some participants will be unable to use a QR code to scan the handout, it is best to have both a QR code and emailable link ready that will direct that participant to the handout for that day

INSIDE THE FACILITY

- Wide paths and routes clear of debris
- Elevator access, if needed
- Wheelchair accessible bathrooms
Adequate signage
Accessories mounted no higher than 26-44 inches
- Door opening > 32 inches wide
- Proper signage that points participants to the room
Do the signs have braille?

DURING THE CLASS

- Check in with participants, ensure everyone is involved in the learning process
- Face the audience and use a microphone, if necessary
- Describe images used during the presentation
- Slideshows should be accessible to low-vision participants
Large print, contrasting colors, clear visual aids



LESSON 1

Introduction to MyPlate, Dietary & Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

LESSON TOPICS

Nutrition Topic

Introduction to MyPlate & Dietary Guidelines

Physical Activity Topic

Introduction to HHS Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Three types of activity: aerobic, resistance, balance and flexibility.

Recommended Recipe Demonstration

Any Create recipe that incorporates all five food groups

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. Define the Create Better Health Utah (SNAP-Ed) program.
2. Recognize the five food groups illustrated in MyPlate.
3. Be familiar with the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans and the recommendations for active living.
4. List the three types of physical activity.
5. Demonstrate how to apply Creates handouts to prepare a nutritious meals that incorporates the MyPlate food groups.

PREPARATION REQUIRED

- Review and become comfortable with the lesson and related handouts.
- Identify a recipe that will incorporate all, or most, of the five food groups.
- Gather food and equipment to make the food demonstration recipe.
- Gather enough copies of handouts and other required forms for all participants or provide QR code or link to access handouts in a digital format.
- If using digital surveys, have the QR code associated with the PEARS Program Activity available.

Required materials

- Justice for All poster
- Ingredients and equipment for the demonstration/sample recipe
- Plates, napkins, and utensils for serving the sample recipe
- Lesson handouts
- Class participant forms

Required handouts

- Creates Handout
- Start Simple with MyPlate
- Good Foods to Have on Hand
- Move Your Way - Adults

Recommended handouts

- USDA App: Start Simple
- Trifolds for Aerobic, Balance and Flexibility and Resistance Training

Chronic Disease Prevention

CDC (Centers for Disease Control) Chronic Disease Video: <https://youtu.be/c91ggTIEGv8?si=l31ywmZhFSU7pJpk>



If you are unable to share the video, this message can be presented to participants to illustrate the importance of the information in these lessons.

- Six in ten adults in the United States have a chronic disease. Four in ten adults have two or more chronic diseases. (CDC, https://www.cdc.gov/chronic-disease/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/index.htm) Chronic diseases are illnesses that can last for long periods of time (sometimes our entire life when not managed). Chronic diseases can reduce our quality of life because of pain, feeling sick, emotional stress, and other limitations that typically come when living with and managing a chronic condition. Diet-related chronic diseases such as heart disease, some cancers, and diabetes are leading causes of illness and death in the U.S. (United States).
- Lifestyle plays a big role in the likelihood of developing chronic diseases. A diet that is high in saturated fats, and added sugars can damage the veins, organs, and other systems in our bodies and over time may develop these chronic diseases. This can be scary, but luckily preventing chronic diseases or reducing (sometimes even eliminating) chronic diseases is something that we can take control of. We have the power to reduce our risk of developing diet-related diseases by eating more nutritious food and increasing our movement. Making the healthiest choices for our bodies isn't always easy but small changes in our everyday lives can lead to a high quality, healthy life.
 - Create Better Health is a SNAP-Ed Program. SNAP-Ed is the nutrition education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.
 - Create Better Health teaches people how to eat well and be active. These classes focus on teaching people how to make delicious and nutritious meals from foods they already have on hand.

Welcome & Introduction

Create Better Health Utah (SNAP-Ed)

- What is Create Better Health?
 - Create Better Health is Utah's SNAP-Ed Program. SNAP-Ed is the nutrition education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.
 - The Create Better Health program is offered through Utah State University Extension offices.
 - SNAP-Education teaches people who have limited time and money how to eat well and be active.
 - All the information you will receive in Create Better Health classes is based on the USDA's nutrition and physical activity recommendations.
 - Each class is designed to build upon the previous lessons. After attending four classes, you will be more prepared with knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Class Structure

These classes will give you the tools to make healthy changes one step at a time. Each week, our lesson will build on what we learned and practiced the weeks before.

At the end of each class, I will ask you to set a goal. In the following class, we will talk about what went well, and about any challenges that got in the way of achieving your goal fully. As a group, we will brainstorm what the next steps might look like to make your goals successful.

The class series will take place on _____ at _____. I look forward to meeting with you for these classes. Together we will work to make the healthy choice, the easy choice.

Tip for Instructor: Some participants might set goals that are too big or unrealistic. Help them set achievable simple goals that they work on between classes.

Pre-Survey

Before we get started, please complete this brief survey. At the end of the four classes, we will complete the same survey to see how much you have learned and how you are progressing in your goal to create better health.

Provide the survey QR code attached to this class series program activity in PEARS (Program Evaluation and Reporting System). You may also use a paper survey if the QR code is not appropriate for your class demographic.

- Note: If you use paper, remember to enter the survey responses into PEARS as soon as possible after the class.
- Give participants a few minutes to complete the survey.

Tips for Instructor: If you notice pushback or hesitancy from your class, it can be helpful to do one of the following:

- *Share an example of how their feedback has helped us report the importance to program funders and helps us improve our programming.*
- *Read through survey questions with the class.*
- *Give an example of how to fill out the unique identifier at the beginning.*
- *Be sure that class members are able to read and understand the survey materials. You may need to provide the survey in another language or provide additional support.*

The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The current nutrition recommendations established by leading nutrition and health experts in the U.S. are known as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- They are intended for all healthy children and adults throughout the entire life cycle, from infancy through adulthood.
- They are updated every 5 years.
- When followed, these recommendations may help delay or avoid the most common health problems we face in our country today including obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.
- All of the recommendations for diet choices in the Dietary Guidelines are evidence based. This means there is strong scientific evidence that supports each of the recommendations of what to consume from MyPlate.

MyPlate Diagram

Show participants the MyPlate poster or the Start Simple with MyPlate handout.



DISCUSSION STARTER: “Who has seen this image before? What do you know about it?”

MyPlate is a tool that was developed to provide an easy way to follow the Dietary Guidelines. The food groups that make up the plate work together to provide the nutrients your body needs. Some of you may remember the food pyramid. MyPlate is a new way to visualize what healthy eating could look like.

- The plate contains five food groups—fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods and dairy.
- Each of the five food groups has an associated message that tells how to make healthy choices within the group.

Tip for Instructor: As you are discussing the food groups, ask participants what their favorite items are from each of the groups. Assure them they will receive more details in future lessons. Go to myplate.gov for more information about MyPlate and each food group.

Fruits

- Focus on whole fruits.
 - Choose whole fruits rather than fruit juice. Fresh, canned, frozen, or dried fruit are great options.

Vegetables

- Vary your vegetables.
 - Eating a variety of different colored vegetables will help ensure we are getting the many different nutrients we need to be our best.

Grains

- Make half your grains whole grains.
 - Whole grains have more nutrients and fiber than refined grains.
 - Whole grains include things like brown rice, quinoa, barley, 100% whole wheat bread, etc.

Protein

- Vary your protein routine.
 - The protein group includes animal-based proteins: meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and plant-based proteins: beans, lentils, soy products, nuts, and seeds.

Dairy

- Move to low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt.
 - The dairy group includes all fluid milk and foods made from milk that have a high calcium content. These foods include fluid milk, yogurt, and cheese.
 - For people who cannot, or choose not, to consume dairy products, there are a variety of non-dairy sources of calcium including milks made from soy, coconut, almonds, and rice. Some beans, leafy green vegetables, and other soy products also provide calcium.

Making even small, healthy shifts in your diet can have big impacts on your health. In our classes, we will focus on the fruit and vegetable food groups. If different topics spark your interest, we have an online course that you can take for a deeper dive into each food group.

Tip for Instructor: Have a picture of a sample menu that would represent a MyPlate day to share with participants. Make it simple, inexpensive, colorful and appealing so people are interested in learning more.

Introduce the USDA Start Simple with MyPlate App

 The USDA has developed an app to help make food choices from each of the different food groups. This app can be downloaded to a smart device. It helps set healthy eating goals and make positive changes.

Tip for Instructor: The USDA Start Simple with MyPlate App can be downloaded onto a smart phone or tablet. Participants can use this to help set and meet goals.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Tip for Instructor: This section has a lot of content. Cover key recommendations and introduce each type of exercise but provide additional details as time allows. Adapt to the needs of the audience as you present the information.

In addition to eating a variety of nourishing foods, being physically active is just as important to leading a healthy life. In 2018, the U.S Department of Health and Human Services released the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Like the dietary guidelines, the physical activity guidelines are based on the latest science. They include recommendations about how people can improve health through living an active lifestyle.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** “What is physical activity” and/or “What are some benefits of being physically active?”

Tip for Instructor: Have participants do a brainstorming session of all the physical activity benefits they have heard and write them on a board or a large sheet of paper.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, physical activity includes any actions that involve movement of the body and use of energy. Engaging in physical activity has many benefits including:

- Increased energy
- Improved sleep
- Controlled blood pressure
- Improved cholesterol levels
- Strong bones
- Improved immunity (ability to fight off sickness)
- Reduced stress and tension
- Relieved anxiety and depression
- Reduced risk of many chronic diseases

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** “What type of things do you like to do to be physically active?”

Getting your body moving in all ways is good for you. The guidelines recommend that all adults move more and sit less throughout the day, recognizing that any physical activity is better than none.

 **Distribute Move Your Way Handout - Adults. Highlight a few of the main points from the handout**

Tip for Instructor: Have trifold handouts available if people want more information about these three areas of physical activity.

Engaging in regular physical activity throughout the week provides many benefits. Spreading out activities throughout the week instead of doing it all at once, will maximize benefits. For example, doing 30 minutes 5 days per week will be healthier than exercising for 2.5 hours on Saturday and nothing else throughout the week.

Aerobic Activity

Aerobic activity is any movement that engages the large muscle groups and has continuous movement. It involves activities that make individuals breathe a little harder and their hearts beat a bit faster than during regular daily activities. The recommendation is to move in any way that fits into your day.

- Adults should get at least 150 minutes (about 2.5 hours) each week
 - 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days of the week.
 - 1 hour of activity 3 days of the week. It can also be done in 10-15 minute increments.
- Examples of moderate physical activity include:
 - Walking quickly
 - Dancing
 - Pushing a lawn mower
 - Water aerobics
 - Riding a bike on level ground
- If you prefer vigorous activity, recommendations are to do 75 minutes or 1 hour and 15 minutes each week. Vigorous activity is done at a higher level of energy intensity. This includes a greater increase in heart rate and heavier breathing than moderate activity.
- Examples of vigorous activity include:
 - Jogging and running
 - Swimming laps
 - Riding a bike on hills
 - Playing basketball

Tip for Instructor: Ask participants if they have questions about aerobic activity recommendations. Encourage them to start thinking about ways they can include aerobic activity in their daily activities.

- Other equally important types of physical activity include:
 - Resistance or strength training
 - Balance and flexibility training

Resistance Training

Resistance training or strength training is a form of physical activity designed to improve your body's muscular strength, power, and endurance. It does not require expensive equipment to participate in strength training. It can even be done using body weight to provide resistance. See Resistance Training Trifold.



DISCUSSION STARTER: "What are some examples of resistance training?"

- Push-ups
- Sit-ups
- Squats
- Lunge
- Weightlifting
- Using household items can also provide resistance.
 - Milk cartons filled with water or sand
 - Soup cans
 - Juice containers
 - Stairs or steps in your home or outside
- There are also inexpensive equipment items that help with building strength.
 - Resistance bands
 - Hand weights
 - Jump ropes
 - Stability ball



DISCUSSION STARTER: “What are some of the benefits of resistance or strength training?”

- Benefits of resistance training include:
 - Improved muscle and bone health
 - Increased lean body mass
 - Lower blood pressure
 - Lower LDL (bad) cholesterol
 - Lower risk of injury
 - Decreased risk of falling
 - Improved self-confidence



DISCUSSION STARTER: “How much resistance training is recommended?”

- It is recommended that muscle-strengthening activities for all major muscle groups be performed twice a week.
- Muscle groups are legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms.
- A common approach for general fitness involves using a moderate rep range, usually around 8-12 reps per set. This offers a balance between muscle and maximal strength gains.
- Starting with a set range of 1-3 sets is a great place to begin for general fitness.

Balance and Flexibility

The final recommended activity is balance and flexibility.

- Balance is the ability of the body to remain in a stable position when performing particular movements.
- Flexibility is a form of physical activity achieved through stretching and moving a joint through its range of motion.

Tip for Instructor: If participants are losing interest, ask them to stand up and do a simple shoulder stretch. If some prefer to stay sitting invite them to do a chest stretch or seated twist. See Balance and Flexibility Trifold.

- Benefits include:
 - Decreased risk of injury.
 - Increased range of motion.
 - Improved athletic ability.
 - Improved stability is especially important for the aging population. Improved stability allows many older Americans to live independently longer.
 - Decreased soreness associated with other exercise.

Balance exercises should be performed one to two times a week. It is recommended to correctly stretch before and after any physical activities. This helps prevent injuries by warming up and cooling down the body.

- **Dynamic Stretching:**
 - Dynamic stretching involves controlled leg and arm movements that gently reach the limits of your range of motion. Avoid bouncing or jerky movements.
 - Examples of dynamic stretching would be slow, controlled leg swings, arm swings, or torso twists.
 - This is most beneficial for warming up BEFORE exercising.
- **Static Stretching:**
 - Static stretching consists of pushing the joint to its furthest point and then maintaining or holding that position.
 - A form of static stretching, known as passive stretching, consists of a person relaxing (passive) while some external force (either a person or an apparatus) brings the joint through its range of motion.
 - This form of stretching is most beneficial AFTER exercising and for increasing range of motion.

Tip for Instructor: Point out the variety of flexibility and balance activities in the handout available. Check for understanding of Physical Activity benefits and types of activity.



OPTIONAL DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- “What types of activities do you already do that increase your balance and flexibility?”
- “How often should the average adult do balance and flexibility activities each week?”
- “Where could you add balance and flexibility exercises to your physical activity goals?”

Create Recipe Demonstration



In each class select a Creates method recipe guide to reinforce the lesson topics.

- If the situation and time allow, invite participants to help with steps in the recipe demonstration. Many people learn better by doing, rather than watching. Remember to have volunteers wash hands and wear gloves if assisting with any food

preparation.

- During the recipe demonstration, introduce Creates handouts. Show how to use the 'Creates method' to prepare meals from foods they have on hand or foods that are readily available to them.
- Demonstrate how the Creates method can help with making substitutions in recipes.
- Share how to use the step-by-step process to create something new.
- Explain how the recipe you are preparing fits the formula and what changes you could make to the recipe.

Share the 'Good Foods to Have on Hand' handout.

- Talk about keeping items on hand that you are familiar with and know you can incorporate into a variety of meals.

Tip for Instructor: The recipe demonstration is an important part of learning. For those that learn visually they can watch as you prepare a healthy recipe. Recipes should be simple to prepare, use normal everyday ingredients, follow the recipe guidelines and use common kitchen equipment and utensils. They should not require specialized ingredients or fancy kitchen tools and gadgets.

Tip for Instructor: If using ingredients with strong fragrance or unique texture pass a sample around the room. This allows participants to use smell and touch to learn. For example, if using a spice, add a teaspoon to a small container and allow the class to pass it around. Do not use what was passed around in a recipe. It should be for a learning experience only.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Encourage participants to share what they like about the recipe.

- "How would you adjust the recipe to fit what you have on hand or individual preferences?"
- "How can you make this part of a MyPlate meal?"

Goal Setting

Setting a goal means identifying something specific that you want to achieve or accomplish in the future. It provides you with a clear direction and purpose, guiding your efforts and actions toward a desired outcome. There are many benefits to setting goals.

- Goals can:
 - Help you clarify what you want to achieve.
 - Enable you to measure how far you've progressed.
 - Help you stay committed and disciplined, as you have a clear benchmark to strive for.
 - Foster your personal growth and development.
 - Learn new skills and expand your capabilities
 - Provide motivation and a sense of purpose.

- Bring a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction.
- Boost your self-confidence.
- Reinforce your belief in your abilities.

There is a specific method for setting goals known as SMART goals. SMART goals are a powerful framework for setting clear and effective goals in various areas of life, including nutrition and physical activity. We will continue to learn more about setting SMART goals in our next few classes.

 **Distribute goal cards. Ask participants to write down a goal following the SMART goal model. This can be a reminder of the health goal they set.**

Wrap Up

Invite participants to follow county social media sites. Provide QR codes to county CBH social media sites.

Next class reminder

Remind participants of the next class in the series (if applicable).

- Include date, time, location, topics, and recipe demonstration.



LESSON 2 Nutrition Facts Label, Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity

LESSON TOPICS

Nutrition Topic

Nutrition Facts Label

Physical Activity Topic

Overcoming barriers to physical activity

Recommended Recipe Demonstration

Any Create Recipe

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate how to use the Nutrition Facts Label to make healthier food selections. Identify barriers to being physically active and at least one strategy to overcome them.
2. Identify three strategies to keep food safe during shopping, preparation, or storage.
3. Demonstrate the skills necessary to create a nutritious dish using common ingredients.

PREPARATION REQUIRED

- Review and become comfortable with the lesson and related handouts.
- Gather food and equipment to make the food demonstration recipe.
- Gather enough copies of handouts and other required forms for all participants.

Required materials

- Justice for All poster
- Ingredients and equipment for the demonstration/sample recipe
- Plates, napkins, and utensils for serving the sample recipe
- Lesson handouts
- Class participant forms

Required handouts

- Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label
- Week at a Glance
- Create Safe Food
- Create Handout
- Recipe

Recommended handouts

- Reduce Added Sugars

Welcome & Introduction

Create Better Health Utah (SNAP-Ed)

- What is Create Better Health?
 - Create Better Health is Utah's SNAP-Ed Program. SNAP-Ed is the nutrition education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.
 - The Create Better Health program is offered through Utah State University Extension offices.
 - SNAP-Education teaches people who have limited time and money how to eat well and be active. The classes focus on teaching people how to make delicious and nutritious meals from foods they already have on hand.
 - All the information you will receive in Create Better Health classes is based on the USDA's nutrition and physical activity recommendations.
 - Each class is designed to build upon the previous lessons. After attending four classes, you will be more prepared with knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Review of Previous Lesson

Choose one to two discussion starters to get participants engaged in the class. Use the questions below, or create your own open-ended questions.

- Let's follow-up from the last class. Who can name one of the five food groups and the nutrition message associated with that group?
- What are three important types of physical activity that the physical activity guidelines recommends we incorporate into our week?
- Who has made a new recipe since the last class? What was it and how did it fit into the MyPlate recommendations?

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Would someone like to share a success or challenge they had with the goal they set last class?

Tip for instructor: It is important to be encouraging and positive about any amount of progress. Successfully working towards a goal is a great reason for celebration. If someone struggled to reach a goal, it is great to acknowledge efforts and help the individual adjust and create solutions or more attainable goals for the next week.

If participants are reluctant to share, provide some of your personal experiences setting goals and challenges you have faced making behavior changes.

Sometimes, when we set a goal, we realize that we need to take a lot of smaller steps to reach that goal. Think about what you wanted to do last week. Are there any smaller steps you can take to help you reach that goal? At the end of today's class, we'll have another chance to set goals.

 **Success story prompting question:**

- "Who added more physical activity to their routine? What did you do? How did you feel after?"
- "Who used MyPlate to plan a meal? What did you make and how did it fit the MyPlate guidelines?"

Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity

Being physically active is good for our health, so why is it so hard to do it every day? Today, we will talk about some of the most common things that make it hard to be physically active, as well as ways to get around them.

Tip for instructor: It is important to give participants time to discuss barriers they personally face.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Common Barriers (discuss as many barriers as time allows). Use the discussion points below to guide a discussion as necessary but focus on your participants' needs. As a group, come up with ways to overcome the barriers that class members are facing.

Lack of time

- Monitor daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute slots you could use for physical activity.
- Schedule physical activity into your established routine. Write it down.
- Be flexible with your schedule. Move during small breaks in your day, 5-10 minutes add up over time.
- Walk during lunch break.
- Park farther away from your destination.

Lack of energy

- Identify the time of day where you feel the most energetic and schedule physical activity at that time.
- Give physical activity a chance; it will give you more energy over time.
- Start small and simple. Then slowly build duration and intensity over time.

Lack of motivation

- Make it fun. Include activities you enjoy helping you find the motivation to reach your goals. If you are not having fun, find a new way to move.
- Plan. Make physical activity a regular part of your schedule and write it on your calendar.
- Add variety to your routine.
- Invite a friend to help encourage you during unmotivated times.

Fear of injury

- Learn how to warm up and cool down properly.
- Identify activities that are appropriate for your age, fitness level, and health status.
- Choose activities that involve minimum risk, such as walking or swimming.
- Understand the risks but be confident that physical activity can be safe for almost everyone.
- Take appropriate precautions.
 - Use protective gear such as helmets, eyewear, or protective pads.

Lack of skill

- Increase physical activity gradually over time to meet health goals.
- Select activities that require minimum skills such as walking or climbing stairs.
- Find a class or set a schedule to improve your skills gradually.

Lack of resource

- Identify free or inexpensive physical activity opportunities in your area to share with participants.
- For example, walking trails, hikes, recreation programs, etc.

Lack of childcare

- Work out with your kids by taking them to the park or dancing in your living room.
- Start early setting an example of an active lifestyle.
- Schedule your physical activity before children wake up in the morning or during naptime.
- Trade childcare with a friend or family member.

Tip for instructor: Find affordable or free resources in your area to recommend to your participants. If you need assistance identifying opportunities in your community, contact the health promotion program of your local health department.

After covering typical barriers to physical activity, ask if anyone has any questions concerning the barriers to physical activity or how to overcome some of the more common difficulties that participants in the class experience.

Nutrition Facts Label

Today, we'll talk about one tool that can help us make smart decisions about what to eat: The Nutrition Facts Label. It can be tough to sort out what this label means, but with practice, you will become a better shopper, be able to choose healthier foods, and have a healthier diet overall.



Distribute Understanding the Food Label handout.

Tip for instructor: Bring in a variety of food packages and distribute to the class. Participants can follow along as you discuss the Nutrition Facts Label.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Discuss as many sections of the Nutrition Facts Label as time allows.

The following content is for the new Nutrition Facts Label.

Servings per container and serving size

- There is often more than one serving in a container, so be sure to look at the serving size.
- Serving size is the amount of food that the rest of the content of the Nutrition Facts Label refers to.
 - For example: if there are 4 servings in the container, the calorie count, sodium, total fat, etc., is the amount you will get if you eat $\frac{1}{4}$ of the container.
- Serving sizes have been updated to better reflect the amount of the product people commonly eat.

Calories

- Calorie count is per serving.
- To find out how many calories are in the entire package, multiply the servings per container by the calories per serving.
 - For example: 8 servings x 230 calories = 1,840 calories per package or container

Total Fat

- The major groups of dietary fats are
 - Unsaturated
 - Monounsaturated
 - Polyunsaturated
 - Saturated
 - Trans fats
- Unsaturated fats
 - Considered heart healthy fats
 - Most often come from plant sources and are liquid at room temperature
 - Examples of unsaturated fats include olive, soybean, corn, and canola oil
 - Benefits
 - Helps your body absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E & K)
 - Helps maintain cell membrane structure
 - Provides energy between meals
- Saturated fats
 - Not considered heart healthy
 - Recommended to keep intake of saturated fats low
 - Most often come from animal sources and are solid at room temperature
 - Examples include butter, lard, shortening
 - Found in many meat products
- Trans fats
 - Many research studies have confirmed the negative health impact of trans fats. As a result, the Food & Drug Association (FDA) has eliminated trans fats from the “generally recognized as safe” list and therefore they can

no longer be used in food products made in the U.S. As of 2020, no foods produced in the U.S. will be made with trans fats.

Total Carbohydrates

- Total carbohydrate count includes the amount of sugars, added sugars, starches, and fibers per serving.
 - Dietary fiber is a carbohydrate that is not absorbed in the digestive process.
 - Fiber is important for digestion and disease prevention.
- Total sugars include the amount of naturally occurring sugar and added sugars.
 - Naturally occurring sugars include types like lactose in dairy products and fructose in fruits or vegetables.
 - Added sugars are those that are added to the product during processing or preparation.
 - It is recommended to keep added sugar to no more than 10% of your daily calories.

Ingredient List

- This is not part of the label, but it is one of the most important things you need to know. The ingredient list is usually printed directly under the label and provides a list of all ingredients used to make the product. The ingredients are listed in order by weight.
- In the next class, we will talk about planning meals and going grocery shopping. Knowing how to read and understand the Nutrition Facts Label will be a valuable skill for this next step.
- After reviewing the important sections of the Nutrition Facts Label check for understanding.



DISCUSSION STARTER: What questions do you have about the Nutrition Facts Label?

Tip for instructor: Optional activity if time allows: Hand out a few products with different Nutrition Facts Labels. Ask participants questions about the labels, encouraging them to find the key elements you just discussed.

Goal Setting

Specific (S) and Measurable (M)

In our last class, we talked about how important it is to make plans for things we want to do or get done in the future. Today, we'll talk about the SMART goal model and use it to set a new goal.

A SMART GOAL is one that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

- Specific - When setting goals to improve your health, it is important to set specific goals. For example, saying "I will be healthier" is a very broad goal, but you can make it more specific with something like: "I will eat more fruits and vegetables during my daily meals."
- Measurable - Try to find one thing you can do that might be a small step toward a bigger goal. When you write a goal, include a way to measure progress and know when you've reached it.
 - You can make our example measurable by adding in some numbers: "I will eat 1 cup of fruit for a snack and add 2 cups of vegetables during my daily meals for 5 out of 7 days each week for 2 weeks."

Other more specific and measurable nutrition goals will be:

- "I will drink eight glasses of water each day over the next week."

- “I will go for a 15 minute walk every morning and evening for the next month.”

Now it's your turn! Try to be specific about what you want to do and include a way to measure your progress. Invite participants to set a health goal based on what they learned today.

 **Distribute goal cards. Use this to write down a goal following the SMART goal model. This can help participants remember their goal during the week.**

Create Recipe Demonstration

 **In each class select a Create method recipe guide to reinforce the lesson topics.**

- If the situation and time allow, invite participants to help with steps in the recipe demonstration. Remember to have volunteers wash hands and wear gloves if assisting with any food preparation.
- Include a Creates handout teaching participants that they can prepare meals from foods they have on hand or foods that are readily available to them. Demonstrate how Creates can help with making substitutions in recipes.

Tip for Instructor: The recipe demonstration is an important part of learning. For those that learn visually they can watch as you prepare a healthy recipe. Recipes should be simple to prepare, use normal everyday ingredients, follow the recipe guidelines and use common kitchen equipment and utensils. They should not require specialized ingredients or fancy kitchen tools and gadgets.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Encourage participants to share what they like about the recipe.

- “How would you adjust the recipe to fit what they have on hand or individual preferences.”
- “How can you make this part of a MyPlate meal.”

Wrap Up

Invite participants to follow statewide Create Better Health's social media sites and sign up for the monthly newsletter. Provide QR codes as needed to easily connect.

Next class reminder

Remind participants of the next class in the series.

- Include date, time, location, topics, and recipe demonstration.



LESSON 3 Meal Planning & Grocery Shopping, Increasing Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables

LESSON TOPICS

Nutrition Topic

Meal Planning & Grocery Shopping
Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Recommended Recipe Demonstration

Any Create Recipe

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the benefits associated with meal planning.
2. Name three grocery shopping tips that help stretch food dollars.
3. Explain the benefits associated with eating fruits and vegetables.
4. Name three ways to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into healthy eating patterns.
5. Demonstrate the skills necessary to create a nutritious dish using common ingredients.

PREPARATION REQUIRED

- Review and become comfortable with the lesson and related handouts.
- Gather food and equipment to make the food demonstration recipe.
- Choose a recipe to demo that features a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Make enough copies of handouts and other required forms for all participants.

Required materials

- Justice for All poster
- Ingredients and equipment for the demonstration/sample recipe
- Plates, napkins, and utensils for serving the sample
- Lesson handouts
- Class participant forms

Required handouts

- Create Handout
- Grocery Shopping Packet
- Good Foods to Have on Hand
- Cutting Grocery Expenses

Recommended materials

- USDA App: Shop Simple
- Menu Planner
- Grocery Shopping Tips
- Shopping for Produce
- Measuring Cups

Welcome & Introduction

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 - SNAP-Education teaches people who have limited time and money how to eat well and be active. The classes focus on teaching people how to make delicious and nutritious meals from foods they already have on hand.
 - All the information you will receive in Create Better Health classes is based on the USDA's nutrition and physical activity recommendations.
 - Each class is designed to build upon the previous lessons. After attending four classes, you will be more prepared with knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Review of Previous Lesson

Choose one to two discussion starters to get participants engaged in the class. Use the questions below, or create your own open-ended questions.

- What is one thing we can learn by reading the nutrition food label?
- Who has made a new recipe since the last class? What was it and how did it fit into the MyPlate recommendations?
- Would someone like to share something they did to be active this week?

Remember to follow up on goals from the previous class. Encourage class members to share about the goals they set.



Listen and record success stories as participants report on their goals.



DISCUSSION STARTER: Would someone like to share a success or challenge they had with the goal they set last class?

Tip for instructor: Celebrate meeting goals successfully. If someone struggles to reach a goal, troubleshoot with them to set a more attainable goal for the next week.

Sometimes, when we set a goal, we realize that we need to take a lot of smaller steps to reach that goal. Think about what you wanted to do last week. Are there any smaller steps you can take to help you reach that goal? At the end of today's class, we'll have another chance to set goals.



Success story prompting question:

- Who would like to share how they used the Nutrition Facts Label to make a food decision?
- What parts of the label did you use and how did this influence the decision you made?

Tip for instructor: If no one is responding, offer some of your own thoughts, successes, or struggles. This may get the conversation going.

Meal Planning and Food Budgets

Tip for instructor: Review and be familiar with the meal planning resource page in this curriculum. There are multiple methods to meal planning. Having a few favorite ideas will help you provide suggestions for participants.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Have you ever gone to the grocery store, loaded up your cart, spent \$100.00 or more, come home and put all the food away, and then realized you still have nothing to make for dinner?

Meal planning can help avoid this situation. It is also an important strategy to ensure that your food dollars last the entire month.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What are some of the challenges you face when meal planning?

Tip for instructor: Sharing some of your own challenges with meal planning will help participants feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts.

- Time
- Lack of cooking skills
- Do not like sticking to a plan
- Too many fussy eaters in the house
- Money

Distribute Grocery Shopping Packet

Trying to decide what to eat every night can take a lot of time and energy. If you set aside a small amount of time (30-60 minutes) once a week, you can plan ahead and save time, energy, and money.

Let's go through one method for menu planning:

- First, figure out how much money you have each month to spend on food. This is your food budget.
 - Look at how much you've spent on food in the past to figure out how much you can spend on food each month.
 - This amount could change as you plan your meals and shop smartly. You'll find that you can spend less on food than you used to and still have more food in the house.
 - It is important to plan so that the food budget can last the whole month and provide nutritious options.
- Take an inventory of what foods you already have on hand.
 - Use a copy of the grocery list outline in the Grocery Shopping Packet to help with inventory.
- Review ads and digital coupons for the stores where you shop.
- Start planning out the meals:
 - Use the MyPlate tool as a guide while you plan nutritious meals.
 - Although you don't need to start with dinner, most people find it easier to plan the main meal of the day first. Move on to planning breakfast, lunch and then snacks.

- Include a variety of meals that include favorites, budget stretchers and quick-fix meals.
- Plan around leftovers.
- Include ingredients that can be used in multiple meals.
- Cook once and eat twice by prepping food for multiple meals. For example, if you need rice for dinner on Monday, cook some extra for a stir-fry on Wednesday.

If a full week seems overwhelming, start with a few days before you build up to a full week. Some people find it helpful to prepare a 2–4-week menu cycle that you can rotate each month. It makes planning easy and grocery shopping even easier. Once you have a menu, it is a good idea to save it. You can reuse all or parts of it later.

Tip for instructor: If time allows share some local grocery store ads. Have participants use the ads to create a meal or a few days of meals. Encourage participants to think of what ingredients they already have at home. Ask someone to share what they chose and how it fits into the MyPlate guidelines.

Have each participant write down or state a meal they often have during the week. Write down the ideas on a menu template and share them with the class. (Encourage sharing from participants and help be a support group among the class).

Tip for instructor: Invite participants to bring copies of a favorite recipe to class next time to trade with other class members.

Grocery Shopping

Once you have a meal plan ready, it is time to head to the grocery store.

- From your menu plan, make a shopping list.
- Limit trips to the grocery store during the month.
- Know exactly how much you can spend each trip to the grocery store.
- Purchase larger packages of items you use most often.
- Consider using generic brands.
- Utilize online free grocery shopping and pick up. It helps reduce impulse buying and saves time.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What are some tips and tricks you use when shopping for nutritious foods while staying within your budget?

 **Distribute General Grocery Shopping Tips handout.**

Select a few ideas from the handout to share. Do not go through the full handout. Highlight some of the main points:

- Stick to the edge of the store.
- Do not shop hungry.
- Go to the grocery store during slow times.
- Identify which foods you really want.
- Always compare prices.
- Look high and low on the shelf.

- Make and stick to your grocery list.
- Be flexible.

 The USDA has created an app to help with grocery shopping called Shop Simple. It can be downloaded onto a phone or tablet. This app can help save money while shopping for healthy food choices. It can be used to find cost-saving opportunities in your local area and discover new ways to prepare budget-friendly foods.

Nutrition Topic: Fruits and Vegetables

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Why are fruits and vegetables such an important part of our diet?

- An important source of many nutrients that are often under-consumed in our diets including, but not limited to:
 - Vitamins A, C, K and folate
 - Potassium
 - Fiber
 - Phytochemicals/Pigments
- Low in calories, fat, and sodium
- Diet rich in fruits and vegetables are associated with a reduced risk of many chronic diseases including obesity, type II diabetes, heart disease, digestive disorders, and certain types of cancer.

 **Show participants MyPlate, focusing on the fruit and vegetable food groups. Emphasize that 1/2 the plate is made up of fruits and vegetables.**

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** How many cups of fruit do you think an average adult should eat daily?

- 1 1/2 - 2 cups of fruit per day
- What counts as a cup of fruit?
 - 1 cup chopped/sliced fruit (show measuring cup)
 - 1/2 cup dried fruit
 - 8 oz. 100% fruit juice
 - 1 medium pear, 1 small apple (size of a baseball), 1 large banana (8-9")
- Fruits can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or 100% fruit juice. Here are some tips for finding the healthiest version of these categories:
 - Fresh: Fruits without any glazes, syrups, sugar, etc.
 - Frozen: Check the label for frozen fruit without any added sugars (added sugars are often found in pre-made smoothie mixes)
 - Canned: Check the label for canned fruit packed in 100% fruit juice.
 - Dried: Check the label for dried fruit that is not coated with sugar or glazes.
 - 100% fruit juice: Check the label for 'no added sugars'. MyPlate recommends making most of your fruit whole fruit, rather than juice. Whole fruits offer more fiber and less sugar than even 100 % fruit juice, making it a better option.
- Limit juice on the menu to no more than 6-8 ounces per day (or in other words: less than half of the daily fruit recommendations).



DISCUSSION STARTER: How many vegetables do you think an average adult should eat daily?

- 2 ½ - 3 cups per day.
- What counts as a cup of vegetables?
 - 1 cup of cooked or raw vegetables (show measuring cup)
 - 2 cups raw, leafy greens. For example, lettuce, spinach, kale, etc.

Focusing on a variety of colors will ensure that you receive all the health benefits associated with eating vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are colored with different pigments that each have different health benefits.

Tip for instructor: If time allows, show the class some examples of what 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ -3 cups of vegetables looks like using a variety of fruits and vegetable food models or pictures.

Increasing Fruit and Vegetable Intake

There are many ways to incorporate fruits and vegetables into the foods you are already eating. Before you know it, eating 5 or more cups a day will be part of your routine.



DISCUSSION STARTER: What are some ways to increase the amount of fruit and vegetables throughout your meal plan?

Tip for instructor: Ask participants to shout out a typical breakfast, lunch, or dinner meal. As a group, talk about which fruits or vegetables you could add to that meal.

- Eat fruit with breakfast.
- Use fruit instead of syrup on pancakes or waffles.
- Eat fruit and vegetables for snacks.
- Add vegetables to your sandwiches.
- Add vegetables to your scrambled eggs or omelets.
- Add extra vegetables to canned soups.
- Order a side salad, rather than fries or chips.
- Enjoy fruit for dessert.

After instructing on the importance of eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, ask participants what questions they have.

Create Recipe Demonstration



In each class select a CREATE recipe guide to reinforce the lesson topics.

- If the situation and time allow, invite participants to help with steps in the recipe demonstration. Remember to have volunteers wash hands and wear gloves if assisting with any food preparation.

- Include a creates handout teaching participants that they can prepare meals from foods they have on hand or foods that are readily available to them. Demonstrate how Creates can help with making substitutions in recipes.

Tip for Instructor: The recipe demonstration is an important part of learning. For those that learn visually they can watch as you prepare a healthy recipe. Recipes should be simple to prepare, use normal everyday ingredients, follow the recipe guidelines and use common kitchen equipment and utensils. They should not require specialized ingredients or fancy kitchen tools and gadgets.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.



DISCUSSION STARTER: Encourage participants to share what they like about the recipe.

- “How would you adjust the recipe to fit what you have on hand or individual preferences.”
- “How can you make this part of a MyPlate meal.”

Goal Setting

Achievable (A) and Relevant (R)

In the last two classes, we’ve talked about how to set SMART goals. We talked about how to make specific and measurable goals last week. Today, we’ll talk about how to set goals that can be achievable and are relevant. Achievable (A) and Relevant (R) Goals.

To set yourself up for success, health goals should be reasonable and realistic for your specific lifestyle and resources. It is also important for goals to be relevant, which means are important to you and connect back to your personal values as well as your long-term health goals.

- Think about your goal and how to make it more achievable and relevant in your life this week.

Invite participants to set a health goal based on what they learned today. Encourage them to set goals that are achievable and relevant.



Distribute goal cards. Ask participants to write down a goal following the SMART goal model. This can be a reminder of the goal they set.

Wrap Up

Invite participants to follow county social media sites.



Provide paper copies or a QR code.

Next class reminder

Remind participants of the next class in the series.

- Include date, time, location, topics, and recipe demonstration.

Creates Method Recipe Demonstration Talking Points

WAYS TO SAVE MONEY WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Many people think fruits and vegetables are too expensive for those with a limited food budget. Sometimes certain fruits and vegetables can be pricey, but there are many ways to get your five a day on limited funds.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What are some tips you use to get a variety of fruits and vegetables while staying within your budget?

 **Distribute *Shopping for Produce or Cutting Grocery Expenses* handout and discuss money saving tips.**

- Buy fresh, frozen, or canned.
- Shop in season.
- Buy quality produce that will last longer.
- Plan your meals using the most perishable items first.
- Shop local Farmer's Market.

Tip for instructor: This could be a good opportunity to introduce Double Up Food Bucks incentive program if seasonally appropriate.

IDEAS FOR SAVING MONEY ON FOOD

- Choose a couple of inexpensive meals and add them to your regular meal rotation.
- Use a grocery store shopping app to build a list, or to place an order for pick up.
 - This can help you stay on track with a budget more easily while watching shopping cart totals.
- Use coupons on items you normally purchase and eat.
- Freeze leftovers for a future meal to minimize food waste.
- Take an inventory of your pantry and freezer and make meals using those ingredients first.
- Limit trips to the store. If you only need one thing, try to do without until the next shopping trip.
- Turn leftovers into planned overs.
 - Leftover meats can be cut/shredded and made into skillet meals, grain bowls, soups, or salads.
 - Get creative with what you already have!
- Buy generic brands.
 - Many families can save \$20 a week, which is \$80 a month or \$1,040 a year just by switching to generic brands, which can be about 50% less than name brands.

Utilize community resources, such as free or reduced priced school lunch programs, if your family qualifies. There are also the food assistance programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and food pantries available in most areas.

Stretching your food dollar tips shared and adapted from Utah Money Moms. <https://www.utahmoneymoms.com/uploads/1/8/0/6/18060107/efwcuttingexpenses-oy-aug2021.pdf>



LESSON 4

Establishing Healthy Eating Patterns & Physical Activity Review

LESSON TOPICS

Nutrition Topic

Establishing healthy eating patterns

Physical Activity Topic

Physical activity review

Recommended Recipe Demonstration

Any Create Recipe

Reduce added sugar

OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. List three ways to establish a healthy eating pattern through all stages of life.
2. Identify the current dietary guideline areas of focus.
3. Define the recommendations for physical activity.
4. Identify ways to reduce added sugar, fats, and sodium to achieve a healthier eating pattern.
5. Demonstrate the skills necessary to create a nutritious dish using common ingredients.

PREPARATION REQUIRED

- Review and become comfortable with the lesson and related handouts.
- Gather food and equipment to make the food demonstration recipes.
- Gather enough copies of handouts and other required forms for all participants.

Required materials

- Justice for All poster
- Ingredients and equipment for the demonstration
- Plates, napkins, and utensils for serving the sample
- Lesson handouts
- Class participant forms

Required handouts

- Create Handout
- Recipe

Recommended materials

- USDA App: MyPlate Plan
- Pass along cards for online courses

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 - Each class is designed to build upon the previous lessons. After attending four classes, you will be more prepared with knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Review of Previous Lesson

Choose one to two discussion starters to get participants engaged in the class. Use the questions below, or create your own open-ended questions.

- Who can tell me one of the ways we talked about getting more food for your money?
- What are the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables that we talked about in class last week?
- How many servings of fruit and vegetables should we eat every day?

Remember to follow up on goals from the previous class. Encourage class members to share about the goals they set.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Would someone like to share a success or challenge they had with the goal they set last class?

Tip for instructor: : If participants are reluctant to share, provide some of your personal experiences setting goals and challenges you have faced making health behavior changes.

Sometimes, when we set a goal, we realize that we need to take a lot of smaller steps to reach that goal. Think about what you wanted to do last week. Are there any smaller steps you can take to help you reach that goal? At the end of today's class, we'll have another chance to set goals.

 **Success story prompting question:**

- Who overcame some of the barriers keeping them from being active?
- What did you do to be physically active?
- How did you feel after?
- Who used some of the tips we shared last week to save money on groceries?
- What did you do and how did it fit into your meal plan?

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Establishing Healthy Eating Patterns

This is the last class in the series. The information for today's class will help us review USDA's dietary guidelines and the physical activity guidelines. We will review what these recommendations are and how to apply that information to develop healthy habits and create better health in our own life.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are updated every 5 years by the nation's top health and nutrition experts. They are intended for healthy children and adults throughout the life cycle, from infancy to adulthood.

Throughout our Create Better Health classes, you have learned tips about how to follow these guidelines, let's review.

 **OPTIONAL DISCUSSION STARTER:** Ask participants to list recommendations they can recall from previous lessons.

Follow a Healthy Eating Pattern at all Stages in Life

- Healthy eating is important for all ages starting in infancy.
- Individuals who establish a healthy eating pattern at an early age (infants and toddlers) are more likely to have a nutritious diet during adulthood.
- MyPlate messages guide us to foods that will help you feel and be your best. Some of those messages are:
 - Choose a variety of colors of vegetables and fruits.
 - Choose whole fruit more than fruit juice.
 - Make at least half of your grains, whole grains.
 - Choose low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products.
 - Vary your protein routine, opt for lean protein choices including beans, lean meats, eggs, nuts, seeds, and seafood.
 - Limit the amount of saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar and sodium in your diet.

Each set of guidelines has key focuses. The focuses of the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans include:

- Follow a healthy eating pattern at every life stage.
- Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations.
- Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.
- Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages, and stay within calorie limits.

Focus on Variety, Nutrient Density and Amount

Most foods can fit into a healthy eating pattern based on the MyPlate recommendations. Choose a variety of minimally processed whole foods. Non-processed whole foods, like those encouraged in MyPlate, are considered nutrient-dense.

- Nutrient-dense foods contain a lot of nutrients including vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- The opposite of nutrient-dense is calorie-dense. Calorie-dense foods contain a lot of calories but few nutrients.
- Choose proper amounts of food that keep you within your daily calorie needs.
- Being aware of portion sizes will help you fit the foods you enjoy into a healthy diet.
- Use MyPlate serving size information to stay within your daily needs.
- Use serving size recommendations on the nutrition facts panel to be aware of how many calories you are consuming from packaged items.

 **MyPlate Plan App Introduction:** Class participants can go to myplate.gov for a free estimation of their calorie needs and the best way to meet their needs using MyPlate guidelines. The USDA has also created an app to help establish healthy patterns. Use the MyPlate Plan mobile app to personalize your food plan based on your needs.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Physical activity paired with eating a nutritious diet can help you create even better health!

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What is one way you have become more physically active since starting the Create Better Health Utah classes?

- Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that all Americans move more and sit less.
- To maximize the health benefits of being physically active, we should be moderately active at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) per week. Ideally, this activity should be spread throughout the week.
- Any duration of activity (i.e., 10 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, etc.) is beneficial and counts toward your daily and weekly goal.
- The guidelines also recommends adults perform strength training exercises for each of the main muscle groups 2 times per week.
- Exercises that improve balance and flexibility are also important for overall health.

 **DISCUSSION STARTER:** What are some of the benefits of being physically active? What has motivated you to become more physically active since starting Create Better Health classes?

Optional Review Activity Tools:

- Kahoot! or Jeopardy style games work well for reviews.
- Mentimeter.com has some free options that can be used to do quiz-like reviews and get the participants involved.
- Write review questions on a beach ball and toss around the room. Whoever catches the ball reads the questions and the class answers. Avoid yes or no questions.

Goal Setting

Time-bound (T)

Over the last 3 lessons we have built up our SMART goals. Who remembers what S M A and R stand for?

The last part of SMART goals is T, for Time-Bound. Goals should always have a due date. Putting deadlines or target dates on goals helps create a sense of urgency and motivation.

The following are examples of time-bound nutrition goals:

“I will meal plan dinner meals for 2 weeks” or

“I will complete a 30-day sugar reduction challenge by December 30th”

Remember that using the SMART GOAL framework to make your goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound will give you small, actionable steps you can take to improve your health that can lead to big changes.

Invite participants to set a new health goal based on what they learned today. Encourage participants to use all the elements of SMART goals

- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound.

-  **Distribute goal cards.** Ask participants to write down a goal following the SMART goal model. This can be a reminder of the goal they set.

Create Recipe Demonstration

-  **In each class select a Create method recipe guide to reinforce the lesson topics.**

- If the situation and time allow, invite participants to help with steps in the recipe demonstration. Remember to have volunteers wash hands and wear gloves if assisting with any food preparation.
- Include a Creates handout teaching participants that they can prepare meals from foods they have on hand or foods that are readily available to them. Demonstrate how Creates can help with making substitutions in recipes.

Tip for Instructor: The recipe demonstration is an important part of learning. For those that learn visually they can watch as you prepare a healthy recipe. Recipes should be simple to prepare, use normal everyday ingredients, follow the recipe guidelines and use common kitchen equipment and utensils. They should not require specialized ingredients or fancy kitchen tools and gadgets.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.

-  **DISCUSSION STARTER:** Encourage participants to share what they like about the recipe.
 - “How would you adjust the recipe to fit what they have on hand or individual preferences?”
 - “How can you make this part of a MyPlate meal?”

Wrap Up

Thank your participants for attending classes. Invite them to take the post survey.

-  **Success story prompting idea:**

Create a poster or utilize a whiteboard if one is available to invite people to share their CBH experience with you. Give each participant a small piece of paper or sticky notes to write down their response to one of the questions below. You might even come up with your own question to encourage people to share their experiences. Have participants add their responses to the question to the poster or whiteboard. Collect the responses at the end of class and use them to write success stories. If you have permission from the participants include their name in the PEARS report. It could be part of the next annual report.

- How have the Create Better Health classes changed what you eat every day and how you plan your meals?
- Could you share on how your ideas about nutritious food have changed since you started the program?
- How have the Create Better Health classes affected the way you shop for groceries and choose what to buy?
- Have you run into any problems or benefits you did not expect when trying to apply the nutrition skills you learned into your daily life?
- How do you plan to keep up with the healthy habits you learned in the Create Better Health classes for a long time?

- What health changes have you seen since you started doing the Create Better Health classes?
- Has your family or the people you live with been eating differently or acting differently about food because of what you learned in the program?
- What was the most important thing you learned or did in Create Better Health that made you think and change the way you act?
- How have you changed how you cook or get meals ready because of what you learned about eating better in the program?
- How do you feel about exercising now, compared to before you took these classes?



Provide paper copies or a QR code.

If you are interested in learning more about the Dietary Guidelines and Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, we invite you to take our free online course at createbetterhealth.org.



Distribute a QR code or pass along cards for the online course

Create Method Recipe Demonstration Talking Points

LIMIT CALORIES FROM ADDED SUGARS, SATURATED FATS, AND REDUCE SODIUM INTAKE

Limiting foods that are high in added sugar, sodium, and saturated is easier if you are choosing mostly whole foods.

SUGAR



Distribute Reducing Added Sugars handout

Excessive added sugar intake is associated with increased risk of:

- Obesity
- Type II diabetes
- Heart disease
- Inflammation
- Weight gain

Select highlights from the handout such as identifying sources of added sugars in products.

Added sugars are those that have been added to a food during preparation or processing. It does not include sugar that is naturally occurring in a food.

Tip for instructor: This is not a complete list of sources of added sugar. There are over 50 sources of added sugar that may be added to products.

The top sources of added sugar in Americans' diet include:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages
- Soda (not diet), energy drinks

- Grain-based desserts such as cakes, cookies, pies, etc.
- Fruit drinks that are not 100% fruit juice
- Candy
- Dairy-based desserts like ice cream, sorbet

Some surprising sources of added sugar:

- Ketchup
- BBQ sauce
- Salad dressing, especially low-fat versions
- Breads
- Tortillas
- Granola
- Flavored yogurt

People older than 2 years should eat less than 10% of their daily calories from added sugar, according to the Dietary Guidelines.



DISCUSSION STARTER: What are some ways to reduce added sugar in your diet?

- Read labels to identify foods with added sugar.
- Replace some sugar in recipes with fruits or vegetables.
 - For example, use applesauce, banana puree, or sweet potatoes.
- Get creative and try some tasty and healthy options during special occasions.
 - Turn fruits and vegetables into art to match the occasion (example- turn sliced carrots, celery, and black olives into a jack-o-lantern for Halloween, or create a Christmas Tree platter using cucumbers, broccoli, cherry tomatoes, and a slice of cheese cut into star.)

SATURATED FATS

Fewer than 10% of your daily calories should come from saturated fat.



DISCUSSION STARTER: What are some ways to limit daily calories that come from saturated fats?

- Choosing lean sources of protein (plant based, fish, seafood, bird, game meats)
- Select low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products.

SODIUM

High sodium intake can increase our risk of developing heart disease and high blood pressure.

It is recommended we consume less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium daily. You can find the amount of sodium in a product by looking at the nutrition facts panel. Remember to look at the serving size.

Sodium is found in various processed foods. It can be found in breads, lunch meats, frozen meals, and canned foods like vegetables, meat products (tuna, chicken, salmon, etc.) and soups.

To help reduce the amount of sodium you are eating:

- Choose canned food products that say, reduced sodium, or no salt added on the label. If you can't find those options, drain, and rinse your canned products thoroughly. This won't remove all the sodium, but it will help.
- Experiment with different herbs and spices to give your food more flavor without the downsides of having too much salt.
- Make more meals from scratch and less from boxed mixes or pre-made meals.

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CREATE AMAZING VEGGIES



Vegetables are often the most neglected part of a meal but are definitely one of the most nutritious. When prepared properly vegetables can also be the most flavorful part of your meal.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing cups and spoons
- Large skillet or wok
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 DISCUSS IMPORTANCE OF PREPPING ALL INGREDIENTS BEFORE YOU START

2 VEGETABLES

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
- Veggies will give the dish more volume, vitamins, minerals, and fiber but not many additional calories.
- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up veggies.

3 COOKING METHOD

- Discuss best options for veggies on hand.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross-contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information on food safety.

4 FLAVOR

- Discuss options—most common and not-so-common.
- Onion and garlic—sautéed in a very small amount of oil or in water/broth.
- Choose spices/herbs according to other ingredients.
 - See Spice It Up handout for combination ideas.

5 EXTRAS

- Discuss options.
- Watch for hidden fats.

Additional Help to Create Amazing Veggies

Vegetables and Food Safety

- Even though vegetables are nutritional powerhouses, that doesn't mean they're resistant to foodborne illnesses and mishandling by the consumer. It is important to follow food safety practices with vegetables.
 - When purchasing cans of vegetables, do not buy cans that have dents, bulges, or signs of rust.
 - Carefully select frozen vegetables. Choose packages that contain firm, individual pieces. If the product feels like a solid block, it may be a sign that it has thawed and then refrozen.
 - Thoroughly wash all fresh vegetables before peeling, eating, or cooking. A vegetable brush is helpful. Do not use soap.
 - Avoid cross-contamination when preparing a meal.
 - Cross-contamination occurs when bacteria from one item is carried to another item. It can occur if hands or cooking tools are not properly washed and sanitized. Meat and poultry products are especially notable for their bacteria-possessing properties prior to cooking. If possible, use one cutting board for fresh vegetables and another for raw meat, poultry, or fish. If you only have one cutting board, be sure to wash and sanitize it after each use, or cut the fresh vegetables before you cut the meat.
 - Use a different knife for meat than for vegetables; or sanitize the knife you used to cut meat; or cut the vegetables first.
 - Wash your hands!

Storing Vegetables

- Fresh vegetables can be very delicate. Not only do we need to protect them from cross-contamination, but we also need to protect them while they are being stored because they have a short storage life.
 - If you wash lettuce and other leafy vegetables before storing, drain thoroughly because too much moisture will cause decay.
 - Store most fresh vegetables in the refrigerator either in the crisper drawer, a covered container, or plastic bag. Store potatoes, yams, and onions in a cool, dry place with good air circulation. Keep unripe tomatoes at room temperature, away from direct sunlight until ripe, then refrigerate.
 - Frozen vegetables can be stored in the freezer for several months.
 - Store canned vegetables in a cool dry place. For best quality, use within a year, but products will remain safe to eat for a longer period of time.

Cooking Vegetables

- Vegetables are a great source of nutrients. Cooking vegetables may change the nutrient content, depending on the method used. Nutrient content can be impacted by cooking in water, heat, and length of cooking.
- Boiling:
 - May result in significant loss of certain nutrients as they leach out of the vegetable and into the water during cooking time.
 - Boiling is fine for soups or other recipes where you also consume the cooking liquid.
 - To help reduce nutrient loss during boiling:
 - Boil larger pieces of vegetables.
 - Boil vegetables for less time.
 - Put vegetables into already boiling water rather than bringing the water and vegetables to a boil together.

- Steaming
 - Steaming preserves a significant amount of nutrients since vegetables do not come in direct contact with the cooking water and the cooking time is relatively short.
- Sautéing
 - Quickly cooking vegetables in a small amount of fat will preserve many of the nutrients. Small amounts of nutrients may be lost due to exposure to high temperatures.
- Roasting or baking
 - Roasting and baking vegetables may result in small amounts of nutrient loss due to the high temperatures. To reduce loss, roast for less time and enjoy a slightly crisper vegetable.



CREATE A CASSEROLE

Say goodbye to calorie and saturated fat rich casseroles. Using whole grains, vegetables, and our SOS mix will make a casserole that is more nutritious but just as tasty as the ones our moms made for us.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing spoons
- Saucepan
- Casserole/oven-proof dish
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

Tip for instructor: Teach participants about the cook once, eat twice method of meal preparation. For example, if your meal plan shows you will use peppers for dinner on Tuesday and Friday, then cut them all at one time and store in the refrigerator. This will save time on busy days.

1 STARCH

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
- Discuss and demonstrate how to cook grains, rice, and pasta.

Tip for instructor: This is a great place to add how to increase whole grains in your diet. Using whole grains in a casserole will add flavor and fiber.

2 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant-based.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.

3 VEGGIES

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
- Be sure to incorporate different fruits and vegetables to help participants increase their fruit and vegetable intake!
- Vegetables will give the dish more volume and nutrients, but not many extra calories.
- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up veggies.

4 SAUCE

- Make a sauce that doesn't come from a can: less fat, sodium, preservatives, cost.
 - Homemade sauces cost pennies to make, while jars may cost a few dollars.
 - White sauce made from roux and/or slurry.
 - Roux: uses a fat and flour, add water.
 - Slurry: add flour to water, no fat or additional calories needed.
 - SOS: define and explain; demo if time and circumstances permit.

Tip for instructor: Have a jar of SOS mix to show participants. Having a visual, in addition to the recipe and explanation, will make it more likely they will make some SOS mix for their pantry.

5 FLAVORS

- Onion and garlic sautéed in a very small amount of oil or in water/broth
- Choose spices/herbs according to other ingredients.
- See Spice It Up Handout for combination ideas.

6 TOPPINGS

- Discuss options.
- Watch out for hidden fats.

Additional Help to Create a Casserole

Cooking Grains

The Create a Casserole handout has some general instructions for cooking rice and pasta, but what about other grains? Here are some general guidelines that will work for almost all whole grains.

1. Wash the grains by placing them in a pan and adding enough water to cover them by an inch. Swirl them around in the pan and then gently pour the water out of the pan. Do this a few times until the water is clean. Note: this step is especially important when cooking with quinoa, as it has natural toxins and will taste bitter if not rinsed away.
2. Add enough clean water to the pan to cover the grains by about ½ inch (for most grains you can use twice as much water as grain; example: 1 cup rice and 2 cups water).
3. Bring grains to a boil over high heat.
4. Reduce heat to a simmer; you want the water to barely bubble.
5. Cook until the grains are tender (10 minutes to an hour or more, depending on grain). Stir occasionally to make sure they don't stick to the pan. Add ¼ cup of water to pan as needed if water cooks out. Drain any water left in pan when grains are done.
6. Cover the pot, remove it from heat, and let it rest for a few minutes.
7. Note: This method does not work for couscous—follow instructions on box.

Making Homemade Bread Crumbs

You can easily make homemade bread crumbs using day-old bread. Put two slices of bread and 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning in a food processor and process until you have coarse crumbs. Spread mixture on a cookie sheet and bake at 350°F for 3-5 minutes or until it begins to crisp. Cool and store in airtight container.



CREATE EASY EGGS

We often associate eggs and omelets with breakfast, but they can also be an inexpensive, quick, and healthy lunch or dinner. Try adding a variety of vegetables to your eggs to make them a filling meal.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable/cheese grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing spoons
- Whisk or fork
- Nonstick skillet
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 PREPARE FILLINGS; SET ASIDE

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
 - Encourage adding a lot of vegetables.
 - Vegetables will give the dish more volume and nutrients without adding many calories.
 - Demonstrate knife skills as you cut vegetables.
 - Watch out for hidden fats (butter, cheese, etc.).

2 CRACK EGGS

- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, temperature.
- Add salt, pepper, water, and herbs.

3 HEAT PAN, ADD COOKING SPRAY

- Cooking spray will add fewer calories than butter or oil.

4 ADD EGGS TO PAN

5 PULL COOKED EGGS FROM EDGES

6 ADD FILLING

7 FOLD ONE SIDE OF EGGS OVER THE FILLING

8 SLIDE OFF PAN ONTO THE PLATE

Additional Help to Create Easy Eggs

Hints for Making the Perfect Omelet

One of the tricks to making a great omelet is to make sure you have all of your ingredients ready before you start cooking the eggs. Once the eggs hit the hot pan, everything goes fast. You can precook any of the ingredients before adding them to the omelet (mushrooms, onions, meats, etc.)

- Crack the eggs into a bowl and add water (1 tablespoon water per egg). The water helps to make a light and fluffy omelet. Whisk the egg/water mixture vigorously to incorporate as much air into the eggs as possible.
- Heat a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until a drop of water sizzles. Spray the pan with cooking spray and add the eggs. Gently tilt the pan so eggs are evenly distributed over the bottom of the pan. Let the eggs begin to set up in the pan, then carefully push the cooked edges toward the center of the pan. Tilt the pan and let any liquid run underneath. Repeat as needed until there is no liquid left.
- Add toppings of choice down center of omelet. Fold in thirds and slide onto plate. That is all there is to it!

Creating a Frittata

Omelets are a quick and easy meal, but when cooking for a crowd, it may actually be easier to make a frittata. An omelet and a frittata are essentially the same thing but the cooking technique is a bit different. With omelets, you cook the egg mixture and fold the cooked egg around the filling. With a frittata, you stir the filling ingredients into the raw eggs and cook them at the same time. You must make one omelet at a time and even though they are quick to make, if you need to make six or more, it can be tedious. With a frittata, you can make 6 or more servings in one pan.

Basic cooking instructions for a frittata

- Prepare filling ingredients, precook any that you may want cooked (onions, mushrooms, etc.).
- Crack six to 10 eggs into bowl and whisk them.
- Heat large skillet sprayed with cooking oil over medium heat.
- Gently stir filling ingredients into eggs.
- Pour entire mixture into skillet, cover, and cook over low heat for 10-20 minutes, or until center is set.
- If top is still a little runny, you can stick the pan under the boiler for a minute or so to set the top. Make sure the pan is oven safe, including no rubber handles that can melt under the broiler.
- Cut into wedges and serve.

Importance of Breakfast

Although we can eat an omelet or frittata at any meal, we typically think of them as breakfast foods. Mom was right! Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. Breakfast eaters are more likely to be:

- More alert
- More energetic
- Quicker to react
- Better students and employees
- More productive
- Less likely to overeat
- Less likely to be absent

Some quick, easy, and nutritious breakfast foods include:

- A blender drink made of fruit, milk, and yogurt, especially if you make it the night before and keep it in the fridge.
- A piece of fruit and a bagel.
- Oatmeal with milk and raisins.
- Trail mix or granola bar with 100% fruit juice.
- Sandwich with milk.
- Whole wheat bread or English muffin with peanut butter.

Leftover pizza or a burrito works just fine as breakfast food! Breakfast for dinner is also a good idea. If you don't have time to make your favorite breakfast for breakfast, there is no reason not to have it for dinner.



CREATE A FRUITY DESSERT

Many people have a bit of sweet tooth and eating healthy does not have to mean never eating sweets again. Creating a fruity dessert is a great way to satisfy your sweet tooth while also increasing your fruit intake.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing spoons
- Saucepans
- Baking pan
- Casserole/oven-proof dish
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 FRUITS

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
- Fresh, frozen, or canned fruit works well.
 - If using canned, look for fruit packed in 100% fruit juice or water.
 - If you have fruit packed in syrup, drain and rinse.

2 PREPARATION METHOD

- Discuss options.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.

3 FLAVOR

- Discuss options—most common and not-so-common.
- Discuss how fruits are naturally rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- Fruits are naturally sweet, so you don't have to add a lot of extra sugar.
- Choose whole grains for the topping:
 - Oats
 - Whole wheat flour
- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up fruit.



CREATE A GRAIN BOWL

A flavorful grain bowl

can be a great way to include whole grains in a healthy diet. Using variety in textures and flavors make grain bowls an exciting addition to a MyPlate meal plan.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Vegetable peeler
- Cooking pot with lid
- Individual serving bowls

Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 BASE

- Discuss options. Some grains traditionally pair well with certain flavors but think outside the box and experiment with new flavors.
- Encourage the use of whole grains to reinforce MyPlate recommendations.

2 VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

- Discuss adding a variety of fruits and vegetables.
 - Use fresh, frozen, or canned.
- Discuss a variety of options. Even though the grain is the foundation, the fruits and vegetables can be the star of the dish. Be creative.
- Vegetables provide a savory or earthy element of flavor. They add flavor, fiber, and a variety of nutrients while not adding a lot of calories.
- Fruits add a little sweetness.

3 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant-based.
 - Encourage lean proteins to reinforce the MyPlate lesson.
- Eggs and plant proteins cost less than meat.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, safe temperatures, and storage.

4 SAUCES OR DRESSING

- Sauces and dressing add flavor.
- Homemade sauces and dressings allow more control of fat and sodium.
- Consider the end result and how you want it to taste.
- Share recommendations for flavor—see Spice it Up handout.

5 TOPPINGS

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
- Watch for added fats.



Additional Help to Create a Grain Bowl

When introducing this Create method, emphasize using leftover grains. This can be done with a “cook once eat twice” concept of preparing extra ahead of time.

- Grains keep 3-4 days in your refrigerator and will take only a few minutes to warm up.
- Cooked grains can also be frozen and added to soups and casseroles easily as needed.
- Store in a zip-top freezer bag for up to 6 months in the freezer.
- To reheat, vent the zip-top bag and place it in a microwave. Reheat for 1 minute per cup of grain.

When cooking most grains

- Add dry grain to the pan with water or broth.
- Bring everything to a boil, then simmer on low heat until all the liquid is absorbed.
- Remember to set a timer so you don't burn the food to the bottom of the pan.
- Add ½ teaspoon salt to the water per 1 cup of grain for the best flavor.

Cook the pasta in a large amount of water; after the recommended cook time, drain the leftover liquid using a colander.

How to prepare basic grains

TO 1 CUP OF THIS GRAIN	ADD THIS MUCH WATER OR BROTH	BRING TO A BOIL, THEN SIMMER FOR	AMOUNT AFTER COOKING
white rice	1 ½ cups	18 minutes	2 cups
brown rice	2 ½ cups	40-45 minutes	3 cups
hulled barley	3 cups	40 minutes	3 cups
pearl barley	3 cups	25 minutes	3 cups
quinoa	2 cups	12-15 minutes	3 cups
old-fashioned oats	2 cups	5 minutes	2 cups
steel-cut oats	4 cups	30 minutes	3 cups
whole wheat pasta	6 cups or more	8-12 minutes (varies by size)	Varies based on shape of pasta
wild rice	3 cups	45-55 minutes	3 ½ cups

Sources

Whole Grain Council <https://wholegrainscouncil.org/recipes/cooking-whole-grains>

Go Barley <http://gobarley.com/>

Quaker Oats <https://www.quakeroats.com/>

Recommended handout

Oldways Whole Grain Council https://wholegrainscouncil.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/WGC-CookingWholeGrains_0.pdf



CREATE A KABOB



Kabobs or skewers are a fun and easy way to put together a quick and healthy meal. The combinations of vegetables, fruit and lean proteins are endless. Kabobs are often considered a dinner option, but can make a quick lunch or even a healthy dessert. Cook a few extra kabobs for leftovers that can be enjoyed the next day on their own or added to a salad.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Mixing cups and spoons
- Skewers (wooden or metal)

Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant based.
- Discuss food safety—cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for information about food safety.

2 FLAVORS/MARINADE

- Choose marinade sauce/spices according to other ingredients.
 - See Create a Kabob handout for combinations.
- Discuss food safety—where to store the protein while marinating (refrigerator), if you should use the liquid that was used to marinate the protein to baste while cooking, etc.

3 VEGETABLES

- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut the vegetables and fruit.
 - See additional resources for more information about knife skills.
- Discuss different vegetables (or fruits) you can use in your kabobs.
 - Give common and not-so-common ideas.
 - See Create a Kabob handout for combination ideas.

Tip for instructor: Get participants involved by asking for examples of fruits and vegetables that can be added to the dish.

4 THREADING THE SKEWER

- Thread the kabob onto a skewer using a pattern of protein and vegetables (or fruit).
- Repeat pattern two or three times until skewer is full.
 - Leave about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of space between each ingredient so they will cook evenly.
 - Leave an inch or so of space on each end of the skewer for easier rotation while cooking.



Additional Help to Create a Kabob

What type of skewer to use

Wooden skewers - Wooden skewers can be found at most grocery stores. They are a great option for kabobs. They can burn easily over a hot grill or heat source in the oven, so be sure to soak them in warm water for 10 to 30 minutes before threading your ingredients on them. This will keep the skewers from cooking along with the food.

Metal skewers - Metal skewers are a great, reusable option for kabobs, if you plan to make them frequently. Find a skewer option with a triangular shape or that is flat rather than round. This will help to keep your ingredients from spinning when you rotate your skewer to cook each side.

Grilling your kabob

Place a piece of foil on top of your metal grill grates and spray it with cooking spray before placing your kabobs on the grill. This will help keep food from sticking and also from falling through the slats of your grates while they are cooking or being rotated.

Cooking your kabob without a grill

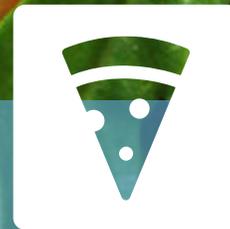
Kabobs can be cooked easily in the oven and are just as delicious that way! Prepare a cookie sheet by lining it with foil. You can also place cooling racks on the pan and spray them with cooking spray to act as the “grates” of the grill. After your protein has reached its desired internal temperature, remove your pan from the oven and turn the broiler on low. Place pan back in the oven and rotate your kabobs every 3-5 minutes until the protein and vegetables have gotten a slight char like they would on the grill.

Cooking your kabobs without skewers

You do not need skewers to create a kabob-type meal! Follow all of the kabob preparation instructions found on the handout. Instead of threading your ingredients onto a skewer in a pattern, lay them out on a small aluminum or metal pan in the same pattern instead. Place the pan on the grill or in the oven and cook according to the directions provided in the handout. You may choose to turn the protein and vegetables or fruit mid-cooking to achieve the char on all sides, or leave it to cook through.



CREATE A PIZZA



Creating pizzas at home will be better for your health and your wallet. Homemade pizzas will have less sodium, fat, and maybe even calories. Depending on your ingredients it will likely have more vitamins, minerals, and fiber than one from a restaurant or the freezer aisle.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing spoons
- Pizza pan or baking sheet
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 CRUST

- Most traditional pizza crusts are made with refined, or white flour.
- Making pizza crust with whole grain flour is just as easy and provides additional vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- Demonstrate how to make whole grain pizza crust.

Tip for instructor: Make mini pizzas in a toaster oven using a small amount of the whole wheat dough, whole grain English muffins, or pitas for this lesson.

2 SAUCE

- Discuss options.
 - Tomato sauce, fresh tomatoes, olive oil and garlic, salsa.

3 FLAVORS

- Choose spices/herbs/cheese according to other ingredients.
 - See Spice It Up handout for combination ideas.

4 LIMIT CHEESE

- A little bit goes a long way. Use more as a condiment than a main topping to reduce sodium, fat, and excess calories.

5 TOPPINGS

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
 - Encourage the use of vegetables or fruit as a pizza topping. It is a good way to add volume, flavor, and nutrients to your pizza without adding many calories.
 - Ask participants which fruits and vegetables they like on their pizza.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information about food safety.

Additional Help to Create a Pizza

Homemade Pizza Crust

Learning to make a homemade pizza crust is a great way to help participants become comfortable with baking breads that contain yeast. With a little bit of knowledge about the types of yeast to use, how yeast works, and how to knead, participants will be well on their way to making yeast breads, including pizza crust.

There are basically two forms of yeast; regular active dry yeast and rapid rise dry yeast. These two types of yeast can be used interchangeably in recipes. The advantage of rapid rise yeast is that it only takes half the time to rise, and it generally only needs one rising. A disadvantage of using a rapid rise yeast is flavor and texture are sacrificed because the yeast does not have time to develop its own flavor. So, while regular yeast will take longer, it will be more flavorful than the rapid rise yeast.

Yeast is a living organism, but when it is stored as dry yeast it is in a dormant state. When using yeast, it is vital to add three things to its environment to activate it: warmth, moisture, and food (which is generally a sugar). In order to accomplish this, some recipes will have you proof the yeast first. This is just a way to test the yeast to ensure it is still alive. For this process, dissolve the yeast in warm water and then add sugar or flour. In the next 5-10 minutes, if the yeast is still alive it should become foamy and bubbly. Since dry yeast is so reliable these days, many recipes just have you add the yeast straight into the mixture without proofing it first. So, if the recipe does not have you proof the yeast first but you are unsure if the yeast is still alive, you can test it by proofing a sample of the yeast before you put it in the recipe.

After all the crust ingredients are added together, the next step is to knead the mixture so that it will form a dough. Kneading has three steps. First, put the ball of dough onto a lightly floured surface and press into it with the heel of your hand. Then, fold the dough over onto itself. Last, you want to turn the dough a quarter turn and then start the process again; press, fold, turn. To see how this is done, YouTube videos are available that demonstrate the process! There is also the option of using an electric mixer with a dough hook.

The kneading will incorporate pockets of air into the dough, and will help to develop gluten or elasticity. The length of time the dough is kneaded will determine the texture of the final product. The longer the dough is kneaded, the smaller and more numerous the air pockets become, which will result in a finer texture. If it is not kneaded for very long, the air pockets will be big and the bread will have a coarse texture. When the dough appears smooth and satiny and the indentation of your finger pressing into the dough stays, you will know that the dough is ready for the next step in the recipe.

There are just a few simple tips to help make your pizza a meal to remember

1. Cook in a very hot oven that is preheated all the way.
2. Before shaping the dough, make sure it is at room temperature.
3. If the dough springs back while you are trying to shape it, let it rest for 15 minutes before trying again.
4. Lightly brush the outside edge of crust with olive oil to help it become golden brown in color.



CREATE A QUICK BREAD



Packaged muffins or sweet breads at the grocery store are often loaded with added sugar, saturated fat, and often even trans fats. Making quick breads or muffins at home is a good way to stretch your food dollar and make a much healthier choice. Add whole grains to bread to give an extra nutritional punch.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Large and small mixing bowls
- Mixing spoons and cups
- Bread pan
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 ADD ACID TO MILK

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
 - Other options: $\frac{3}{4}$ c. buttermilk or $\frac{3}{4}$ plain low-fat yogurt

2 EGG OR EGG SUBSTITUTE

- Discuss options.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.

3 FLAVOR

- Discuss options—most common and not-so common.
- Choose spices/herbs according to other ingredients.

4 DRY INGREDIENTS

- Discuss whole versus refined grains .

5 EXTRAS

- Consider end product and how you want it to taste and what it will be served with.
- Discuss adding fruits and vegetables to a quick bread.
 - Fruits and vegetables are naturally rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals.
- Watch out for hidden fats.
 - Discuss how to substitute some oil for applesauce or other fruit puree.

Additional Help to Create a Quick Bread

Baking Skills

Baking is a little bit like a science project going on in the kitchen with all kinds of interesting chemical reactions taking place. Most baked goods are nothing more than flour, sugar, fat (or fat substitute), eggs (or egg substitute), a moistener like milk or water, and leavenings like baking soda, baking powder, or yeast. But just think about the endless possibilities you can create with these few ingredients! The more you understand the chemical reactions that take place with these ingredients when you subject them to heat and the more prepared you are, the better at baking you will be.

Flour has a protein called gluten that gives structure and strength to the baked goods. The more you stir or mix the flour with other ingredients, the more you develop the gluten. When would you want to do more mixing to develop the gluten and when would you want to do less?

- More—breads
- Less—muffins, cakes, pie crust, cookies

Note: *Whole-wheat flour contains the bran from the whole kernel of wheat. This is important for health as it provides valuable fiber. However, the bran also acts like micro razor blades and when baking bread, if kneaded too much, those little razor blades will cut the gluten strands you worked so hard to develop. It is not as big of a problem for quick breads and cookies that require little stirring.*

Sugar gives sweetness and flavor, tenderness, moisture, and color (think of a browned crust).

Fats like butter or oil are tenderizers. They also give flavor. Fat replacers do tenderize but do not act exactly like fats so the texture of the final product will be somewhat different. Note: Why would you want to replace the fat in baked goods? If a recipe calls for $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of oil, you are adding an extra 400 calories to the final product! Little changes end up making big differences.

Liquids add moisture and are needed to develop the gluten in the flour. The more liquid, the more the gluten develops and the tougher the product; the less liquid, the less gluten and the more tender the product.

Leavenings like baking soda, baking powder, and yeast give structure, shape, and texture to baked goods.

Eggs have many different roles in baking. Like flour, they provide structure; like sugar, they provide moisture; like fat, they act as tenderizers; like liquids, they give moisture; like leavenings, they give structure, texture and shape.

Steps to successful baking

Read through the recipe thoroughly. Be sure you have the time, ingredients, and utensils you will need. Make sure you understand the terms and techniques required to complete the recipe and the order of procedures.

After reading through the recipe, gather all ingredients and equipment. For best results, use the pan size the recipe specifies. Before preheating the oven, make sure the racks are in the right place for the pans and recipe. It is usually preferable to place the item in the center of the oven to allow even distribution of heat. Preheat the oven as the recipe directs. Allow 10 minutes for your oven to reach the temperature specified.

Measure the ingredients accurately and use the correct measuring tools.

Use standard dry measuring cups for dry ingredients such as flour, sugar, cocoa, brown sugar, cornmeal, etc., that allow you to measure to the rim of the cup. Use standard spoons for amounts less than $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (4 tablespoons). Remember to avoid measuring over the mixing bowl so that excess ingredients do not spill into the other ingredients.

- **Flour:** stir flour in the storage container or bag. Using a large spoon, lightly spoon the flour into a measuring cup. Pile it higher than the top of the cup. Do not shake or tap the cup. Do not pack the flour in. Holding the cup over the flour container, level off the top using a straight edge of a knife or spatula.
- **Sugar:** Spoon the sugar into a dry measuring cup higher than the top of the cup. Holding the cup over the sugar container, level off the top using the straight edge of a knife or spatula.
- **Powdered sugar:** Sift the powdered sugar to break up small lumps. Spoon it into the dry measuring cup. Holding the cup over the powdered sugar container, level it off with the straight edge of a knife or spatula.
- **Baking powder or baking soda:** Stir it lightly in the storage container before measuring. Using the measuring spoon, lightly scoop out of container. Use the straight edge of a knife or spatula to level it off even with the top of the measuring spoon.
- **Brown sugar:** Break up any lumps by squeezing or rolling. Spoon it into a dry measuring cup. Pack it down firmly with the back of a spoon so it keeps the shape of the cup when turned over. Level with the straight edge of a knife or spatula.
- **Butter or margarine:** Cut it with a knife using the measurement marks on the wrapper as a guide. Or pack it firmly into a dry measuring cup with a rubber spatula, following recipe recommendations for temperature (example- softened or room temperature). Level the top with the straight edge of a knife or spatula. Remove it from the cup with a rubber spatula.
- **Semi-liquids:** Ingredients like sour cream, peanut butter, and yogurt are measured using dry measuring cups because they are too thick to be accurately measured in the liquid cups. Level them off with the straight edge of a knife or spatula.

Use a standard liquid measuring cup for liquids such as water, oil, milk, honey, or corn syrup. Liquid measuring cups are transparent and have extra space at the top to allow the liquid to be measured.

- **Liquid extracts and juice:** Pour the amount needed into the appropriate measuring spoon.
- **Liquids:** Place the liquid measuring cup on a flat counter or table. Fill to the mark for the amount of liquid needed. Bend down and look at eye level to check that the top of the liquid is at the mark for the amount needed. Looking down on the measuring cup does not give an accurate reading—you will end up with less liquid the recipe calls for.

Finish each step of the recipe and double check to make sure nothing was omitted.

Place pans in the oven so they do not touch each other or the oven sides. Do not place pans on racks directly below or above another pan. Do not open the oven door to check your product during baking. Use the oven light and window to see how things are going. Hint: You lose about 25° of heat every time you open the oven door. Keep the oven window clean so you can see what's happening without having to open the door. When you open the door you could cause some items, such as cakes, to fall or sink in the middle.

Set out cooling racks to cool the pans and product when it is ready to come out of the oven. Clean up the kitchen while the product bakes.

When the product is finished baking, remove the pan(s) carefully from the oven using oven mitts or hot pads. Follow the recipe directions for cooling before removing the product from the pans.



CREATE A SALAD



Salads purchased from restaurants are often expensive and surprisingly high in calories and sodium. Making a salad at home is a great way to eat healthier while saving money. Making your own salad dressing can also reduce the amount of sodium and even added sugar in your diet.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing spoons
- Salad bowl
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

Tip for instructor: Engage participants throughout the demonstration by asking them which ingredients they could substitute in the dish, what flavors they would try, what questions they have.

1 BASE

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
 - Greens
 - Whole grain pasta
 - Whole grains (i.e., quinoa, barley, etc.)
 - Potatoes
 - Whole grain bread

2 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant-based.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information on food safety.

3 VEGETABLES

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
- Veggies will give the salad more volume, fiber, and nutrients, but not additional calories.
- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up veggies.

Tip for instructor: Share a tip with participants to cut up extra vegetables when preparing salads at home. The extra vegetables will be ready to use for meals or snacks later in the week.

4 FLAVORS

- Onion and garlic can be cooked or raw.
- Choose spices/herbs/cheese according to other ingredients.
 - See Spice It Up Handout for combination ideas.

5 DRESSING

- Homemade dressing—less fat, sodium, preservatives, cost (pennies versus dollars).
 - Making dressing at home can cost pennies, versus the few dollars you would spend on a bottle at the store.

6 TOPPINGS

- Discuss options - most common and not so common
 - Watch out for added fats
-

Additional Help to Create a Salad

Easy Homemade Dressings

When loaded with lots of fresh ingredients such as veggies, beans, and whole grains, a salad can be one of the healthiest dishes you can make...until you pour a large amount of creamy dressing on top! Many premade dressings are packed with calories, saturated fat, sodium, and even sugar. Making your own dressing at home with heart healthy oils and using them in moderation are great ways to keep your salads a healthy choice. They are also easy to make, and fit in a frugal budget.

Poppy Seed Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoons lemon zest
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds

Whisk all ingredients together. Pour on a salad and enjoy!

Garlic Vinaigrette

- ½ cup rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk all ingredients together. May also blend all ingredients in blender to pulverize garlic and produce a smoother consistency. For a creamy dressing, try fat-free yogurt or tofu.

Homemade Healthy Ranch Dressing

- 1 (15 ounces) carton silken tofu
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2-3 tablespoons fresh parsley or 1-2 teaspoons dried
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon dill (optional)

Blend all ingredients together until creamy. Adjust spices and seasonings to taste. Chill.

Using Fresh Herbs

Fresh herbs in a fresh salad can make all the difference in taste! Although buying them at the grocery store can be cost prohibitive, there are a few ways to get them without paying a premium.

Grow your own. Herbs are easy to grow and can even be grown in the winter if you put the pot in the house near a sunny window.

- Get them from a farmer's market.
- Get them from a neighbor's garden.

When you use fresh herbs in place of dried herbs, remember a few things.

First, when a recipe calls for 1-2 teaspoons of dried herbs, you will need to use 2-4 tablespoons of fresh herbs. Second, when using fresh herbs in cooking, add them toward the end of the cooking time instead of at the beginning, as they lose their potency if cooked too long. Dried herbs can be added at the beginning of the cooking process.



CREATE A SANDWICH/WRAP

Wraps and sandwiches

are a great way to incorporate more whole grains and vegetables in your day. Making wraps and sandwiches at home, rather than buying them at restaurants will also save you money. They are often associated with lunch, but they make quick, easy, and healthy breakfasts and dinners as well.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Mixing cups and spoons
- Other

Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 DISCUSS IMPORTANCE OF PREPPING ALL INGREDIENTS BEFORE YOU START.

2 WRAP/BREAD

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
- Remind participants that whole grain breads and wraps often don't cost more than refined ones!

Tip for instructor: This is a great place to suggest ideas about how to increase whole grains in your diet.

3 PREPARE PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant based.
- Discuss cutting all foods about the same size for even cooking times.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See back of curriculum for more information about food safety.

4 FILLING

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
- Veggies will give the dish more volume and nutrients, but will not add many extra calories.
- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up veggies.
 - See back of curriculum for more information about knife skills.

5 SPREAD

- Discuss options—avocado, mustard, seasoned Greek yogurt, ketchup, low-fat mayonnaise, ranch dressing, Italian dressing, hummus, bean dip, etc.
- Discuss identifying hidden fats and healthier options.



CREATE A SKILLET MEAL



A skillet meal is a good example of how eating according to the MyPlate guidelines doesn't always have to look exactly like MyPlate with all of the food groups separated. Often, we eat a dish that combines many food groups into one dish.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Saucepan
- Skillet with lid
- Other

Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant based.
- Discuss food safety-when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information about food safety.

2 FLAVORS

- Onion and garlic-sautéed in a small amount of oil, water, or broth.
- Choose spices/herbs according to other ingredients.
 - See Spice It Up handout for combinations.

3 VEGETABLES

- Demonstrate knife skills as you cut up the vegetables and fruit.
 - See additional resources for more information about knife skills.
- Adding fruits and vegetables is a great way to add more volume, vitamins, and minerals to your skillet meal without adding a lot of extra calories.
- Discuss different vegetables (or fruits) you can use in a skillet meal.
 - Give common and not-so-common ideas.
 - A skillet meal is a great way to easily increase fruit and vegetable intake. Fresh, frozen, or canned items work great in this type of dish.

Tip for instructor: Get participants involved by asking for examples of fruits and vegetables to add to the dish

4 LIQUID *Optional depending on whether starch is precooked.*

- Necessary to cook starch such as uncooked rice or raw potatoes.
- Gives added flavor if something other than water is used.
 - Examples: Low-sodium broth, 100% fruit juice.

5 SAUCE *Optional*

- Make a sauce that doesn't come from a can.
 - Less fat, sodium, and cost (can be pennies versus dollars).
 - Sauce options:
 - Sauce made from slurry—add flour or cornstarch to water, no fat/additional calories needed.
 - Soup or Sauce (SOS) Mix, define, and explain; demo if time permits and is appropriate for the skillet recipe demonstration.

6 STARCH

- Discussion starter, “What type of starch would you typically serve with a skillet meal? Is there any way you could make the meal (or recipe) a little healthier?”
- Discuss how the starch in a skillet meal is usually cooked at the same time as other ingredients. However, sometimes it may be more convenient to cook starch separately (i.e., leftover rice, etc.). If using already-cooked starches, reduce the amount of liquid used.

Tip for instructor: Cooking starches is a good example of how to cook once, eat twice. It is easy to cook twice as much rice as the recipe needs and put the extra in the freezer to use at a later date. You can also freeze rice in 1-cup portions for easy use.

7 TOPPING

- Discuss a variety of options.
 - Think of options to increase the number of food groups represented in the skillet.

Additional Help to Create a Skillet Meal

Making a Healthy Homemade Sauce or Gravy

A skillet meal will often have some type of sauce to help bind the ingredients together and give the dish a unified flavor. The fastest and easiest thing to do is open a can of cream-of-whatever soup and dump that into the dish, but there are other options that are less expensive and much healthier.

One option is to make a homemade sauce or gravy. Sauces and gravies are typically based on a technique called making a roux (pronounced “roo”), which simply means cooking a fat (like butter) and flour together and then adding liquid, like milk or broth. This method is easy, cheap, and tastes fabulous. The problem is you can add LOTS of fat and calories to the entire dish, making your end product less healthy than if you had used the canned alternative.

The healthier option is to make a slurry. What is a slurry, you ask? It is a mixture of a thickener (usually flour or cornstarch) and a liquid (such as milk or broth). It bypasses the saturated fat, thus the added calories, etc., that come with a roux. Most of the time, you do not miss the fat. To make a slurry, combine either cornstarch or flour to COLD water and mix it up well. Then stir the mixture into a hot liquid such as a broth. Cook and stir until the mixture thickens. The cornstarch and flour are interchangeable according to your personal preference. The finished gravy made with cornstarch is clearer and more glaze-like than the gravy made with flour. A sauce made with cornstarch does very well in dishes with an Asian flavor and a sauce made with flour is great in a dish that contains potatoes. They are interchangeable and it really is a matter of personal preference.

It is advisable that you experiment with making cornstarch and flour slurries before teaching this lesson so that you are experienced with the topic and can comfortably teach and demonstrate the information. See the recipes for slurries in the Create a Skillet Meal handout.

Choosing a Good Skillet

One of the most crucial pans you can own is a skillet. It is one of the most versatile pieces of equipment in your kitchen. Because the skillet is so versatile and you will use it so much, it is wise to buy the best one you can afford. A good pan will last a life time, if you take care of it.

What to look for when buying a skillet

- Size 8-12 inches with a lid
- Material options:
 - **Stainless steel**—best all-around choice as it is durable, easy to clean, and nonreactive to acidic foods. Look for a heavy pan, preferably with a copper or aluminum bottom for even heating and one that can be used in the oven.
 - **Cast iron**—great pan that doesn't cost too much. Can be heavy to lift, requires some care to keep it seasoned, but terrific for non-stick cooking and for using in the oven as well as the stove-top. Can be reactive to acidic foods if not well seasoned (example: dish with tomatoes may have slight metallic taste and have a darker color).
 - **Teflon**—great for non-stick cooking, especially for eggs, but you must use care not to scratch the surface. Not desirable for high heat cooking. Note: There is some controversy about Teflon being a carcinogen. At this time, Create Better Health Utah does not take a stand on the use of Teflon. If the question comes up, make sure you explain that using Teflon is a personal choice and encourage participants to research the matter so they can make their own informed decision.
 - **Electric skillet**—a skillet or frying pan that is heated by plugging it into an outlet instead of being placed on the stovetop. It is convenient because it can free up space on the stove and in the oven because the entire dish can be prepared and cooked in one pot with more control over temperature than with a skillet on the stove. An electric skillet is really nice to have, but if you can only have one, choose a regular skillet first.

A good skillet is an investment.

- Here are some things to know that will ensure your skillet will last a long time.
 - Heat the pan slowly to the desired temperature instead of placing a cold pan on high heat.
 - Put room temperature foods into the heated pan rather than cold ones straight from the fridge.
 - Wooden spoons and spatulas are best for stirring. Metal spoons will definitely scratch non-stick coatings but can also scratch metal pans.
 - After using your skillet, always let it cool before attempting to clean. DO NOT pour cold water into a skillet while it is hot; a sudden change in temperature may cause the metal to warp.
 - Wash pans in hot soapy water instead of in the dishwasher. Use regular dish soap and a non-abrasive scrubber. When you have something really stuck to the pan, let it soak for a while with a little soap added to the water. It's always easier to clean skillets, dishes, and kitchens right after you eat instead of waiting until food is dried and caked on.
 - To season a cast iron skillet, use a combination of fat and heat. First, wash and dry the pan. Set the oven to 350°F. Heat the pan on the stove over low heat. With a paper towel, spread about 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil all over the inside of the pan. Don't leave any excess oil in the pan. Place the warm pan in the oven and "bake" for 1 hour. Turn the oven off and leave the pan in until it is cool. To keep it seasoned, make sure to dry it thoroughly after each use. Every once in a while, place the dry pan on the stove, heat it on low, add a little oil with a paper towel, and let it sit on low heat for a few minutes. Wipe out any excess oil, cool, and store. Eventually the pan will darken, become very smooth on the inside, and will be perfectly non-stick.

CREATE A SMOOTHIE



Smoothies made at home

are a good way to incorporate many of the MyPlate food groups. Smoothies made with low-fat dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and protein make a nourishing, quick, and inexpensive breakfast or snack.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Blender or food processor
- Other

Steps

Demo each step as time permits

Tip for instructor: If available, bring more than one blender to the class and let individuals or small groups choose their own ingredient combination.

1 PRODUCE

- Discuss options—what participants usually use, what better choices could they make?
- Discuss fresh, frozen, and canned alternatives.
- Discuss how fruits and veggies are naturally rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, phytochemicals, and fiber.
 - Unlike fruit juice, smoothies that use the entire fruit are a great source of fiber which will help you feel full longer.

Tip for instructor: While preparing the smoothie, ask participants to list a variety of fruits and vegetables that would be taste good together.

2 LIQUID

- Discuss options—water, juice, milk, milk alternative, yogurt, etc.

Tip for instructor: Encourage participants to use water as a base to decrease the cost and sugar in their smoothie.

3 EXTRAS

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
 - Example: seeds could add fiber; nuts can add protein.



CREATE A SOUP



Creating your own soup

at home is better for your wallet and your heart. Many soups contain high amounts of sodium and are not very filling. By making your own soup, you can cut the sodium and add a variety of whole grains, vegetables, and lean proteins.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Mixing cups
- Spoons
- Soup Pot
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 FAT

- Discuss amount to use—what participants usually use, and what better choices they could make.
- Discuss sautéing in water or broth as a desirable alternative to using fat.

2 ONION

- Cooking onion before adding other ingredients provides the best flavor.

3 VEGETABLES

- Discuss options—most common and not so common.
- Discuss adding a variety of vegetables to any soup.
 - Fresh, frozen, or even canned.
 - Vegetables will add more volume, vitamins, and minerals to your soup without adding a lot of extra calories.
- Get participants engaged by asking them which vegetables they could add to the dish.

4 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant-based.
 - Encourage lean proteins to reinforce MyPlate lesson.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information on food safety.

5 STARCH

- Discuss options—what do participants usually use, what better choices they could make (i.e., replacing a refined grain with a whole grain).

6 BROTH/BASE

- Discuss clear broth versus cream.
 - Discuss/show how to make clear broth for a fraction of the cost.
 - Discuss/show how to make a healthy cream base.
 - Define and explain SOS mix.
 - Demo if time permits.

7 SEASONING

- Choose spices and herbs according to other ingredients.
- See Spice It Up handout for combination ideas.

Additional Help to Create a Soup

Sautéing Onion

Soup will have a richer flavor if you sauté the onion before adding the other ingredients. You may also add celery and garlic during this first step. Note that this method teaches using water or broth to sauté instead of fat (butter, oil, etc.). This is a technique that helps control calories without sacrificing taste.

Soup Broth

Soups usually have a water/broth base or a cream base. Broth base is usually the healthier option since it does not have the added fats that make cream-based soups so...creamy. However, there are ways to get that creamy feel without the added fats.

Broth or water-based options

- Pre-made vegetable, chicken, or beef broth in cans or cartons; easy to use and convenient, but they may be expensive and full of added sodium. Always look for low sodium or no-salt added broth. Or, dilute the broth with water to reduce sodium content.
- Water or tomato juice with vegetable, chicken, or beef bouillon added in; bouillon is easy to use, easy to store, and usually more economical than pre-made broth. Watch the sodium content.
- Homemade broth: economical and easy to make.
 - **To make 2 quarts of vegetable broth:** In a large pot, put any/all of the following according to what you have on hand: 1 onion, 2 carrots, 2 celery stalks, 3 cloves of garlic, 1 small potato, 1 medium tomato, 5-6 mushrooms, 2 bay leaves, sprig of parsley, salt, pepper, and 2 quarts of water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 30 minutes to an hour. Strain liquid, pressing down on veggies to get all the flavor out of them. Don't worry about peeling the carrots or potato. The skins add flavor. The onion, carrots, celery, and garlic are most critical for best flavor. *Note: if you do not want to use new, fresh vegetables for your broth you can keep a bag in your refrigerator to put your vegetable peels, ends, and pieces that are leftover from other preparations. Once you have enough odds and ends you can make your broth. This is a great way to reduce food waste and the cost of your broth.
 - Vegetables NOT to add to broth: eggplant, bell peppers, broccoli, cabbage, greens, etc. Although all of these are great to make soup, they are not preferred to make broth. They will either make the broth taste bitter or impart a strong taste you may not want in your final product.
 - **To make 2 quarts of chicken broth:** In a large pot, put a whole or cut-up chicken, onion, carrots, celery, and garlic. Add 2 quarts of water, bring to boil, reduce heat, and cook until chicken is tender and cooked through, about 30-45 minutes. Remove chicken, strain broth pressing down on veggies to get all their flavor. Use cooked chicken in soups, casseroles, sandwiches, etc.
- The broth can be stored in the fridge for a few days or frozen for a few months.

Cream-based options

- The cream base is usually made by cooking flour and fat together and then adding cream or milk. Although cream based soups are delicious, they can contribute lots of calories and fat, making the soup a less healthy meal option.
- There are several ways you can get the creamy texture without sacrificing good nutrition.
- Start with a broth base and make a slurry by combining 2 tablespoons flour with 4 tablespoons cold water and then slowly adding the mixture to the hot broth or soup. This will thicken the soup a bit without the addition of fat.
- In a blender or with an immersion blender, puree part or all of the soup once all the ingredients have become soft. This works especially well with a vegetable or bean soup that has no meat. If the soup contains meat that you don't want blended, you can mash the vegetables with a vegetable masher instead of blending.
- Add a little fat-free or low-fat milk to soup in addition to the slurry and/or blending.
- Use SOS mix (see additional resources for more information).



CREATE A STIR FRY



A stir fry is a great way to incorporate many of the food groups from MyPlate into a single dish. It is also a great place to increase our intake of a variety of vegetables.

EQUIPMENT

Show and explain equipment including

- Sharp knife
- Vegetable peeler
- Vegetable grater
- Large mixing bowl
- Mixing cups and spoons
- Large skillet or wok
- Other



Steps

Demo each step as time permits

1 DISCUSS IMPORTANCE OF PREPPING ALL INGREDIENTS BEFORE YOU START

2 WARM SKILLET OVER LOW HEAT

- Extreme and fast temperature changes are hard on pans.

3 PROTEIN

- Discuss options—both meat and plant based.
- Discuss cutting all foods about the same size for even cooking times.
- Discuss food safety—when to worry about cross contamination, proper hygiene, acceptable temperatures, and safe storage.
 - See lesson resources for more information about food safety.

4 MARINADE

- Discuss how it adds flavor.
- Discuss how making your own reduces the sodium content of the dish and can even save a lot of money.
- Discuss cross contamination and meat. Don't reuse a meat marinade—throw it away!

5 VEGETABLES

- Demonstrate skills as you cut up vegetables.
- Discuss different vegetables (or fruits) you could use in the stir fry.
 - Ask participants to name different vegetables (or even fruits) they like to include in stir fries.

6 SAUCES/GLAZE

- Sauce adds flavor.
- Glaze provides more flavor, gives texture, and holds stir fry together.

7 COOK ON MEDIUM-HIGH HEAT IN BATCHES TO KEEP PAN HOT

Tip for instructor: Never put a lid on the pan or overcrowd the pan when making a stir fry. Both will cause your vegetables to steam and become mushy and brown.

Additional Help to Create a Stir Fry

How to make a healthy stir fry

- You don't need a lot of oil to make a delicious stir-fry. While many oils are healthy in moderation, using too much in your stir fry can result in mushy vegetables add a lot of calories. If you are looking to further reduce your calorie intake, you can also stir fry your vegetables and protein in water.
- Begin by having all of your recipe ingredients pre-chopped and ready to go because you will move quite quickly once you start cooking.
- Slowly warm a large skillet or wok over low heat. Heating a cold pan over high heat may warp the metal in the pan. Once the veggies and protein are ready and pan is heated a little, turn the heat to medium high. Add one to two tablespoons of heart healthy oil. To test the temperature of the oil, drop a small piece of your protein into the oil. If it begins to sizzle, you can add the rest and begin to stir fry. Stir fry until well browned and cooked through, about 2-3 minutes. Transfer to a clean bowl.
 - If you want to reduce the calorie content of your stir fry further, you can use water in place of oil. Place 2 tablespoons of water into the pan. You don't want too much water; otherwise you are steaming the food instead of frying it. Once the water is hot and begins to bubble, add half of the protein. Stir fry until well browned and cooked through, about 2-3 minutes.
- Sprinkle a little more oil or water in your pan. Add the onion and stir fry until it is slightly browned but still crisp, about 1 minute. Add garlic and ginger; stir. Add half of the vegetables and stir a few minutes, then add remaining vegetables. One of the biggest mistakes people make with stir fries is cooking the veggies too long. You want the protein to be thoroughly cooked but the vegetables to be tender-crisp.
- Return the protein to the pan and stir in the sauce until everything is well coated. Add the glaze and stir until the sauces in the pan are glossy.

Cooking with Tofu

If you have never cooked with tofu, it can seem a little intimidating. What exactly do you do with that tasteless, off-white blob anyway? Be prepared to be amazed. Tofu can be a fun, creative, easy, cheap, fast, and yummy way to add variety and protein to a meal! Its mild taste is a bonus because it goes with everything and soaks up the flavor of the dish.

Description

- There are basically two kinds of tofu: silken and regular. They are both made from soybeans, but are processed a little differently. They are not really interchangeable, but recipes almost always say if silken tofu is needed. Both types are usually pasteurized and are safe to eat without cooking.
- Silken tofu is the Japanese style of tofu. It has a soft, smooth, almost pudding-like consistency compared to regular tofu and is perfect for smoothies, salad dressings, desserts, and sauces where you want a creamy texture AND where you do not need to cook the recipe. You can find soft, medium firm, and extra firm silken tofu. It falls apart easily so it must be handled with care if you are not planning to blend or crumble it. It is often found in the produce or refrigerator section of the grocery store, but you can sometimes find it in aseptic containers, meaning that tofu in an aseptic container does not need refrigeration until you open the package. It will last unopened on the pantry shelf for up to a year. Once opened, keep it covered in water and store it in the fridge for up to a week, changing the water every few days.
- Regular tofu is the Chinese style of tofu. It is usually found in the produce or refrigerator section of the grocery store in plastic containers, covered in water. It also comes in soft, medium, firm, and extra firm consistencies.

Pressing

- Regular (Chinese style) tofu contains quite a bit of water and works best when excess water is removed. This is known as pressing the tofu. Remove it from the package, wrap in paper towels, and place it between two dinner plates for 30 minutes or so. The pressure from the top plate will force water from the tofu. It is also helpful to add a little extra weight to the top plate by adding a book or a few cans of veggies. Don't add so much weight that you cause the tofu to fall apart.

Marinating

- One of the best things about tofu is that the taste is very mild and it soaks up the flavors of the other ingredients in the dish, especially marinades. The simplest marinade is soy sauce and water but don't be afraid to use other things like vinegar, citrus juice, vegetable stock, and spices. Cut the tofu in cubes so you have more surface area for the marinade to soak into. Let it marinate for at least 15 minutes. Never use oil in the marinade. Tofu is water based and it will repel a marinade made with oil so that none of the flavor will penetrate.

Uses

- **Diced/cubed** tofu is great for salads and soups. It is perfect for soaking up the flavor in marinades. Dice it small for soup and larger for salads.
- **Crumbled** tofu is good in casseroles and in dishes where it substitutes for scrambled eggs. Many people enjoy crumbled tofu in lettuce wraps.
- **Sliced** tofu is great on the grill or under the broiler. Grill 6-7 minutes per side for a crispy coating.
- **In stir fries**, choose regular (not silken) firm or extra firm and cube before marinating. Coat with a little cornstarch to get a great crispy coating.
- **In baked dishes**, dice into small pieces, marinate, and bake on a low temperature oven (250°F) or roast in a hot oven (400°F) so that it dries out and becomes somewhat chewy on the inside and crunchy on the outside. Then add to salads, casseroles, burritos, etc.
- **Freeze it**—when it thaws, remove as much water as you can. Frozen tofu has a chewier texture than fresh.



LESSON RESOURCES

The Create Better Health Curriculum is designed to get participants in the kitchen where they can learn basic cooking skills, have the opportunities to discuss the concepts, and practice new habits that will help take control of their own nutrition and health. Create Better Health also emphasizes the importance of being physically active and is designed to help participants add physical activity into their busy days.

You will be seen as the expert and a valuable resource to your participants on all activities taught in the lessons. This section provides the information you will need to be that expert.

Please study this section and become familiar with each concept so you can have meaningful discussions about the healthy habits during each lesson you teach. Remember, you do not need to cover everything included in this section in each class. Become so familiar with the subject matter that you are comfortable incorporating it into your lessons in natural conversation.

- 94** Food Safety
- 96** Using a Chef's Knife
- 99** Essentials of a Well-Stocked Pantry and Kitchen
- 101** Grocery Shopping
- 103** Nutrition Facts Label
- 104** Meal Planning
- 106** Soup or Sauce (SOS) Mix
- 107** Reducing Sodium in the Diet
- 108** Nutrients

Any additional information needed about the food groups found in the curriculum can be accessed at:

myplate.gov



Food Safety

The preparation and handling of food is part of everyday life. This is why it is so important to understand a few simple concepts related to food safety in order to avoid some potentially serious consequences. The Centers for Disease Control estimates 48 million people in the United States become ill and 3,000 even die from harmful pathogens in food each year.

The four most common foodborne illnesses are caused by Norovirus, Salmonella, Clostridium perfringens, and Campylobacter. Symptoms of these illnesses can seem a lot like the flu. The most common symptoms of a foodborne illness are diarrhea and/or vomiting while the flu usually comes with diarrhea and vomiting along with a fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, and runny nose. Some types of bacteria can cause even more serious symptoms. In severe cases of foodborne illness, E. coli can cause kidney failure; Salmonella can lead to arthritis and serious infections; and Listeria can cause meningitis and stillbirth.

Infants, children, pregnant women, and elderly have immature, compromised, or weakened immune systems and

are at the highest risk for contracting a foodborne illness. While these groups are at the highest risk, that does not mean that other groups cannot contract an illness from food. Care should always be taken when handling food because if it is handled properly, it will greatly decrease the likelihood of anyone getting sick. For example, the most common foodborne illness, Norovirus, is caused by a virus, and can only be prevented by practicing good personal hygiene. The other three most common foodborne illnesses are caused by bacteria. Salmonella and Campylobacter can be controlled by cooking foods to the proper temperature, but Clostridium perfringens can only be controlled by keeping hot foods hot and then quickly chilling leftovers.

Some simple knowledge of how and when bacteria grow, as well as simple ways to inhibit this growth, will help keep your family healthy and safe. As with any other living organism, bacteria grow best under certain conditions. One of the main goals of food safety is to control those conditions so that bacteria won't multiply and grow to harmful amounts. An easy way to remember these conditions is by the acronym **FATTOM**.

F	Bacteria need FOOD to grow, specifically proteins and carbohydrates. Foods that have lots of protein or carbohydrates are more likely to have harmful bacteria on them because the bacteria have something to eat. Some of these hazardous foods include: meat, fish, baked or boiled potatoes, cooked rice or beans, eggs, and milk products.
A	Bacteria grow best under slightly ACIDIC or neutral conditions. Foods that are very acidic do not promote bacterial growth. Examples of acidic foods include a lemon or something pickled. We don't have to worry as much about bacteria growing on these types of foods. However, the majority of the foods that we eat are in the middle or neutral range on the pH scale, which means bacteria like to grow on them.
T	The TEMPERATURE danger zone is very important to remember. Food should not be kept in the 40° - 140°F range for more than 2 hours.
T	The TIME food is left out is important to monitor. Bacteria can double every 20 minutes when left in the temperature danger zone. That is why it is so important to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. This makes it very important to cool foods down below 40°F very quickly.
O	Some bacteria need OXYGEN to grow and some do not. Sealing out oxygen can help to keep food fresh longer.
M	Most bacteria need MOISTURE to grow. This is why bacteria grow so well in high moisture foods, making them potentially hazardous.

While it is true that some foods are more likely to become contaminated and unsafe, this does not mean that only those foods can become unsafe. Any food can become contaminated with illness-causing bacteria if correct food safety practices are not used. The most common ways foods are handled unsafely are time-temperature abuse, cross-contamination, and poor personal hygiene. Luckily, by implementing a few simple food safety practices these three problems can be avoided.

Time-temperature abuse is when a food has been allowed to stay too long in temperatures that support the growth of bacteria. This allows the small harmless amounts of bacteria to grow to large harmful amounts. So, when cooking, cooling, or storing food it is vital not to leave the food in the danger zone (40°-140°F) for more than 2 hours. Simply storing food quickly after shopping, cooking or reheating it to the correct temperatures, and promptly cooling and storing leftovers will help your food stay much safer.

Cross-contamination is when harmful bacteria are transferred from one surface or food to another. This can happen simply by putting cooked hamburgers on the same plate that they were on before cooking them. Or even from just using the same knife and cutting board to first cut raw meat and then vegetables. To avoid this, surfaces should be sanitized by using bleach and water mixture or another sanitizing agent you can buy in the stores. The general rule of thumb is to use 1 capful of bleach to 1 gallon of room temperature water.

Poor personal hygiene can be something as simple as not washing your hands often enough, touching or scratching sores, cuts, or bruises and then touching food, or not keeping your hair pulled back out of the food. This is especially important if you are preparing food when you are sick.

Washing hands is an easy thing to do, but must be done properly and consistently in order to reap the benefits of safe food.

Proper hand-washing procedure:

- Wet hands with as hot of water as you can comfortably stand.
- Apply soap.
- Scrub tops and bottoms of hands and between fingers for 20 seconds (about as long as it takes to sing the alphabet song or “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”). Make sure to clean under fingernails and between fingers.

- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry with a single-use paper towel or a clean cloth.

There are four food safety principles that can also help to control the growth of bacteria. These are called the Fight BAC! Principles: clean, separate, cook, and chill.

- You should clean your hands, counter tops, cutting boards, dishes, and any other surfaces that food contacts often.
- Separate ready-to-eat and raw foods to prevent cross contamination. Some ways to do this are to place raw meat at the bottom of the fridge so the juices don't drip onto other foods; do not use marinade as a topping unless it has been boiled first; and use separate cutting boards for fresh produce and raw meat.
- Cook foods to the proper temperature in order to kill bacteria.
- Chill food promptly and properly. Package and store leftovers when the meal is over, use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure the temperature is below 40°F. When thawing food, do not thaw it on the counter. Instead, thaw it in the fridge, under cold running water, or in the microwave just before you use it.

All of these concepts and food safety practices may seem a little daunting at first, but with a little practice, the tasks will become second nature. Anyone who eats or comes in contact with your food will be grateful for the effort that was taken to keep the food safe.

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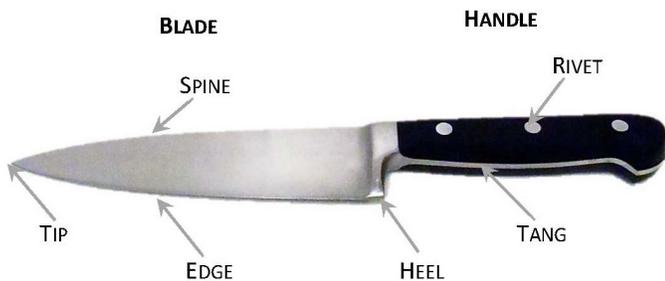
Using a Chef's Knife

A chef's knife is by far the most valuable tool in the kitchen. When you learn to use one, it is the knife you will use 99% of the time. You will use this knife for general purpose chopping, slicing, and dicing. A good chef's knife can be pricey, but you only need one good quality chef's knife. If you take good care of it, it will last a lifetime. Always remember to cut on a cutting board on a stable surface.

Note: Another good knife to have is a paring knife. This knife is used to trim vegetables and fruits and usually has a blade that is 2 to 4 inches long.

What to look for in a good chef's knife

- Blade that is from 6 inches to 12 inches long (8" works well for most women, men with bigger hands may prefer the 10" or 12" knife).
- Blade made of a high-carbon stainless steel. This metal can be honed to an extremely sharp edge and does not rust, corrode, or discolor.
- Full tang. That means the metal runs the full length of the handle. It is one piece of forged steel from tip to end. This gives the knife heft and durability.
- Balance. You should be able to lay the knife flat on your finger and balance it between the handle and the blade. This feature makes working with the knife much easier because cuts will be smooth and even.



There are several basic ways to hold a chef's knife, and just like signing your name, everyone finds the fit that suits them best.

Two basic grips

Grip #1: Grip handle with all four fingers and hold thumb gently but firmly against handle on opposite side.



Grip #2: Grip the handle with three fingers, rest the index finger flat against the blade on one side, and hold the thumb on the opposite side of the blade to give additional stability and control.



As you practice holding and using your knife, you will find the grip or grips that are most comfortable for you and that give you the most control.

What do you do with the other hand?

- Hold the item being cut.
- Guide the knife.
- Protect the hand from cuts (claw hold).

There are only three simple cuts a home cook really needs to know—the draw, the slice, and the chop. Once you master these, you will be able to handle any cut.

The draw

- Especially good for cutting strips.
- Only uses the tip of the blade. It is easiest to do this with a paring knife.
- Put index finger on top of blade to help guide and control your movements.
- Put tip of knife on cutting board away from you, then draw tip of knife through the food toward you.



The slice

- Uses the middle portion of the blade.
- Loose grip on handle.
- Place tip on board and push tip away from you as you push down and away. The heel of the knife falls down to make the cut.
- The free hand grips the ingredients to be cut. Curl the hand into a claw with the thumb and pinky tucked behind the other three fingers. This protects the fingers from cuts.



The chop

- Uses the entire blade.
- Place tip of knife on board.
- With other hand, place four fingers on top of knife.
- Gently push knife down and away but keep tip on cutting board the entire time.
- Cut in many semi-circular motions, keeping tip of knife on board and rotating handle.
- Flip knife over and scrape ingredients back to center, then continue chopping.



Using a paring knife

This knife is used to trim fruits and vegetables. You will have a much easier time removing the core from an apple with a good, sharp paring knife than with your big chef's knife.

Tip: Cut foods in uniform shapes to ensure even cooking and enhance the appearance of the final product.

Caring for your knife

- Clean in hot, soapy water and dry thoroughly between tasks and after you are through cooking to prevent cross contamination.
- Never put a good knife in the dishwasher. The edges could be damaged by jostling or extreme temperature changes.
- Never drop a knife in a sink of soapy water. The knife could become dented or nicked, and anyone reaching into the sink could be seriously cut.

Storing knives

- Protect the blades by storing your knife in a block made for knives or by keeping a sheath on the knife if stored in a drawer. A simple sheath can be made with an empty cereal box or folder. Make sure to put the edge of the knife facing the fold in the cardboard. Use 2 or 3 layers of tape at the end of the sheath to keep the knife tip from poking through.



Keeping knives sharp

- The surface you cut on makes a difference. A cutting board is an important partner to your knife. Hard wood, hard plastic, or rubber boards are preferred. Any of these can harbor harmful bacteria so care should be taken to clean and sanitize them with each use.
- Ceramic, glass, and tile are very hard on the knife's blade and should be avoided as cutting boards.
- Another tool important to a good, sharp knife is the steel. A steel is used for truing and maintaining the knife's edges between sharpening and immediately before sharpening with a stone. Using the steel to maintain the edges of your knife is called honing. Ideally, you will hone your knife each time you use it for repeated cuts. Only making one or two slices or cuts? Don't worry about it!
 - Honing: Place steel perpendicular to cutting board and hold knife at a 90° angle. Then angle the knife up half way and then half way again. Now you should be holding the knife at a 20° angle to the steel. With a loose grip on the knife, draw the knife down and toward you. Repeat this three or four times, then do the same thing on the other side of the blades three or four times.

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Essentials of a Well-Stocked Pantry and Kitchen

Did you ever go to the grocery store, load up your cart, spend \$200 or more, come home, put all the food away, and then realize you still have nothing to make for dinner? That could make anyone want to give up and go out for dinner. If you are watching your food dollars, dinner out is not the best option.

Research suggests that a family of four will spend about \$25 on a fast food meal. Many families eat dinner at fast food places at least twice a week, bringing the amount spent to \$50 in a week. What does that mean? If this family of four has a monthly food budget of \$400, they are spending \$200 of it on only eight dinners. With the remaining \$200, they still need to come up with another 30 breakfasts, 30 lunches, 22 dinners, and snacks! What about premade frozen dinners from the grocery store? It almost always cost more to buy pre-boxed or frozen meals at the grocery store instead of making them at home. For instance, a frozen dinner of Italian sausage and rigatoni would cost about \$3.25 per servings but only \$1 per servings if made from scratch. That is a savings of 67 percent! A frozen Chinese beef and broccoli dinner would cost about \$3.75 per person but only \$2.50 if you made it yourself, for a savings of 33 percent.

Whether you choose to eat out or buy your meals already made for you, you are paying for someone else to do the work. You are also giving them control of what goes into the food you are eating. It is almost certain that when you buy food that has been made for you, it will have more fat, sugar, and salt than what you could make at home. It will also have less fiber, vitamins, and other healthy nutrients. If it came from a restaurant, you can almost guarantee that the servings sizes are way too big. When you do the cooking, you get to be in charge!

Cooking from scratch is actually fun for many people. It produces feelings of satisfaction to create a meal that tastes good, is good for you, brings family and friends

together, and saves money. People who enjoy being in the kitchen make it a priority to have the basic equipment to get the job done right.

Organize and Equip Your Kitchen

A cook, like any other skilled worker, needs the right equipment. However, you don't have to have the latest, greatest kitchen gadgets to make a good meal. Many people have a kitchen full of appliances they don't use and that take up space. It takes less to stock a kitchen than you may think. A good knife and cutting board, some mixing bowls and mixing spoons, and few good pans are all you really need to create a good meal. As you spend more time in the kitchen you will realize what items and appliances you may want or need to make food preparation faster and easier.

It is okay to accumulate a little at a time. Don't feel like you have to do it all at once. You can start by purchasing one or two quality kitchen items each month. A really well stocked kitchen only needs the following items, and chances are, you already have many of them.

- Sharp knives (chef, paring, serrated)
- Cutting board
- Skillet with lid
- Large pot or roasting pan
- 2 sauce pans (one large, one small)
- 2 quart baking dishes (glass or metal, rectangular or square)
- Baking sheet
- Muffin tin
- Pie tin
- Loaf pan

- Mixing bowls (2-3 varying sizes)
- Whisk
- Ladle
- Vegetable masher
- Rubber scraper
- Wooden spoons
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Can opener
- Rolling pin
- Thermometer
- Basket steamer
- Cooling rack
- Plates, bowls, glasses, eating utensils
- Storage containers

If you are missing any items on this list, make it a goal to save up to get them. Having them will make cooking much easier. Many of these items can be purchased at discount or dollar stores, at garage sales, and second-hand stores. Buy the best you can afford so you don't have to replace broken equipment.

There are a few appliances that are not considered necessary, but do make cooking a little easier. These include:

- Toaster
- Blender
- Garlic press
- Hand held mixer
- Microwave
- Food processor
- Slow cooker/crock pot

Remember, all of these items are nice to have but certainly are not necessary, and you may find that you don't use them often enough to justify their expense or the space they take up. To be a successful cook, it is just as important to have the right cooking ingredients or foods in the pantry, cupboards and fridge as it is to have all the right equipment. Don't let this overwhelm you. Like collecting the right equipment, you stock the pantry one food item at a time. Stock your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer as your budget allows. You will be amazed at how quickly you can build up a reserve of food by simply buying one or two extra items each time you go to the store. Make sure to stock your

kitchen with foods you will actually use. It is nice to have staples such as flour, sugar, salt, seasonings, pasta, rice, and cereal products. Keep a good supply of canned foods like soup, beans, vegetables, fruit, and tomato products. Stock your fridge with dairy products, eggs, fresh vegetables and fruit and various condiments. Keep your freezer stocked with a variety of meat, poultry, fish, and vegetables.

All food should be rotated. Use the older foods in the pantry or freezer before you open a new package. Label your food with the date you bought it to help you remember what to use first. Arrange your food and equipment conveniently for fast-paced work. For example, put hot pads in the drawer next to the stove, knives near the cutting boards, etc. Organize things so related items are together, such as flour and sugar together, canned goods together, spices together, etc.

Use efficient cleanup methods.

- Clean as you go. Wash and put things away as you use them.
- Soak dirty dishes while you eat.
- Assign family members cleanup chores. List them on a calendar or prepare a special chart.

You can learn to make tasty, inexpensive, and nutritious meals in less time than it takes to wait for the pizza guy to deliver a pizza!

Bottom Line

Although planning a weekly menu is the ideal way to save time and money, not everyone is disciplined enough to always follow through. It really is more important to learn to keep a well-stocked pantry than to plan a menu! Then with some basic cooking skills such as those taught in this curriculum, anyone can come up with nutritious, cost-effective, time-saving meals with the foods they have on hand!

Teach your participants to use their food dollars wisely by stocking their cupboards, freezers, and refrigerators with healthy, whole foods.



Grocery Shopping

Walking into a grocery store can be a little intimidating. Facing an entire supermarket with millions of different food options is overwhelming. More options mean more decisions we have to make as consumers. This can be a daunting task for many people. Basic tips on how to survive and possibly look forward to those trips to the grocery store are provided below.

Use a prepared shopping list and stick to it to save time and money

Grocery stores are strategically set up by professionals to get the most money out of their customers. You can be smarter than these professionals by only buying the items on your list. Don't let their appealing advertising cause you to stray from buying only the food you need.

Organize the shopping list in food groups or by where the food is located in the store

For example, put all the dairy items by each other on the shopping list. This way, when you get to the dairy section of the store, everything you need will be easy to find. Doing this will ultimately save time because you won't have to backtrack.

Use coupons if they make the items you NEED cost less

Don't let the lure and thrill of a sale convince you to buy an item. Remember that you won't really be saving any money if you buy the sale item and it ends up going to waste in your fridge or cupboards. Many coupons are for processed foods that have little nutritional value anyways. Disregard these coupons and buy something that will help keep you healthy.

Try to go to the store only once a week

Keep those runs to the store for only one item or one evening meal to a minimum. More likely than not you will go into the store for that one item and come out with a cart load of other items that looked good but are ultimately not useful.

Shop when the store is least crowded

Crowded stores usually have frustrated and cranky people. This can make the shopping experience less enjoyable. Try shopping in the early mornings or on weekdays. Try to avoid the between-work-and-dinner rush, which generally occurs between 5:00 and 7:00 in the evening.

Leave children at home

Try trading babysitting with a friend. This will make it less stressful and there will be fewer hands to grab unneeded food.

Don't shop on an empty stomach

Hungry shoppers spend more money. Your stomach will crave just about anything you see and then you end up with an odd array of food that won't help you make a good meal.

Shop the perimeter of the grocery store

The perimeter has breads, produce, meat, and dairy. These foods should fill up most of your cart. It will be necessary to brave the aisles for canned items and other cooking essentials.

Compare quality

Store brands are often just as high quality as the name brand items and cost less money.

Compare prices using unit pricing

Unit pricing tells how much something costs per ounce or pound. You can often find the unit price on the label that is attached to the shelf. Unit pricing can help you decide what brand or size of specific item to buy. The lower the unit price, the better the value.

Buy in bulk if the price is lower and you have extra money

Just make sure the item is something you can use before it goes bad. In some cases, you can divide the item into meal-sized portions and freeze it.

Replace staples like flour and sugar when they are on sale

Large quantities of dry ingredients like flour and sugar often go on sale a few times per year. Sugar and white flour are shelf stable and will last a long time in your pantry. If you purchase whole grain flour, keep large quantities in the refrigerator or freezer for longer storage.

Be sure to check the use-by date

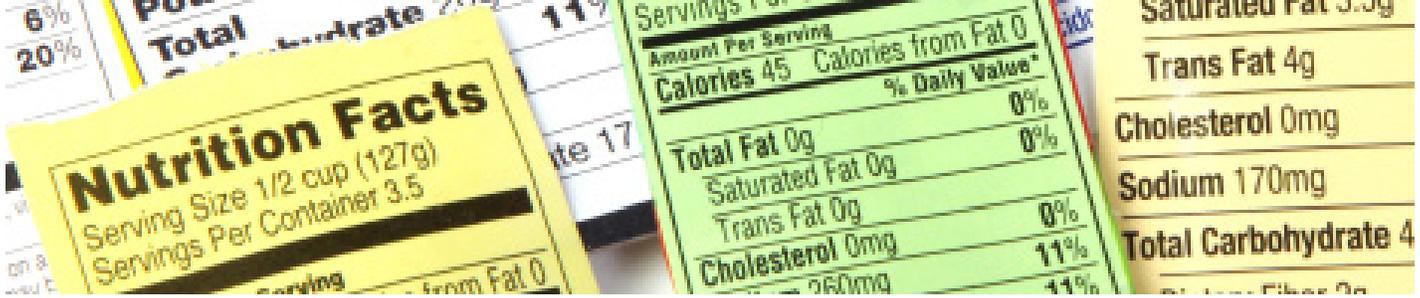
Make sure you aren't buying an item that has a use-by date before you are able to use it.

Watch for mistakes when you check out

Make sure the items you have selected ring up for the correct price in the cash register.

Food safety at the grocery store

Grocery shopping can be a major concern when it comes to food safety. Luckily, by just taking a couple of simple steps, the concerns will be minimal. While at the grocery store select all the non-perishable items first and select meat, dairy, and any other refrigerated or frozen foods last. While checking out, ensure your raw meat is in a separate bag from your other food items. After you have checked out, go directly home and store all of your new food items. It is important that the frozen and refrigerated goods are stored within 2 hours of shopping. If you know it is going to be longer than that, put a cooler and some ice in your car to help keep the food safe.



Nutrition Facts Labels

Nutrition Facts Labels are designed to give consumers information on the food contained inside the package. Yet, they can seem overwhelming and confusing. There are really only a few things on the Nutrition Facts Label you need to pay attention to in order to make a healthy choice.

Ingredients list—this is not really part of the label but it is one of the most important things you need to know. The ingredients list is usually printed directly under the label and provides a list of all ingredients used to make the product. The ingredients are listed in order by weight.

What to look for:

- Whole foods. An example is a loaf of bread that says “100% whole-wheat flour” as the first ingredient rather than “enriched wheat flour.” The first example means you are getting a whole grain, the other means you are getting white, or refined, flour.
- Ideally, you want a short ingredients list made up of items you recognize. If the package contains 10 or more ingredients and you can’t pronounce most of them, it is probably a highly processed or refined food that should be chosen less frequently.
- Look for items that don’t have added sugar as one of the first three ingredients. Manufacturers use different types of sugar, so it can be tricky to identify. Look for the words syrup, sweeteners, juice, and anything that ends in -ose (dextrose, maltose, sucrose, etc.).

Serving size—make sure you understand how many servings are in the product. If it has two servings and you choose to eat the entire package, you need to double all of the numbers on the Nutrition Facts Label to know what you consumed.

Total Fat—avoid products that list any number of calories from trans fats. Also, our daily intake of saturated fat should be less than 10% of our total daily calorie intake. So, if you consume a 2,000-calorie diet, no more than 200 of those calories should come from saturated fat.

Sodium—check to see the milligrams of sodium in each serving of food. Remember if you eat more than one serving size, you need to multiply the number of milligrams by the number of servings consumed. It is recommended to keep our daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams.

Added sugars—ideally added sugars should not be one of the first three ingredients listed. Remember that fewer than 10 percent of our daily calories should come from added sugar. So, if you eat 2,000 calories per day, less than 200 of those calories should come from added sugar. The amount of added sugar is listed separately from the amount of naturally occurring sugar such as lactose in dairy products, or fructose in fruit-based products. This makes it much easier to determine the amount of added sugar in a product.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



Meal Planning

How do you feel when it's 5 pm, everyone is starving, and someone asks, "What's for dinner?" How long does it take each night to look through recipes to make something for which you actually have all the ingredients? Did you know that you can spend 30 minutes or more every day trying to figure out what to eat for dinner or you can spend 30 minutes or less per week?

If you learn and use the principles of menu planning you will not only save money and time, but you will improve your nutrition, too.

If you think you hate to cook, you may discover what you actually hate is not knowing what to cook. When the plan is in place and you have all the ingredients you need to create a fast, easy, delicious, and nutritious meal, you may find you actually like to cook! You may even find great satisfaction in knowing that you have provided a way to nourish your family, both in body and soul!

Menu planning is one of the best ways you can stay within your food budget and alleviate the everyday stress of not knowing what to cook.

Here are some tips for creating a menu

- The hardest part of planning a menu is taking the time to do it. It works best when you schedule a time each week just for menu planning. Some people like to plan their menus the day before they go grocery shopping; some schedule around payday; others around the ads that come in the newspaper; some do it when the house is quiet like during children's naptime; and others wait everyone home so they can give input to what goes on the menu.
- The first thing you have to determine is how much money you have to spend at the store each month. Your goal is to stretch your food dollars so you have enough nutritious food to eat all month long.

- To know what your monthly budget should be, you can look back at how much you have spent on food in the past. You will probably tweak the amount you budget for food over the next few months as you incorporate menu planning and smart shopping. Chances are you will realize you can get by on less food money than you previously spent and still have more food in the house.
- Remember to include all SNAP benefits and WIC vouchers in your budget. Remember to factor in the food you may get free from your garden or a friend's garden.
- If you shop once a week, divide your monthly food dollars into four portions, one for each week. If most of the shopping is done once per month, make sure to budget part of the food dollars for items that you will need to purchase later in the month.

Possible methods

- Some people put cash in envelopes, one for each week. Once the cash is gone, the grocery budget is gone.
- Other people keep track of the total food budget and subtract from it every time they go to the store. Once the total reaches zero, the grocery budget is spent.
- Think of sticking to the food budget as a form of insurance against being hungry at the end of the month. It takes some self-control not to spend the entire budget at the beginning of the month, but like all good things, it is definitely worth it!
- It is smart to plan your menu around foods you already have on hand and around store ads that come in the newspaper so you can take advantage of specials. This helps you save money and avoid wasting food you already have.
- Once you are aware of the foods you already have on hand and those in the grocery ads, you are ready to come up with five to seven meals for dinner. Although you don't have to start with dinner, most people find it easier to plan the main meal of the day first.
- As you plan, choose a variety of meals that include favorites, budget stretchers, and quick-fix meals.

- Picture your plate as you plan each meal. Remember to include lots of veggies and fruits, a quarter of the plate will have grains and the other quarter will have a protein. With a glass on the side for dairy, you will have all the food groups suggested by MyPlate.
- To save time in the kitchen, think about cooking once and eating twice. For instance, if you are having chicken and rice for dinner on Monday, cook some extra rice for beef and broccoli stir-fry on Wednesday.
- Some people have a 2 to 4-week cycle menu. That means they choose their favorite meals and use the same menus over and over. It makes planning very easy and grocery shopping even easier.
- Some families have theme nights for each day of the week. For instance, everyone in the family knows that on Monday they are eating Mexican food and on Tuesday they are eating Italian, etc.
- Breakfast for dinner is also a good idea. If you don't have time to make your favorite breakfast for breakfast, there is no reason not to have it for dinner.
- Speaking of breakfast, after you plan all of your evening meals, plan breakfast. Include items from three of the MyPlate food groups. Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. People who eat breakfast on a regular basis are usually more alert, energetic, quicker to react, and more productive. They are less likely to overeat later in the day or to be absent from work or school. Remember, breakfast doesn't necessarily have to be breakfast foods. Leftover pizza or a burrito work just fine as breakfast food!
- Next, plan your lunches. This is a good time to use leftovers. When you plan to use leftovers, they become planned-overs. Once again, think of your plate and make sure to include veggies and fruit.
- Now that you have planned dinner, lunch, and breakfast, all that is left to plan is nutritious snacks. When many people think "snack" they think "cookies" or "chips". It is important to think of snacks as mini-meals, or as a way to "fill in the gaps" of MyPlate with foods that we aren't getting enough of during the day in our regular meals.
- Once you have a menu, it is a good idea to save it. You can reuse all or parts of it later, and that will save you some time in the future.



Soup or Sauce (SOS) Mix

Have you ever found yourself preparing a meal only to realize you don't have the cream soup or gravy mix on hand? A simple solution to this problem is to have a supply of SOS mix prepared. It is a simple and much healthier option to use in a variety of recipes including soups, gravies, creamed vegetables, skillet meals, casseroles, and pretty much any recipe that calls for a can of cream soup. SOS mix is a simple, cheap, fat-free option in recipes. It only has five ingredients, takes minutes to prepare, and is easy to store.

Ingredients

- 2 cups powdered non-fat dry milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup instant chicken bouillon
- 2 tablespoons dried onion flakes
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning

Directions

Combine all of the ingredients in a resealable plastic bag and shake to mix. Store in an airtight container until ready to use.

Yield: equivalent to 9 cans of cream soup

To substitute for 1 can of cream soup

1. Combine $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dry mix with 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups cold water.
2. Cook and stir on stovetop or in the microwave until mixture thickens.
3. Add the thickened mixture to recipes as you would a can of cream soup.

Examples of recipes using SOS mix are located on the Create Better Health Utah staff website.

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Reducing Sodium in the Diet

Heart disease, cancer, and stroke are conditions that cause the highest number of deaths in the United States. Two of these conditions, heart disease and stroke, are partially affected by the amount of sodium in the diet. High sodium intake can also result in a common condition called hypertension or high blood pressure, which also correlates with increased incidence of heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. Simply reducing the amount of sodium in the diet can help decrease the chances of these health conditions, which may increase life expectancy and quality of life.

According to the current Dietary Guidelines, it is recommended that the average American should consume less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day. This equates to only one teaspoon! It is also recommended that anyone who is 51 years of age or older, is African American, has hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease consume only 1,500 milligrams daily. Considering that the average American consumes 3,400 milligrams per day, it is easy to see there is room for improvement.

Which foods contain sodium?

Enhanced flavor is the biggest reason sodium is added to food, but it also functions to preserve and protect food from foodborne pathogens. Sodium binds ingredients, enhances color, and serves as a shelf stabilizer. Some categories of food with high amounts of sodium include:

- Processed foods and/or baked grain items
- Mixed dishes like pizza and hamburgers
- Meat and meat alternatives

Processed food is by far the biggest contributor of sodium in the diet. In fact, up to 75 percent of the sodium Americans consume comes from processed foods. While sodium can be an important part of some food products, if we consume more whole foods and less processed foods it will greatly decrease our sodium intake and keep us healthier. There are many easy ways to reduce sodium intake.

How to reduce sodium intake

Eating a whole food diet and cooking more at home will help you eat less processed foods, which will decrease the amount of sodium you consume. The following are a few other simple ways to decrease sodium intake:

- Choose fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables when possible. Not only are they low in sodium, but also high in potassium, which helps to counter the effects of sodium on blood pressure.
- Use different spices and herbs rather than salt to enhance the flavor of food.
- Add fresh lemon juice instead of salt to fish and vegetables.
- When purchasing processed foods, read the Nutrition Facts Label to compare similar foods and their sodium content. You may be surprised at the difference in sodium levels on foods that look the same.
- When buying canned foods, buy the can with reduced sodium levels, or no salt added. If that isn't possible, drain and rinse the food so some of the salt is washed away.
- Lowering your sodium intake is the simplest and most cost-effective strategy to lower your risk for heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and many other chronic conditions. Implementing these simple sodium-reducing strategies will help improve your health.

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Is Sodium the Same Thing as Salt? (2019). Eatright.org. <https://www.eatright.org/health/essential-nutrients/minerals/is-sodium-the-same-thing-as-salt>

Get the Scoop on Sodium and Salt. (2017, April 21). <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/sodium-and-salt>



Nutrients

Our society is obsessed with nutrients. We worry whether or not we are getting all of the nutrients our bodies need on a daily basis, and often times choose our foods based solely on the known nutrients they provide.

There is no doubt that nutrients are important. We know that when people don't get enough of the nutrients they need they may suffer with deficiencies such as beriberi (thiamin deficiency), scurvy (vitamin C deficiency), osteoporosis (calcium deficiency), and neural tube defects (folate deficiency) among others. In an effort to avoid a deficiency, many people are willing to spend lots of time and money on what they consider to be "super" foods and on supplements. However, Mother Nature never intended for it to be so hard. Think about it! For most of the world's history, the majority of the world's population never had an opportunity to eat a goji berry or an acai berry, but they still thrived as long as they got enough calories from other whole food sources. When you eat a variety of whole foods, you don't have to worry about the nutrients. They just come with the package!

Bottom line

- You cannot undo the damage of a diet consisting primarily of highly processed and refined foods with a handful of supplements or a few super foods.
- Isolated nutrients found in supplements do not act the same way in the body as the same nutrients when they come packaged in real food. For instance, vitamin E is heart protective when consumed naturally in foods but can be harmful to the heart when consumed as an individual nutrient.
- When you eat a diet consisting of whole, unprocessed (or minimally processed) foods, you get the nutrients your body needs in just the right amounts. This is especially true for whole plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.

As you teach, it is important to convey that when we eat a whole food diet, we automatically get the nutrients we need. Nonetheless, you will encounter many participants who will

still want to know what foods are high in certain nutrients and how specific nutrients function in the body. This section will help you answer those questions.

Water Soluble Vitamins

Vitamin B1-Thiamin

- Functions: Helps turn food into energy, assists in transmitting nerve responses, contains antioxidant properties. It may also help reduce the risk of developing dementia and heart problems.
- Sources: Pork, legumes (beans, lentils), whole grains, fortified breakfast cereals and breads, wheat germ, and soymilk.

Vitamin B2-Riboflavin

- Functions: Helps turn food into energy, contains antioxidant properties, helps break down medications and removes toxins from the body.
- Sources: Milk, cheese, meat, legumes, fortified breakfast cereals, eggs, almonds, spinach and fortified bread.

Vitamin B3-Niacin

- Functions: Helps turn food into energy. It may also reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer.
- Top Sources: Turkey, chicken, tuna, halibut, beef, pork, peanuts, green vegetables, and fortified cereal.

Vitamin B6

- Functions: Helps build proteins, neurotransmitters, and hormones, and transports oxygen through the body. It may also reduce the risk of heart disease, certain cancers, and dementia.
- Top Sources: Meats, turkey, oatmeal, pinto beans, pistachios, russet potatoes with the skin, and bananas.

Vitamin B12

- Functions: Important for the breakdown of fat and protein. May reduce the risk of heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, and neural tube defects in infants.
- Top Sources: Crab, salmon, beef, fish, poultry, milk, and eggs. (Only found in animal products!)

Folate

- Functions: Helps build important components of the body including proteins, DNA, neurotransmitters, and red blood cells. May help reduce the risk of heart disease, neural tube defects in infants, and certain types of anemia.
- Top Sources: Fortified orange juice, lentils, green leafy vegetables, fortified breakfast cereal, and beans.

Pantothenic Acid

- Functions: Involved in the transport of broken down fats and turns food into energy.
- Top Sources: Found in many foods! Meats, egg yolks, broccoli, avocados, legumes, whole-grain cereals, mushrooms, and potatoes.

Biotin

- Functions: Helps make collagen, which is important for blood vessels, tendons, ligaments, and bones. Part of neurotransmitters, which can affect mood and learning. It has antioxidant properties and helps support a strong immune system.
- Top Sources: Soybeans, egg yolk, legumes, nuts, liver, oranges, grapefruits, red bell peppers, kiwi, and broccoli.

Fat Soluble Vitamins

Vitamin A

- Functions: Important for vision, night vision, and a strong immune system. Also has antioxidant properties. Also, important for growth and development in infants and children.
- Top Sources: Fish, cod, liver, dairy products, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, carrots, and green leafy vegetables (kale, spinach).

Vitamin D

- Functions: Necessary for bone development and strength, helps control blood pressure, and builds a strong immune system.

- Top Sources: Known as the "sunshine vitamin." We can get Vitamin D from the sun in March-November in Utah. It is also found in salmon, sardines, liver, beef, milk, dairy products, fortified orange juice, and cereal.

Vitamin E

- Functions: Antioxidant properties. May reduce the risk of heart attack, certain cancers, and Alzheimer's disease.
- Top Sources: Vegetable oils (canola, soy, olive), wheat germ, asparagus, almonds, sunflower seeds.

Vitamin K

- Functions: Important for blood clotting and bone health. May help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.
- Top Sources: Soybean oil, kale, broccoli, spinach, parsley.

Minerals

Calcium

- Functions: Important for strong bones and teeth, blood clotting, and muscle contraction and relaxation.
- Top Sources: Milk, yogurt, cheese, broccoli, kale, and fortified orange juice.

Magnesium

- Functions: Helps turn food into energy. Important for enzymes, antioxidants, and strong bones.
- Top Sources: Oat bran, brown rice, almonds, lima beans, and spinach.

Phosphorus

- Functions: Important for strong bones and teeth. Helps turn food into energy and stores energy. Activates many hormones and enzymes in the body.
- Top Sources: Dairy products, beef, seafood, lentils, and almonds.

Potassium

- Functions: Important for water balance, muscle contractions, and nerve impulses. Works with sodium to control blood pressure.
- Top Sources: Potatoes, prunes, tomatoes, bananas, and beans.

Sodium

- Functions: Important for water balance and muscle contraction and relaxation. Works with potassium to control blood pressure.

- Top Sources: Table salt, meats, canned foods, and processed foods.

Copper

- Functions: Helps turn food into energy and pulls iron out of food to use. Important for certain brain and nerve functions.
- Top Sources: Liver, seafood, nuts, lentils, potatoes, dried fruit, whole grains, and semisweet chocolate.

Iodine

- Functions: Important for growth, development, metabolism, reproduction, and to make certain hormones.
- Top Sources: Iodized salt, seafood, meats, eggs, milk, navy beans, and potatoes.

Iron

- Functions: Carries oxygen through the body, helps build red blood cells and turns food into energy.
- Top Sources: Meat, seafood, dark leafy greens, lentils, raisins, and iron-fortified foods.

Manganese

- Functions: Important to turn food into energy and healthy bone and cartilage formation.
- Top Sources: Whole-grain cereals, leafy vegetables, pecans, oatmeal, brown rice, spinach, and almonds.

Zinc

- Functions: Important for a strong immune system and a good sense of taste and smell.
- Top Sources: Nuts, beans, wheat germ, yogurt, and yeast bread.

Phytochemicals

Carotenoids

- Functions: Includes over 600 yellow, orange, and red pigments, that have antioxidant properties which are associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and certain types of cancer.
- Top Sources: Pumpkin, carrots, dark leafy greens, tomatoes, papaya.

Chlorophyll

- Functions: Helps detoxify cancer-causing agents and may speed up wound healing.

- Top Sources: Spinach, parsley, green beans, arugula, and sugar snap peas.

Curcumin

- Functions: Has antioxidant properties and anti-inflammatory properties. May play a role in cancer prevention.
- Top Sources: Turmeric is the only food source.

Fiber

- Functions: A component of plant-based foods that cannot be digested by the human digestive tract. May help reduce risk of heart disease and certain cancers. It is also important for regulating blood sugar levels, helps reduce cholesterol levels, and prevents constipation.
- Top Sources: Beans, oats, bulgur, leafy greens, and prunes.

Flavonoids

- Functions: Have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Helps maintain a healthy heart and urinary tract.
- Top Sources: Grapes, grape juice, and peanuts.

Soy Isoflavones

- Functions: May help reduce LDL cholesterol levels and decrease the risk of certain types of cancer.
- Top Sources: Tofu, miso, soybeans (edamame), tempeh, soy milk.

**This is not a comprehensive list of phytochemicals, rather it is a small list of well-known phytochemicals. There are too many discovered phytochemicals to list here and many, many that have not yet been identified.*

REFERENCES

Gropper, SS, Smith, JL, Groff, JL. Advanced Nutrition and Human Metabolism: Eighth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth; 2021



LESSON HANDOUTS

In the following section, you will find the handouts that support the Create Better Health content. In each lesson you will find a list of required and recommended handouts. Please choose handouts that will help your participants implement what they learned in your class at home. The handouts in the curriculum are just for your reference. Order your handouts from the state office.

Nutrition/Budgeting/ Shopping/etc. Handouts

- 112** Good Foods to Have on Hand
- 114** Spice It Up
- 116** Start Simple with MyPlate
- 117** Grocery Shopping Packet
- 120** Monthly Menu Planner
- 121** General Grocery Shopping Tips
- 123** Cutting Grocery Expenses
- 124** Shopping in Each Section
- 127** Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label
- 130** Misleading Claims
- 132** Shopping for Produce
- 134** Shopping for Fruit
- 138** Shopping for Vegetables
- 141** Reduce Added Sugars in your Diet

143 The Facts About Caffeine

145 Create Safe Food

Physical Activity Handouts

- 147** Week at a Glance
- 148** Aerobic Exercise
- 149** Resistance Training
- 150** Balance and Flexibility
- 151** Move Your Way

Creates Handouts

- 152** Create Amazing Veggies
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Instructors: For printable and digital handouts go to:
extension.usu.edu/fscreate

Good Foods to Have on Hand

When you have most of these nutritious foods in the house, you will be amazed at what you can create in no time flat!

Grains

- Whole grains - oatmeal, barley, bulgur, brown rice, quinoa, cornmeal, popcorn, etc.
- 100% whole-wheat bread, tortillas, bagels, muffins, etc.
- Whole grain crackers
- Rice cakes
- Whole grain cold cereal

Fruits

- Fresh fruits in season - apple, orange, grape, banana, pear, strawberry, blueberry, raspberry, kiwi, melon, peach, plum, pineapple, etc.
- Frozen and/or canned fruit - berry, peach, pear, pineapple, mandarin orange, etc.
- Raisins, other dried fruits
- All fruit jams
- Juice - white and/or purple grape, orange, apple, pineapple, etc.

Vegetables

- Fresh vegetables in season - potato, sweet potato, summer squash, winter squash, broccoli, cauliflower, carrot, celery, bell pepper, green bean, corn, tomato, romaine lettuce, spinach, mushroom, avocado, garlic, onion, etc.
- Frozen and/or canned vegetables - green bean, corn, pea, tomato, tomato sauce, tomato paste, etc.
- Vegetable juice

Dairy

- Milk
- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Cheese - Cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, Parmesan, etc.

Protein

- Nuts and seeds - dry roasted peanuts, sunflower seeds, almonds, walnuts
- Canned tuna, salmon, chicken, turkey, chili
- Beef
- Chicken
- Fish
- Wild game
- Deli turkey, ham
- Eggs
- Peanut butter
- Canned and/or dried beans - black, pinto, kidney, white, chickpea, etc.

Miscellaneous

- Staples - flour, sugar, brown sugar, powdered sugar, cornstarch, baking soda, baking powder, yeast, mustard, mayonnaise, etc.
- Salsa
- Chicken/beef/vegetable broths or bouillon
- Canned soups - low-fat, low sodium cream of chicken, mushroom, tomato, etc.
- Herbs/Spices - salt, pepper, basil, oregano, parsley, thyme, rosemary, paprika, cumin, chili powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, etc.

Things to Eat from Good Foods to Have on Hand

When you have a well-stocked pantry and fridge you can put these foods together faster and lots cheaper than ordering take-out or going through the drive-thru!

Apple Slices and Peanut Butter

Burrito or Quesadilla

Filled with beans, cheese, veggies, egg, rice, potato, chicken, beef, salsa

Crackers

Topped with cheese, peanut butter, tuna or chicken salad

Green/Pasta/or Potato Salad

Made with fresh or roasted veggies, beans, fruit, raisins, sunflower seeds

Homemade Soup

How about chicken and rice, tortilla, potato, chicken noodle, beef vegetable, minestrone

Oatmeal

With walnuts, raisins, milk

Omelet or Frittata

Filled with eggs, potatoes, cheese, peppers, mushrooms, onion, garlic, tomato, avocado, canned beans, salsa

Potato Bar

Made with baked potato, chili, cheese, broccoli, cottage cheese

Sandwiches or Wraps

Filled with turkey or ham with cheese, lettuce and tomato, tuna with celery, diced apple and walnuts, egg salad with lettuce, peanut butter and jelly, grilled cheese

Smoothie

Made with yogurt, milk, fruit, spinach, kale

Stir-fry

Made with chicken, pork, or tofu, lots of veggies, brown rice

Trail Mix

Cereal, sunflower seeds, peanuts, raisins, dried fruits

Whole Grain Pancakes or Waffles

Yogurt

Mixed with cereal, fruit, cottage cheese

The possibilities are limited only by your imagination!



Spice it Up

15 seasoning blends so good you won't miss the salt!

Spices are usually defined as the roots, bark or seeds of various plants. Herbs are usually defined as the leaves. Salt is neither an herb nor a spice!

Most herbs and spices lose flavor and color with age. Each year, test your herbs and spices by sprinkling a small amount into your hand and crushing them; if a distinct aroma is not immediately obvious, your herbs are past their prime. Sealed glass jars are best to lock in flavor and color.

Another way to preserve freshness is to buy whole spices (such as cumin seeds and black peppercorns) and grind them as needed in a coffee grinder (about \$20 retail). This grinder should then be used for spices only and not for other uses.

All these recipes contain negligible amounts of sodium and fat, while many spice blends available in grocery stores are very high in sodium.

RECIPES

For each seasoning blend, mix all ingredients and store in an airtight container. Ingredients are dried herbs and ground spices, unless otherwise noted.

Each blend contains 5 mg sodium or less per teaspoon, except as noted.



LOWER SODIUM SEASONED SALT

Makes ¼ cup

- 2 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- 1½ tsp celery seed, well-ground
- ½ tsp parsley flakes, well-ground

260 mg sodium per ¼ tsp, about 25% less than the leading store brand.



MEDITERRANEAN BLEND

Makes 4 tsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp oregano
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp thyme
- 1 tsp coriander



LATINO BLEND

Makes 1¼ tbsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cilantro
- 1 tsp coriander



THAI BLEND

Makes about 1 tbsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp ginger
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp coriander



SOUTHERN BLEND

Makes 1/3 cup

- ¼ cup paprika
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp oregano
- ½ tsp cayenne

Use 1½ to 2 tsp to coat 1 pound of tofu, tempeh or lean animal protein.



SALT SHAKER BLEND #1

Makes 2½ tbsp

- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1½ tsp basil
- 1½ tsp dry mustard
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp ground celery seed
- ½ tsp paprika

**SALT SHAKER BLEND #2***Makes 3 tbsp*

- 2 tsp thyme
- 2 tsp basil
- 2 tsp savory
- 1 tbsp marjoram
- 1 tsp sage

**CURRY BLEND***Makes ½ cup*

- 2 tbsp cumin
- 2 tbsp turmeric
- 4 tsp coriander
- 4 tsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp each: allspice, cayenne, cinnamon, ginger

Use 1:1 in place of store-bought**HERB BLEND***Makes 3 tbsp*

- 1 tbsp thyme
- 2 tsp rosemary
- 1 tsp sage
- 1 tbsp marjoram

**TRADITIONAL SEAFOOD BLEND***Makes ½ cup*

- 2 tbsp allspice
- 1 tbsp ginger
- 4 tsp celery seed, ground
- 2 tsp salt

185 mg sodium per tsp**COOKING BLEND***Makes 2½ tbsp*

- 2 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp rosemary
- 1 tbsp oregano
- 2 tsp dried minced onion

Use 1 tsp for each pound of lean animal protein. Add ½ tsp for each 2 quarts of soup.**SPICE RUB BLEND***Makes ½ cup*

- 2 tbsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp garlic
- 2 tbsp onion powder

255 mg sodium per tsp**ALL-PURPOSE BLEND***Makes 3 tbsp*

- 1 tsp celery seed
- 1 tbsp basil
- 1 tbsp marjoram

Use 1 tsp per pound of protein food. Use ½ tsp for 2 cups of vegetables.**TANDOORI BLEND***Makes ¼ cup*

- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp cardamom

153 mg sodium per tsp**SALAD BLEND***Makes 3 1/3 tbsp*

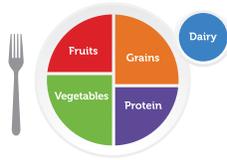
- 1 tbsp marjoram
- 1 tsp tarragon
- 2 tsp basil

Sprinkle over tossed salads or add 2 tsp for each cup of homemade salad dressing.

Adapted with permission, Preventive Nutrition Services
410-764-8343, preventive_nutrition@verizon.net



Start simple
with MyPlate



Start Simple with MyPlate

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Focus on whole fruits

Include fruit at breakfast! Top whole-grain cereal with your favorite fruit, add berries to pancakes, or mix dried fruit into hot oatmeal.



Vary your veggies

Cook a variety of colorful veggies. Make extra vegetables and save some for later. Use them for a stew, soup, or a pasta dish.



Vary your protein routine

Next taco night, try adding a new protein, like shrimp, beans, chicken, or beef.



Make half your grains whole grains

Add brown rice to your stir-fry dishes. Combine your favorite veggies and protein foods for a nutritious meal.



Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt (or lactose-free dairy or fortified soy versions)

Enjoy a yogurt parfait for breakfast made with low-fat dairy milk or fortified soy milk. Top with fruit and nuts to get in two more food groups.



Drink and eat less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium

Cook at home more often to limit added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Read the ingredients lists and use [Nutrition Facts labels](#) to compare foods.



Go to [MyPlate.gov](#) for more information. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**The benefits of healthy eating
add up over time, bite by bite.**

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Grocery Shopping Packet

HOW IT WORKS

Grocery shopping can be overwhelming, expensive and wasteful without a plan. This packet includes all the tools you need to have a successful trip to the grocery store. At the beginning of each month, sit down for an hour and plan out every meal you want for the month. This will save you both time and money. When you have a plan, all you have to do is follow it. Rather than trying to come up with something last minute or going out to eat because you couldn't find something to eat, you will be prepared. By planning ahead, you can also find ways to incorporate leftovers or reuse the ingredients that you buy, saving you money. With a little practice you will be excited and motivated rather than dreading those trips to the local market. Here are the steps you need to take:



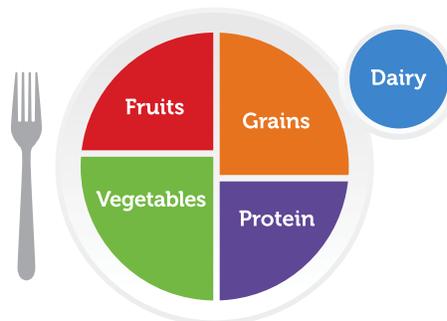
1 Menu Planning

Plan to spend an hour once a month for menu planning.

You will need:

- The meal calendar
- MyPlate diagram
- Local grocery store ads
- Recipes (For well rounded, low cost meals check out):

<https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen>



MyPlate.gov

First look at the MyPlate diagram. Every day should include meals that are well rounded and balanced, so keep that in mind when planning each meal. Then look at the store ad. Are there certain food items on sale? By planning meals with ingredients that are on sale, you are going to save money. (For example: You wanted to make a strawberry smoothie but the strawberries are \$4/lb. The mangos, however, are on sale for \$1/lb. All you have to do is adjust the recipe and make a mango smoothie and you just saved a few dollars!)

Go through the whole month and plan each meal, but don't overwhelm yourself with a hundred recipes! Remember you can have the same meal several times throughout the month. (For example, for breakfast you could plan for oatmeal with cinnamon and apples and a glass of milk every other day, leaving only half the month to figure out other breakfast ideas. Or plan to make a full dish of lasagna on Sunday and use the leftovers as a meal for Tuesday.)

After you are done, hang this menu on the fridge so you have your plan available at all times.



2 Make the grocery list

This can be done at the same time as the menu planning. While you are choosing each meal, check your fridge and pantry to see if you already have the ingredients. If you don't, simply add them to your list. To keep a healthy plan, try to limit processed foods. If there are any desserts/processed foods you really want, see how hard it would be to just make them by hand. This can save you money, is healthier, and could possibly taste even better than store bought. Keep the list up on the fridge next to your menu so that you can add to it throughout the month when ingredients run out.



3 Start Shopping

Now you are ready for your trip to the store! Make sure you eat a meal before you go so you are not tempted to buy things you didn't plan on. Then grab your list and those store ads and head to the local market. The key thing to remember is to bring your list and stick to it; this will help you save time and money. Grocery shopping can be done as often as you prefer. Grocery shopping about two or three times a month will be most beneficial. Going more than once a month will help spread out federal assistance benefits such as SNAP so you do not run out as quickly and limiting your trips to two or three occasions will prevent you from spending more money than you planned.

You did it! That wasn't so bad was it? It may be a little tricky to get used to, but if you stick to your plan every month you will save time, money, and will be able to provide your family with healthy meals every day. Remember to adapt the meals to what your family really likes. If it's a tradition to eat out, schedule those family outings on the menu. This will allow you to still eat out occasionally, but will prevent last-minute trips to a restaurant because you cannot decide what to make.

MENU PLANNER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
B:	B:	B:	B:	B:	B:	B:
L:	L:	L:	L:	L:	L:	L:
D:	D:	D:	D:	D:	D:	D:
B:	B:	B:	B:	B:	B:	B:
L:	L:	L:	L:	L:	L:	L:
D:	D:	D:	D:	D:	D:	D:

GROCERY LIST OUTLINE

VEGETABLES	FRUITS	GRAINS
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
DAIRY	PROTEINS	OTHER
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



General Grocery Shopping Tips

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos and Amy Spielmaker

1 Stick to the edges of the grocery store

The less processed and fresher foods are located on the edges of the grocery store and the more processed, unhealthy items are on the inner aisles.

2 Do not shop hungry

If you shop hungry, you are more likely to impulse buy unhealthy items. Also avoid shopping tired or angry. Emotions always play into our food choices.

3 Go to the grocery store during slow times

Avoid going right after 5 p.m. or near major holidays. When you go shopping on a busy day, you are more likely to spend less time looking at prices and nutrition labels.

4 Avoid overly processed foods

Avoid foods that contain more than five ingredients, artificial ingredients, or ingredients that you cannot pronounce. That's not to say that these items don't have their place, but they should be purchased less frequently than more nutritious foods.

5 Identify which foods you really want

It's hard to resist fresh-baked donuts or salty chips. To try to reduce purchasing less nutritious items, put impulse buys in the cart's child seat. Before checking out, hold each item and ask yourself if you really want or need it.

6 Always compare prices

The generic or store brand is not always cheaper (although it usually is). Also, make sure that you are checking the unit price, not the price per container. The unit price is usually per ounce and can be found in smaller print on the bottom of the price tag.

7 Look high and low

The highest priced items are usually on the middle shelves at eye level. Try looking on the top and bottom shelves for cheaper options.

8 Make a grocery list

Keep a running grocery list throughout the week. When you run out of something, don't leave it to your memory. Jot it down immediately and you'll avoid running back and forth to the store for forgotten items. Also prepare your grocery list by aisle. If you regularly shop at the same stores, organize your list so that you can easily find and check off items as you walk down the aisles.

9 Make a meal list for the week

Consult MyPlate when making a meal list to ensure that you are incorporating all the food groups. By planning the meals you are going to have for the week, you can avoid either trying to plan while you are in a crowded grocery store, or panicking and buying too much or too little. A list of meals reduces stress when it's dinnertime and you have no idea what to make, or even if you have the ingredients. Convenience is the number one factor that people consider when purchasing food. A list of meals for the week will increase convenience, both because it means spending less time at the grocery store and because it will give you direction at dinnertime. If you plan meals, there is less chance that you will be tempted to go out to eat, or eat an unhealthy, pre-packaged dinner. Why? Because you have already purchased food (some of which is perishable), and no one wants to waste money, especially if you are on a budget.

10 Make a budget

Have a clear budget before going to the grocery store and stick within your limit. If you don't know how much you can spend, you'll likely spend too much. To help stay within your budget, keep a running tally of the cost of items in your cart.

11 Be Flexible

Although you should have a plan when entering the grocery store, you should still be flexible. If you usually buy russet potatoes, but sweet potatoes are on sale, consider making a substitution. Remember that variety is the spice of life. Don't be afraid of trying new foods, especially if they are on sale.

12 Pick up a flyer

Grab the flyer or advertisement at the front of the store. These advertisements have the weekly specials and coupons.

13 Use coupons carefully

Look for coupons on shelves or on products. These sometimes offer discounts on items when purchased together (for example, a discount on lettuce with the purchase of salad dressing). These coupons could also offer discounts for multiple item purchases (for example, buy five get one free). However, be careful with these specials. If the coupon fits well into your shopping list, then go for it. If the coupon requires you to purchase more or different items than you had originally planned, it is probably best to steer clear. Apply the same rules to coupons clipped from advertisements or the newspaper. Also, keep the coupons that are printed out with your receipt. These coupons are usually targeted toward what you commonly purchase, so they may come in handy next time you visit the grocery store.

14 Buy in bulk when appropriate

For certain perishable items, buying in bulk can save money. Some stores offer discounts when you purchase items by the case. Items that are good to purchase in bulk include canned goods, certain baking goods (like flour and sugar), some condiments, and other foods you use frequently.

15 Read the fine print

When foods are marked with deals like 10 for \$10, it doesn't mean you need to buy all 10 to be eligible for the deal. You can buy two or three and still get them at \$1 a piece.

16 Beware of items on the ends of aisles

Food manufacturers pay a premium to have their items displayed at this location. Due to this, there is little variety in products and so it is difficult to compare prices. Any item on the ends of aisles can be found on the shelves where it is easier to look at different options.

17 Know about special discounts offered

For example, some stores offer discounts if you use reusable bags instead of plastic.

18 Get a grocery store rewards card

Many stores offer food and gas discounts to members. These cards are no commitment (they usually only require a name, phone number, and address) and they make you eligible for the sale prices that are advertised.

19 Know when specific items are on sale

Many stores plan their best sales around certain times of the year. Typically, baking items are on sale around the end of the year when people do a lot of holiday baking. Spices, condiments, and certain meats have the best prices in the summer when people are barbecuing.



Cutting Grocery Expenses

Adapted from “Cutting Expenses Guidebook”, USU Extension*

ORANGE	YELLOW	GREEN
<p>Orange tips make the biggest difference in the shortest time.</p>	<p>Yellow tips help keep grocery spending in order.</p>	<p>Green tips build a financial foundation and create good habits.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use food you already have. Start by using the food you already have on hand. Plan your meals around the items in your pantry and fridge before going to the store. ● Minimize your trips to the store. This can help you avoid making impulse purchases that can add up. ● Use available resources. Check if you're eligible for free or reduced school lunch programs or SNAP benefits and consider local food pantries if necessary. ● Repurpose leftovers. Get creative with leftovers by turning them into casseroles or soups to stretch your food budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use cash. Take a fixed amount of cash with you to the store. Shopping should end when the cash is gone. This helps prevent overspending. ● Use online shopping. Load your online cart and keep an eye on your total as you go. This strategy helps you avoid impulse purchases that can add up quickly. ● Buy generic brands. Generic brands are usually as good as branded products but at a significantly lower cost. By opting for generic or store-brand items, families can save up to \$1000 per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan meals ahead of time. Meal planning reduces food waste and unplanned trips to the store. It can also save time and decrease stress associated with meal time. ● Shop with a list. Make a shopping list and stick to it when at the grocery store. Avoiding unnecessary purchases helps keep you on a budget. ● Shop alone and when you are not hungry. People tend to buy more when they are hungry or have others with them. ● Take advantage of case sales. Stock up on items you eat frequently when they are on sale. ● Use smaller plates to control portion sizes. To avoid uneaten food, use smaller plates and control portion sizes.

*<https://extension.usu.edu/finance/files/EFWCuttingExpensesGuidebook.pdf>



Shopping in Each Section

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos and Amy Spielmaker

1 Bakery

Look for 100% whole grain. Choose the least processed bakery items that are made from whole grains. Make sure you know how to distinguish between 100% whole wheat and misleading packaging. For example, statements such as “multigrain,” “stoneground,” “durum wheat,” and “high fiber” do not necessarily mean the product is whole grain. Also, don’t be fooled by the color of bread. Dark bread can indicate added molasses, caramel, or other coloring. To ensure that you are actually getting whole grains, make sure to read the ingredient list and look for “whole wheat” or “whole [other grain]” as the primary ingredient. Remember that “enriched wheat flour” means that the product was made with white, not whole wheat, flour.



Look for the stamp. Products with this stamp (to the left) contain at least 8 grams of whole grains.

Look at the nutrition facts label. A serving (slice) of bread should have less than 100 calories, at least 2 grams of fiber, less than 225 mg of sodium, and 100% whole wheat (or other grain) flour as the first ingredient.

Consider white whole wheat breads for kids. You’ve probably seen “whole grain white” or “white whole wheat” breads. These can be great options for people, especially little kids, who do not like the taste or texture of regular whole wheat breads. Remember to read the ingredients list to make sure you’re actually getting 100% whole wheat flour.

Switch up your bread. Switch up basic sandwich breads with pita breads, bagels, rolls, buns, and English muffins.

2 Meats

Go for whole meats. Usually, whole meats are going to be cheaper than selected cuts. So instead of buying chicken breasts, buy a whole chicken.

Get meat sliced. Deli meats can be expensive. Instead of buying sliced meat, purchase a whole cooked ham or roast beef and take it to the deli section to have it sliced.

Look for lower sodium. Look for lower sodium deli meats, as they are usually the same price as their higher sodium alternatives.

Go lean and eat fish. Choose lean cuts of meat (like round, and those with “loin” in the name) and skinless poultry. Also try to increase your weekly consumption of fish. Salmon and tuna are especially high in heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Typically, stores will sell frozen fish fillets in bulk. If these are cheap, it is a good idea to stock up for quick week-night dinners.

Read ground meat labels. Ground turkey and chicken may sound like healthier options, but they are frequently ground with the skin, adding to their fat count. Look for ground meats that are at least 90% lean.

Quality indicators. Look for meat that has shiny, firm flesh that springs back when pressed lightly with your thumb.

3 Dairy

Look for less fat. Try to pick fat free or reduced fat dairy.

Buy strong cheeses. In general, the more pungent the flavor, the less cheese you will need to use. Look for sharp cheddar and Parmesan to give a kick to salads, omelets, and pasta.

Choose yogurt instead of sweets. Yogurt can be a healthy alternative to other dessert options that can be loaded with sugar and fat. Buy plain yogurt and add fresh or frozen fruit. This is healthier for you than buying the yogurt that already has fruit mixed in.

4 Snacks

(nuts, crackers, chips, popcorn, dried fruit, cookies)

Avoid individual servings. Although buying single serving, pre-packaged snacks is convenient, it is a big waste of money. Buy sandwich baggies and buy the snacks in bulk, then it will take just a few minutes to pack snacks.

Look for less seasoning. Ingredient lists play a large role in the snack aisle. Try to buy snacks with few ingredients, and look for those that are low in sugar, salt, and fat. Opt for unseasoned options (like raw nuts and unsalted popcorn). Choose corn chips instead of potato chips and plain crackers instead of those with cheese powder or other additives.

5 Canned goods

(vegetables, fruits, beans, soup, meat)

Keep a well-stocked pantry. Keep a variety of canned vegetables, fruits, and beans on hand to toss into soups, salads, pasta, or rice dishes. Even if there is no fresh food in the house, you can still make a healthy dinner if you have a well-stocked pantry.

Look for less salt, syrup, and oil. Whenever possible, choose vegetables without added salt, fruit packed in juice, and meat packed in water. Also look for reduced sodium soups and beans. Add water to soups to reduce the amount of sodium. To decrease the salt you get from canned beans, make sure to drain and rinse before serving.

6 Baking

Buy in bulk. This is a good area to buy in bulk since most of the items will last for a long time.

What to buy and what to avoid. Good picks in this section include whole wheat flour, evaporated milk, yeast, and spices. Avoid frostings and chocolate chips as these can be easy to snack on without noticing how much you've eaten.

7 Condiments

(pickles, salad dressings, ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce, peanut butter, jam, vinegar, oil)

Look for hidden sugars. Watch out for hidden sugars in BBQ sauces and salad dressings. If an ingredient ends in -ose, it is likely a sugar.

Choose better condiments. When possible, choose mustard as a spread instead of ketchup or mayonnaise. Ketchup is high in sugar and mayonnaise is high in fat.

Use a lower sodium crunch. Keep in mind that a serving of pickles is usually half of a whole pickle and contains 12% of your daily sodium intake. Instead of using pickles in recipes for crunch, try using celery.

Choose BBQ sauce wisely. The first ingredient in most BBQ sauces is some type of sugar, usually corn syrup. Choose a BBQ sauce with a tomato product as the first ingredient.

Consider spending more on peanut butter. Most peanut butters have added sugar. Although no-sugar-added peanut butter is often more expensive, it may be worth the extra money if you eat a lot of peanut butter.

Always have vinegar. Vinegar is cheap and comes in many different varieties (white, apple cider, red wine, white wine, balsamic, white balsamic, rice wine). It can be substituted for extra salt in some recipes and has a long storage life. Vinegar is a good item to always have on hand.

Make your own dressings. Instead of buying premade salad dressings, try making your own. All you need is vinegar, oil, water, and some type of seasoning. You can also substitute some or all of the oil with yogurt.

8 Cereal and Breakfast Foods

Buy plain oatmeal. When purchasing oatmeal, stay away from those that have added sugars, flavorings, and salt. The best way to do this is stick to regular, uncooked oats.

Dry cereal. Choose cereals that have at least 4 grams of fiber per serving, and the less sugar, the better.

Make your own granola. Avoid granolas, even the low-fat variety, as they tend to have more fat and sugar than other cereals. Instead, try making your own granola with oats, nuts, and honey.

Serving sizes vary. Cereal serving sizes can range from ½ cup to more than 1 cup. Make sure to take this into account when choosing a cereal.

Avoid cereal bars. Cereal bars can be a tempting option for early mornings. Unfortunately, these bars can be

packed with refined sugars that won't keep you full for long. Instead, make your own granola bars and store them in the refrigerator or freezer for easy mornings.

9 Frozen Food

Buy frozen fruits and vegetables. The freezer is a great way to keep healthy food in the house. Look for frozen fruits and vegetables without added sauce or syrup. These additions usually contribute to increased cost and calorie content. Frozen fruits and vegetables (without sauce) are a convenient and cost effective way to help fill in the produce gap, especially in the winter.

Use frozen juices. Frozen juice concentrates (remember to look for 100%) can be a cheaper alternative to bottled juices. They are also great for marinades and dressings.

Avoid frozen meals. Watch out for frozen meals claiming to be healthy. These are usually very small portions that are expensive. You would be better off throwing some frozen vegetables in the microwave and serving them over pasta. This is almost as convenient and much less expensive. It's healthier for you too. You can also make your own frozen meals by making a big batch once a week or month and then putting single servings into the freezer for later consumption.

If you do buy frozen meals, spice it up. If you do want to buy a frozen dinner, go for a basic meal (like a plain pizza) that you can doctor up with your favorite vegetables. Think of frozen meals as a foundation to which you can add vegetables, herbs, leftover brown rice, or whatever else you need to make a balanced meal.

10 Ethnic foods

(pasta, pasta sauce, rice, beans, jarred salsa, enchilada sauce, rice noodles)

Look for tomato, not cream. Opt for tomato-based sauces instead of creamy or cheesy pasta sauces. Be wary of differences in serving size. A typical serving of marinara sauce is ½ cup with 70 calories and 2 grams of fat while a typical serving of alfredo sauce is ¼ cup with 110 calories and 10 grams of fat.

Go brown. Whenever possible, buy whole wheat pasta and brown rice. These usually cost just as much or less than their

bleached counterparts. If you don't like the taste or texture of whole wheat pasta or brown rice, try making a mixture of brown and white.

Buy dry beans. Buy dry beans rather than canned. Although they take a little more preparation, they are much cheaper than canned, and you have control over how much salt is added.

Make homemade sauces. Jarred salsa and canned enchilada sauce can be convenient, but the homemade versions are easy to make and much cheaper. Likewise, jarred tomato sauce is convenient, but often has added sugars.

Try unusual foods. Don't be afraid to try new foods in this section. Look for items on sale that you've never tried before and make a meal around them.

11 Drinks

Avoid soda. Soft drinks are cheap, but filled with empty calories. There are no nutritional benefits to drinking soda, so try to avoid purchasing it. If you need a carbonated beverage, switch to flavored sparkling water. These waters contain no calories and are just as cheap, if not cheaper, than soda.

Functional beverages are not necessarily beneficial.

Lately, functional beverage sales have increased drastically. Functional beverages are those that claim a specific nutritional benefit. Examples include sports drinks, fermented beverages, and vitamin water. These beverages usually have limited nutritional benefit, if they have any benefit at all; some are loaded with sugar and can be quite unhealthy. They are also very pricey.

Bottled water drains money. Bottled water is generally unnecessary in the United States because our water supply is extremely safe. Bottled water is expensive, unnecessary, and environmentally unfriendly. Instead, fill a reusable water bottle with tap water.

Look for tea and juice. In this section, look for herbal teas and 100% fruit juices. Juice labels can be misleading; make sure to read the ingredients list to make sure it is actually 100% juice. Also, remember that whole fruits are better than fruit juices; they have fewer calories per volume and more fiber.



Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label

Knowing what is in the food you eat is vital to monitoring food intake and making healthy choices. Food labeling is required by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) to be put on prepared and packaged foods such as breads, canned foods, drinks, etc. The labels must have the name of the food, its net weight, manufacturing information, an ingredient list, nutrition information, and potential allergens. If you take the time to understand and compare food labels, healthier choices can be made. Food labels give you clues as to what you are eating, and being able to decipher those clues is what will help you succeed in making healthier choices.

Here is a map to help you determine how to interpret the nutrition facts label

1	}	Nutrition Facts
		8 servings per container Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)
2	}	Amount per serving Calories 230
		% Daily Value*
3	}	Total Fat 8g 10% Saturated Fat 1g 5% Trans Fat 0g
4		Cholesterol 0mg 0% Sodium 160mg 7%
5		Total Carbohydrate 37g 13% Dietary Fiber 4g 14% Total Sugars 12g Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%
6	}	Protein 3g
7		Vitamin D 2mcg 10% Calcium 260mg 20% Iron 8mg 45% Potassium 240mg 6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1 How much are you eating?

All the information on the Nutrition Facts Label describes one serving. Usually there is more than one serving in a container, so be sure to look at the serving size and servings per container when portioning out a meal or snack. Larger portions increase the number of calories and other nutrients from what is on the label, so it is important to be aware of that.

2 Calorie Count

- The calorie count written is PER SERVING.
- The label has calories in larger print so it is easier for consumers to spot.

3 Total Fat

- The four major groups of dietary fat are monounsaturated, polyunsaturated, saturated and trans fats.
- Unsaturated fats have a unique structure that keeps them liquid at room temperature. They come from plants sources in two forms: monounsaturated (such as olive oil) and polyunsaturated (such as corn, canola, or soybean oil) and are considered to be the heart healthy fats. They help your body absorb fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K), help maintain cell membrane structure, and act as a storage source of energy that is used between meals.
- Companies are not required to list the amount of unsaturated fat in a product, but you can figure it out by subtracting the saturated fat and trans fats from the total fat count. The amount of fat remaining is the amount of unsaturated fat.
- Saturated fats (such as butter, shortening and lard) are solid at room temperature and come from animal sources, with the exception of palm and coconut oil. These fats are not heart healthy and should be consumed minimally.
- Trans fats are fats that were once unsaturated and then chemically altered to become a solid. These fats are such bad news that the less you consume, the better. As of 2020, no foods produced in the United States (U.S.) have been made using trans fats.

4 Cholesterol & Sodium

- Cholesterol is an essential component of every cell in your body. It assists in forming hormones, Vitamin D, and digestive factors. You create all the cholesterol you need through your liver, but it is okay to have some cholesterol in your diet.
- Sodium is an electrolyte that helps regulate fluid balance. If too much sodium is in the body, blood pressure will get too high (hypertension) and put you at risk for things such as heart disease, certain cancers, kidney disease, or a stroke. Try to choose foods that are low in sodium.

5 Total Carbohydrates

- Carbohydrates are found primarily in plant-based foods such as grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes. They provide the body with energy in the form of glucose.
- Total Carbohydrates include the total amount of natural sugar, added sugar, starches, and fiber in a product.
- Dietary Fiber is a non-digestible form of carbohydrates that helps with digestion and disease prevention. Total sugars include both natural and added sugars. Natural sugars are those that are naturally occurring in foods such as lactose in milk products and fructose in fruit or vegetables.
- Added sugars refers to sugar added to a product to sweeten it during processing. It is recommended to keep added sugar to less than 10% of your daily calories.

6 Protein

- Proteins play a number of roles in the body. They help your body fight off infections, keep your hair and nails strong, provide energy, maintain fluid balances, and help transport nutrients throughout the body. In the U.S., protein deficiency is not as common as in other countries, but without enough of it, protein-related malnutrition can develop and bones could get weaker. On the other hand, over consumption of protein can lead to other health concerns such as kidney stones, heart problems, and some cancers. It is important to consume a balance from a variety of food sources.

7 Micronutrients

- Vitamins are divided into two main categories: water-soluble and fat-soluble. It is important to consume enough vitamins in your diet to aid in growth, reproduction, and overall health. It is very rare that too many vitamins are consumed when they are obtained through food, but over-consumption through supplements can occur and can be toxic. Vitamin D is the only vitamin required to be listed on the label, but companies may choose to include other vitamins. Vitamin D is important for healthy bones and teeth and plays an important role in immunity.
- Minerals are additional micronutrients needed in your body. Nutrition labels are required to list calcium, iron, and potassium. Calcium plays a vital role in bone strengthening. Iron is the master of carrying oxygen from the lungs to various tissues in the need. Having too little iron in your blood can cause dizziness and the feeling of being lightheaded or nauseated. Potassium plays a vital role in muscle contraction, lowering blood pressure, strengthening bones, and balancing fluids in the body.

Ingredient List

- Have you ever looked at the ingredient list and wondered what foreign language it was written in? You could do research on each ingredient, but if you don't have time, just look for some key factors. First, how many ingredients are there? It is a good rule of thumb to choose foods with few ingredients. With a smaller list there are usually less added sugars and unhealthy additives. The other thing to notice is what the first ingredient is and what the last ingredient is. Ingredients are listed in the amount present going from most abundant to least. If you have a label that lists all sugars first, and healthier additions at the end, you might want to rethink your choice.

Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label can sometimes be a daunting task, but with practice, you will be able to discover many hidden treasures in the foods you eat. This will help you make healthier choices and have an overall healthier diet.



Misleading Claims

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos and Amy Spielmaker

Watch out for misleading claims. Always look at the nutrition facts label and the ingredients list. Package labeling can be very deceptive. Below are a few of the misleading claims found on food labels.

1 All natural

Foods labeled “all natural” cannot contain added colors, artificial flavors, or synthetic substances. However, a food labeled “all natural” may contain preservatives, high fructose corn syrup, or be injected with sodium.

2 No sugar added

Keep in mind that no sugar added foods likely still contain sugar. Most foods, including fruits, vegetables, milk, and grains, naturally contain sugar. While it is good that no additional sugar has been added, it is important to remember that “no sugar added” does not mean the product has no sugar.

3 Sugar free

Sugar free does not mean a product has fewer calories than its full-sugar counterpart. It may, in fact, have more. Sugar-free products often contain more fat to compensate for the taste and texture that is lost when the sugar content is reduced.

4 Zero trans fat

Products that claim zero trans fat can actually contain up to .5 grams per serving. If you eat more than one serving, this small amount can add up. Check for words on the ingredient list such as hydrogenated oil, partially hydrogenated oil, and shortening, which indicate that trans fat is still present.

5 Fat free

Just like “sugar free” claims, “fat free” claims do not mean that that the product is low calorie. These products likely contain extra sugar to compensate for the reduced fat content.

6 Light

Although “light” may make you think that the food is lower calorie, it can actually refer to the flavor rather than the nutritional content. For example, light olive oil means the flavor is mild, not that the calorie content is any lower than regular olive oil.

7 Gluten free

Gluten is a protein found in grains that can be harmful to people with gluten allergies or celiac disease. The increasing availability of gluten-free foods is great for people who have problems digesting gluten, but the labeling may be a little confusing. Gluten free does not mean the product is whole grain, contains more fiber, or has fewer carbohydrates. Gluten-free products are for people who need them.

8 Made with real fruit

Products that claim to be made from real fruit may not contain very much fruit at all, or none of the type pictured on the box. Food manufacturers do not need to list the percentage of fruit, so a product claiming “made with real fruit” can contain 100% fruit or 1% fruit.

9 Lightly sweetened

Although the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has definitions for reduced sugar, no added sugar, and sugar free, “lightly sweetened” has no regulations associated with it. Therefore, you cannot be sure how much sugar the product actually contains by looking at the packaging; you must read the nutrition facts label.

10 Per serving

Food companies can be tricky with serving sizes. To make a product look low in fat or calories, they may list information based on a small, unrealistic serving size. Remember to look at the serving size and make an educated decision based on how much you typically consume.

11 Catchy claims

Food labels often make claims about the benefits of their brand, like “cholesterol free” and “fat free” that can be misleading on certain products. For example, a brand of vegetable oil claiming to be “cholesterol free” may seem healthier than the other vegetable oil brands, but since vegetable oil is a plant product, it does not naturally contain cholesterol, so all the vegetable oil brands are cholesterol free. Likewise, fruit juice brands claiming to be “fat free” are not healthier because fruit juice is naturally fat free. Be wary of claims like these on food labels, and make sure to do a “common sense” check before making your selection.



Shopping for Produce

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos, Amy Spielmaker, and Lea Palmer

1 Spend time and choose wisely

Spend the most time in the produce section and choose a variety of fruits and vegetables. The different colors represent the different vitamin, mineral, and phytonutrient content of each fruit or vegetable.

2 Use the freezer

Generally, fruits and vegetables are extremely perishable so should only be purchased a maximum of 1 week before you plan to use them. However, most fruits and vegetables can be frozen, so if there is a big sale (or the food item is in season), it may be a good idea to purchase a larger quantity and freeze for later use. To freeze most fresh fruits and vegetables, follow these steps:

- Choose high quality, fresh fruits or vegetables.
- Blanch the fruit or vegetable (submerge in boiling water), then immerse in ice water. Dry thoroughly.
- Freeze fruits and vegetables quickly in heavy-weight, airtight containers or freezer bags.
- Fill containers to the top and make sure to remove as much air as possible from freezer bags.
- As a general rule, fruits and vegetables that hold up well to cooking will also freeze well.
- For a better texture, eat frozen fruits (like berries) before they're completely thawed.

3 Know which fruits and vegetables have a long shelf life

Although most fruits and vegetables should be consumed within 1 week after purchase, there are a few fruits and vegetables that will keep longer without being frozen. Apples, cranberries, carrots, cabbage, most root vegetables, and winter squash are all produce items that have an extended shelf life. When these foods are on sale, it is a

good idea to purchase them for later consumption. The caveat of course is that you will eat them eventually. In other words, avoid buying a 5-pound bag of carrots that is on sale if you don't foresee a use for the carrots in the future.

4 Choose healthy options within your budget

Many food companies tell us that 'organic foods are the clean foods' and 'fresh is best' etc. Buying fresh and organic foods can be a healthy option, but those options are sometimes more expensive. Luckily, there are many lower cost options so that we can eat healthy on a limited budget.

Organic versus Conventionally (non-organic) Grown Produce

Organic simply describes a method of growing food, not the nutrient quality. Produce can be called 'organic' if it was grown in an area that was USDA certified. To become USDA organic certified, farmers must follow specific guidelines and use natural products for things like improving soil quality and weed control. It is more expensive to grow organic produce, so there are fewer organic farms in the country. This means that some organic foods travel much further than non-organic foods. Because of this increased travel time, organic produce is not always fresher and can cost more at the store.

Conventionally grown produce is not grown on organic certified farms, but many precautions are still taken to provide safe foods. Conventional produce can provide the same nutrition as organic produce and may be a way to save money.

Whether choosing organic or conventionally grown produce, look for produce that is on sale or in season to get the most nutrition for your dollar.

5 Take a trip to the local farmers market

Most towns have local markets where you can buy fresh, inexpensive produce. Of course, these markets aren't always the most convenient way to shop because they are usually only once a week and don't have all the grocery items you need. However, they are good to visit because you will likely get great deals, you know the food is fresh, plus, local markets are fun and help the local economy!

6 Go seasonal

Try to focus meals around fruits and vegetables that are in season. These will likely be cheaper and fresher.

7 Maintain quality

All fruits and vegetables should be washed just prior to consumption in order to prolong freshness and quality. Also, fruits and vegetables should generally be kept in the crisper drawers of the refrigerator.

8 Know how to ripen

The ripening of fruits can be sped up by placing the fruit in a paper bag. This is because fruits release ethylene gas as they ripen. This ethylene gas gets trapped in the bag and helps ripen the fruit. For even faster ripening, place the fruit in the bag with another ripening fruit (like an apple). Due to this phenomenon, fruits that you do not want to ripen should be removed from their bags as soon as you return from the grocery store (even plastic bags can trap ethylene).

9 Know ripeness and quality indicators

The general rule for fruit is to smell it. If the smell is overly sweet, moldy, or just plain off, then do not buy it! Also, bruises or cuts on the skin are good indicators of quality.

Vegetables are more difficult because they always seem to smell a little earthy, which is close to moldy or musty. The best way to determine if they are good or bad is to gently squeeze them. If they are spongy or un-firm, keep looking. For information on ripeness and quality indicators, seasonality, and the proper storage of specific fruits and vegetables, refer to the "Shopping for Fruits" and "Shopping for Vegetables" handouts.

10 Fresh vs. Frozen vs. Canned

It is a common misconception that 'fresh is always best'. Sometimes fresh produce travels long distances to the store, so producers must harvest before the produce is fully ripe. Frozen fruits and vegetables are harvested when perfectly ripe and full of nutrients and then frozen right away to preserve the nutrient quality. This means an out-of-season or unripe fresh fruit will have less nutrient value than the lower cost frozen version. If in-season fresh produce is not available or not in the budget, try the lower cost frozen or canned versions for healthy alternatives!

Key things to look for when choosing fresh, frozen, or canned produce:

- Fresh: In season, with no add ins (such as caramelized nuts, syrups, sauces, etc.)
- Frozen: Read the ingredient list and choose bags with no added sugars, syrups, or salt.
- Canned: Choose 'sodium-free' (vegetables) or 'in it's own juice' (fruits) rather than salted vegetables or fruit in syrup.



Shopping for Fruit

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos and Amy Spielmaker

1 Apple

How to determine ripeness and quality? Look at the skin. Often when the skin is shiny, the apple will be juicy and crisp. Apples should be very firm and have a fresh smell. When tapped with one finger, apples should sound hollow, not flat.

When is it in season? Apples are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Apples should be kept in the refrigerator crisper.

2 Apricot

How to determine ripeness and quality? A ripe apricot will be firm to the touch, but yield when pressed. It will have a deep orange or yellow color, velvety skin, and a sweet aroma. Avoid apricots that are very soft, shriveled, or green tinged.

When is it in season? Apricots are in season in the summer.

How to store? Apricots should be ripened at room temperature. Ripe apricots can be stored in the refrigerator for 1 week (but they will not ripen in the refrigerator). Be careful with apricots as they bruise easily.

3 Avocado

How to determine ripeness and quality? A ripe avocado will be firm to the touch, but yield when pressed. An overripe avocado will feel overly soft. Additionally, avocados that feel as if the skin is disconnected from the inner flesh are likely brown or rotten on the inside.

When is it in season? Avocados are in season in the spring.

How to store? It is recommended that avocados be bought unripe and allowed to ripen at home. This ripening will take 2 to 5 days. A ripe avocado can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days before it is consumed.

4 Banana and Plantain

How to determine ripeness and quality? Yellow bananas with brown spots and a soft feel are fully ripe. They are very sweet and have the strongest flavor. However, many people do not like the texture of fully ripe bananas and prefer solid yellow bananas or those that still have tinges of green. These bananas are perfectly edible and have a less sweet taste and a firmer texture. Brown bananas are very sweet and are great for baking. Plantains are ripest and sweetest when they turn yellow-black.

When are they in season? Bananas and plantains are in season in the winter.

How to store? Bananas should be purchased while still a little green and allowed to ripen at home. Bananas stored in the refrigerator or the freezer will turn black. These are still good to eat (and they are especially good for baking), but their texture will be different. Plantains take a long time (longer than bananas) to ripen so plan ahead when making a recipe calling for plantains.

5 Berries

(blueberry, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry)

How to determine ripeness and quality? Ripe berries will have a deep color and no tinges of white or green. Generally, berries do not ripen once they are picked so they should be fully ripe when purchased at the grocery store. Good quality berries will be firm, dry, plump, and free from blemishes. There should be no juice stains on the packages as this indicates crushed, soft, or moldy fruit. Dehydrated, wrinkled fruit means that the berries have been stored too long.

When is it in season? Berries are usually in season in the spring.

How to store? Berries can be kept on the counter, but should be kept in the refrigerator to lengthen storage time. Berries should be stored unwashed until the time they are consumed.

6 Cantaloupe

How to determine ripeness and quality? Cantaloupe does not ripen after being picked so it should be purchased when it is fully ripened. A ripe cantaloupe will have a musky, sweet smell. If you gently press on the end opposite of the stem, it should give a little if the cantaloupe is ripe. Be careful though, because you do not want it to be too soft or mushy. The rind of the cantaloupe should be free of bruises, punctures, and mold. Also, the rind should be orange or golden, not green, which indicates an unripe fruit.

When is it in season? Cantaloupe is in season in the summer.

How to store? Cantaloupe can be chilled or kept at room temperature. However, those kept at room temperature will have the strongest flavor. Cut cantaloupe should be stored in the refrigerator.

7 Cherry

How to determine ripeness and quality? Cherries should have firm and glossy skin. They should be free from blemishes and have a dark color. Bright green stems are a good indication of freshness. Overripe cherries will have wrinkled skin or brown stems.

When is it in season? Cherries are in season in the summer.

How to store? Cherries can be kept on the counter, but should be refrigerated to lengthen storage time. Cherries also freeze well.

8 Citrus fruit

(orange, grapefruit, clementine, tangerine, mandarin, lemon, lime)

How to determine ripeness and quality? Citrus fruits should be firm and heavy for their size. Avoid those with blemishes, moldy spots, or shriveled skin. Citrus fruit should have a sweet, clean fragrance. Citrus fruits are ready to be consumed when they yield when squeezed. Color is an indicator of climate, not ripeness (so oranges with tinges of green can still be ripe).

When is it in season? Citrus fruits are in season in the winter.

How to store? Citrus fruit can be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator. They will ripen faster at room temperature.

9 Cranberry

How to determine ripeness and quality? Cranberries should be red, hard, plump, and shiny. Ripe cranberries will float when placed in a bowl of water. They should also bounce. Cranberries should not be soft, mushy, or discolored.

When is it in season? Cranberries are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Cranberries can be stored in a bag in the refrigerator for up to 2 months. They also freeze well.

10 Coconut

How to determine ripeness and quality? A coconut should have a dark brown shell and feel heavy for its size. The three “eyes” of the coconut should feel dry and slightly soft. When shaken, you should be able to hear the liquid sloshing around on the inside. The more liquid, the fresher the coconut.

When is it in season? Coconuts are in season in the autumn.

How to store? An unopened coconut can be stored in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks. Coconut flesh can be stored in the refrigerator for 10 days. Shredded coconut will only stay fresh for 3 days, and coconut milk should be consumed within 24 hours.

11 Grape

How to determine ripeness and quality? Grapes should be firm and plump with a deep color. The stems of grapes should be green. Brown stems indicate that the grapes are not fresh. If too many grapes fall off the stalk when shaken, the bunch is likely overly ripe.

When is it in season? Grapes are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Grapes will not continue ripening after picking, so be sure to select grapes that are ripe at the grocery store. Additionally, grapes are of the highest quality when consumed soon after purchasing. Grapes should not be washed until they are ready to be consumed, as washing will cause them to become mushy. Grapes are also very tasty and refreshing when frozen.

12 Honeydew

How to determine ripeness and quality? Ripe honeydew will have a creamy white or pale green rind. They should also have a sweet melon aroma and should feel heavy for their size. Honeydew should be firm, but not hard, with a small amount of softness at the stem end. Ripe honeydew should also have a slightly waxy rind.

When is it in season? Honeydew is in season in the summer.

How to store? Honeydew can be stored on the counter to ripen and then in the refrigerator once ripened. Cut honeydew should be stored in the refrigerator.

13 Kiwi

How to determine ripeness and quality? Kiwi should be plump, free of soft spots, bruises, and wrinkled skin. Ripe kiwi should be soft and yield to pressure.

When is it in season? Kiwi is in season in the spring.

How to store? Kiwi will continue to ripen after it has been picked. It should be kept at room temperature to ripen and then in the refrigerator once ripe.

14 Mango

How to determine ripeness and quality? A ripe mango should be soft to the touch and smell sweet. Sometimes the skin wrinkles when the mango is ripe.

When is it in season? Mangos are in season in the spring.

How to store? Mangos stay fresh longer in the refrigerator, but will ripen faster at room temperature. The taste of a mango is best when it has been chilled.

15 Nectarine and Peach

How to determine ripeness and quality? A ripe nectarine should be smooth, bright, shiny, and unblemished. A ripe peach should be fuzzy and red or yellow. Ripe nectarines and peaches should give slightly when pushed and have a sweet aroma.

When are they in season? Nectarines and peaches are in season in the summer.

How to store? Nectarines and peaches will continue to ripen after they have been picked. They should be kept at room temperature to ripen and then in the refrigerator once ripe.

16 Pear

How to determine ripeness and quality? Pears ripen from the inside out, so you can't judge their ripeness by looking at the skin. However, yellowing at the base is an indication of ripeness. It is also important to note that brown or blemished skin on a pear is not necessarily indicative of poor quality. A ripe pear is soft and has a sweet smell.

When is it in season? Pears are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Pears will continue to ripen after they are picked. They should be stored on the counter to ripen and then stored in the refrigerator once ripe. Once pears are ripe they will become overly ripe very fast so it is important to keep an eye on them.

17 Pineapple

How to determine ripeness and quality? A ripe pineapple should be a golden yellow color. The higher the yellow rises up the pineapple, the sweeter it will be. A ripe pineapple smells sweet, but if it smells fermented, it is over ripe. A pineapple should yield only slightly when pressed. A fresh pineapple should have green leaves that cannot be easily pulled out.

When is it in season? Pineapples are in season in the spring.

How to store? Although some pineapples will ripen after they are picked, most pineapples (like those from Hawaii) are picked at the height of freshness and should be consumed shortly after purchase. Pineapples can be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

18 Plum

How to determine ripeness and quality? Plums should have a rich color and no punctures, bruises, or signs of decay. Ripe plums are soft to the touch and have a sweet smell.

When is it in season? Plums are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Plums continue to ripen after they are picked. However, you should still avoid purchasing plums that are excessively hard as they are immature and will not ripen into a flavorful plum. Plums tend to ripen quickly so it is good to keep an eye on them. Plums can be stored in the refrigerator once ripe.

19 Pomegranate

How to determine ripeness and quality? Pomegranates are ripe when their skin is a deep color and can be easily scratched with your fingernail. A ripe pomegranate is slightly square, whereas an unripe pomegranate is round. Another sign of ripeness is when the petals on the crown of the pomegranate turn inside. The pomegranate should feel heavy for its size. You should avoid pomegranates with cracks and splits in the skin.

When is it in season? Pomegranates are in season in the winter.

How to store? Pomegranates can be kept in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks. Once they've been seeded, the seeds should be refrigerated or frozen.

20 Watermelon

How to determine ripeness and quality? The stripes on a ripe watermelon will be faded and the entire watermelon will be an almost uniform green color. If you press on the watermelon rind and it gives, the watermelon is likely ready to eat. The bottom of the watermelon should be yellow, not white, when it is ripe. A ripe watermelon will sound hollow when thumped and an unripe watermelon will sound solid.

When is it in season? Watermelons are in season in the summer.

How to store? Uncut watermelon should be kept at room temperature. Since watermelon tastes best when it has been chilled, room temperature melons can be placed in the refrigerator before serving. Cut watermelon should be stored in the refrigerator.



Shopping for Vegetables

Tips and tricks for the grocery store Written by: Mateja Savoie Roskos and Amy Spielmaker

1 Asparagus

How to determine quality? Choose stalks that have tightly closed tips. Usually thinner stalks will be less tough and stringy than thick stalks.

When is it in season? Asparagus is in season in the spring.

How to store? Wrap a wet paper towel around the bottom of asparagus stalks. This will help keep them fresh. Put the asparagus in a plastic bag and place in the crisper section of the refrigerator.

2 Broccoli

How to determine quality? Choose broccoli heads with tight, green florets and firm stalks. The broccoli should feel heavy for its size. The cut ends of the stalks should be fresh and moist looking. Avoid broccoli with dry or browning stem ends or yellowing florets.

When is it in season? Broccoli is in season in the winter.

How to store? Store broccoli unwashed in the refrigerator in an open plastic bag for 3-5 days.

3 Brussels Sprouts

How to determine quality? Brussels sprouts should have very tightly packed leaves. They should also be round and heavy for their size.

When is it in season? Brussels sprouts are in season in the winter.

How to store? Store Brussels sprouts in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

4 Cabbage

How to determine quality? Look for a firm body, and crisp, richly colored leaves. Avoid cabbage with a cracked head, pale color, or wilted leaves.

When is it in season? Cabbage is in season in the winter.

How to store? Keep cabbage in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

5 Carrots

How to determine quality? Look for carrots that are about ½ inch in diameter; these are young and the sweetest. Carrots should have a bright color, firm body, and smooth skin. The leaves, if attached, should be crisp and green.

When are they in season? Carrots are in season in the summer.

How to store? Whole carrots should be kept in a bag in the refrigerator. Cut carrots can be put in a container filled with water and kept in the refrigerator. This will help them stay fresh longer.

6 Cauliflower

How to determine quality? Cauliflower heads should be compact, white, and firm, with tightly clustered florets. The leaves should be bright green.

When is it in season? Cauliflower is in season in the autumn.

How to store? Cauliflower should be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

7 Corn

How to determine quality? Ripe, just-picked ears of corn have a tightly attached husk that is pliable, healthy and green. The kernels should ooze a milky liquid when stabbed; if they are dry or watery, the ear is not good. The kernels should be plump and arranged in neat, tight rows that extend the full length of the ear.

When is it in season? Corn is in season in the autumn.

How to store? Corn should be stored in the refrigerator crisper with husks still on. Corn also freezes well.

8 Cucumbers

How to determine quality? Cucumbers should have a heavy and firm body. Small, skinny cucumbers will have firmer, sweeter flesh and softer seeds.

When are they in season? Cucumbers are in season in the summer.

How to store? Cucumbers should be kept in the refrigerator. Cucumbers can absorb the flavor of nearby foods, so it is important to store cucumbers away from strong flavors, like onions.

9 Green Beans

How to determine quality? Green beans should be brightly colored and snap easily when bent. Avoid beans that have visible blemishes or are stiff.

When are they in season? Green beans are in season in the summer.

How to store? Green beans should be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

10 Jicama

How to determine quality? Choose jicama roots that are small in size. As the root grows larger, its flavor decreases and its texture toughens. Jicama should have smooth, shiny, and unblemished skins. Avoid jicama with green discoloration around the stem end as this is an indicator of mold.

When is it in season? Jicama is in season in the summer.

How to store? Jicama should be stored in a cool, dry place and left uncovered. Moisture can lead to rotting, so avoid putting jicama in the refrigerator. Remove any soggy or discolored flesh before use.

11 Onions

How to determine quality? Green onions should have crisp, bright green tops and a firm white base. Dry onions should be firm and free of cuts and blemishes.

When are they in season? Onions are in season in the winter.

How to store? Rubber bands and damaged leaves on green onions should be discarded immediately. Green onions can be wrapped in a damp paper towel and placed in the refrigerator. Dry onions should be kept in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place. Once cut, they should be stored in the refrigerator.

12 Peas

How to determine quality? Peas should be plump and bright green, not white. Peas with small pods and seeds are the most tender and sweet.

When is it in season? Peas are in season in the summer.

How to store? Peas can be stored in their pods in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Peas removed from their pods can be blanched and frozen.

13 Peppers

How to determine quality? Look for peppers with a firm body, thick walls, smooth skin, and a bright and shiny color. The colored bell peppers (red, yellow, and orange) are mature and sweeter bell peppers while the green bell peppers are immature and slightly bitter.

When are they in season? Peppers are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Peppers should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper.

14 Potatoes and Sweet Potatoes

How to determine quality? Potatoes should have a firm body and be heavy for their size. They should be free from black or soft spots, sprouts, wrinkles, or greenish color.

When are they in season? Potatoes are in season in the winter. Sweet potatoes are in season in the autumn.

How to store? Store potatoes in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area. They should be placed in a perforated plastic or burlap bag.

15 Rhubarb

How to determine quality? Rhubarb should have firm, crisp stalks with a hint of red. The edges should not be brown or dried out. The leaves, if they're still attached, should not be wilted.

When is it in season? Rhubarb is in season in the spring.

How to store? The leaves of the rhubarb should be removed. Wash and dry the stalks and cut off any imperfections. Wrap the stalks with a damp paper towel and place in the refrigerator.

16 Root Vegetables

(beet, parsnip, radish, celery root, rutabaga)

How to determine quality? Look for small-to-medium-sized roots; large roots are often tough and woody. Flesh should be smooth and firm. Root vegetables should have a rich color and have healthy, unwilted leaves.

When are they in season? Root vegetables are in season in the winter.

How to store? If the root vegetable still has leaves connected, keep them attached. Place the root in a perforated plastic bag (or open plastic bag) in the refrigerator crisper.

17 Salad Greens

(endive, bok choy, radicchio, spinach, any lettuce)

How to determine quality? Look for healthy, dark green leaves. Smaller spinach leaves indicate a more tender and sweet flavor. Lettuce leaves should be crisp and compact.

When are they in season? Salad greens are in season in the spring.

How to store? Store in the crisper section of the refrigerator.

18 Summer Squash

(zucchini, yellow squash)

How to determine quality? Yellow squash and zucchini are at their best when they're small (about 4 inches long). They should feel firm, heavy for their size, and have a bright and healthy skin. Avoid summer squash with dull or hard skin, an oversized body, soft spots, or blemishes.

When is it in season? Summer squash is in season in the summer.

How to store? Store summer squash in a plastic bag in the crisper section of the refrigerator.

19 Tomato

How to determine ripeness and quality? Since tomatoes are a fruit, they will continue to ripen after being picked. The skin of the tomato will be shiny, not matte, when it is ripe. The skin should be a deep color and be slightly soft to the touch.

When are they in season? Tomatoes are in season in the summer.

How to store? Tomatoes should be stored at room temperature. If kept in the refrigerator, tomatoes will not ripen properly and will become mushy.

20 Winter Greens

(kale, chard)

How to determine quality? The leaves of winter greens should be firm and deeply colored with stems that are moist and strong.

When are they in season? Winter greens are in season in the winter.

How to store? Store winter greens in the refrigerator in an airtight bag. The longer winter greens are stored, the more bitter they will become.

21 Winter Squash

(butternut, acorn, spaghetti)

How to determine quality? The skin of winter squash should be hard and rigid. The skin should be dull and rich in color without blemishes, cracks, or soft spots. The stem should be dry and firm.

When is it in season? Winter squash is in season in the winter.

How to store? Store winter squash in a cool, dark, well-ventilated area. Do not wrap winter squash in plastic bags.



Reduce Added Sugars in Your Diet

Reducing intake of added sugars can help lower your risk of obesity, heart disease, type II diabetes and weight gain.

What are added sugars?

- Sugar and syrups added to food when it is being processed or prepared. It does not include sugars that are naturally occurring in foods like fruit, vegetables, or milk.
- Added sugars generally only add calories to foods, not vitamins or minerals.
- Look at ingredient list on packages of most foods for some of these common types of added sugar:
 - Cane sugar
 - Molasses
 - Dextrose
 - Corn syrup
 - High-fructose corn syrup
 - Raw sugar
 - Glucose
 - Brown sugar
 - Honey
 - Lactose
 - Fruit Nectar
 - Maple Syrup
 - Maltose
 - Brown Rice Syrup
 - Malt Syrup
 - Sucrose

Recommendations for added sugar intake

- The Dietary Guidelines recommend limiting added sugars to no more than 10% of daily calories.
 - Example: 2,000 calorie diet > 200 calories/day
 - 200 calories = 50 grams* = ~12 tsp. per day*
 - * 1 tsp. of sugar = 4 grams = 16 calories**
- Use the nutrition facts label to identify how much sugar is in different foods.
- Children under 2 years old should not eat or drink added sugars.

Nutrition Facts Label

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Separates natural and added sugars

Added sugars in beverages

Many beverages have a surprising amount of added sugar. How does your favorite beverage stack up?

BEVERAGE	SUGAR CONTENT*
Water	0 grams = 0 teaspoons
Fruit Infused Water	Varies depending on fruit used, but contains 0 grams of added sugar
44 oz. Diet Cola with Ice	0 grams=0 teaspoons
Unsweetened Iced Tea	0 grams=0 teaspoons
1 cup (8 oz.) of 100% Orange Juice*	21 grams = ~5 teaspoons
9.5 oz. Iced Coffee – Mocha Flavored	31 grams=~8 teaspoons
20 oz. Sports Drink	35 grams= ~9 teaspoons
15 oz. Energy Drink	54 grams = 13 ½ teaspoons
15 oz. 100% Juice Smoothies*	60 grams = 15 teaspoons
44 oz. Cola with Ice	128 grams= 32 teaspoons

**100% fruit juice will have a high amount of sugar, but it's not added sugar. 100% fruit juice is a better choice than sugar sweetened beverages, but choosing whole fruit over juice is recommended.*

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The Facts About Caffeine

CAFFEINE is a stimulant (something that energizes) of the nervous system, causing you to become more alert with a boost of energy.

How much is too much?

Every person responds to caffeine differently so what works for one person could be too much for another person. It is important to watch for any negative side effects while drinking caffeinated beverages. Even though it is very uncommon, extremely high intakes of caffeine can trigger serious health problems such as heart attack, stroke, or even death.

The Mayo Clinic recommends the following daily limits of caffeine:

Adult: less than 400 mg/day

Adolescent: less than 100 mg/day

Child: 0 mg/day

As little as 100 mg/day can cause dependency on caffeine.

Side Effects

Depending on the amount of caffeine consumed, one or more of the following side effects could occur:

- Increased energy
- Increased alertness
- Jitteriness
- Increased anxiety
- Increased blood pressure
- Stomach irritations
- Irritability
- Decreased quality and length of sleep
- Headaches
- Abnormal heart rhythms
- Sleep walking

***The effects of caffeine are different for each individual.**

Health Benefits?

There is research linking small amounts of caffeine to reduced risks of Parkinson's disease, some cancers, and increased endurance. There is no evidence that shows caffeine to be an effective way to lose weight. In fact most drinks that contain caffeine also contain unhealthy amounts of sugar and calories that will actually contribute to weight gain, diabetes, and tooth decay.

Dependence on Caffeine

Caffeine can cause an individual to become dependent on it, if consumed regularly. Dependency on caffeine can cause headaches, restlessness, drowsiness, and irritability. If you are dependent on caffeine, decrease daily consumption slowly to prevent these symptoms. While you are decreasing caffeine intake, you may experience fatigue, so find alternative ways to increase your energy such as: getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, eating a healthy diet, and exercising daily. If you are still tired after allowing your body to get used to a lack of caffeine and having healthy lifestyle habits, consult a doctor. Extreme fatigue could be a sign of an underlying health problem that caffeine was covering.

Common Drinks and Their Caffeine Content

NAME	STANDARD AMOUNT	CAFFEINE IN STANDARD AMOUNT	CAFFEINE IN 16 OZ.
ENERGY DRINKS			
5 hour Energy	2 oz.	200 mg	
Bang Energy	16 oz.	300 mg	300 mg
Monster	16 oz.	172 mg	172 mg
Rockstar	16 oz.	160 mg	160 mg
Red Bull	8.4 oz.	79 mg	151 mg
Mountain Dew Energy	16 oz.	90 mg	90 mg
COFFEE, ETC			
Brewed Coffee	8 oz.	163 mg	324 mg
Average Coffee	8 oz.	95 mg	190 mg
Coffee Shop Iced Tea	12 oz.	120 mg	160 mg
Iced Tea	8 oz.	Average of 47 mg	94 mg
Dunkin' Donuts Coffee	20 oz.	270 mg	216 mg
Starbucks Bottled Frappuccino	13.7 oz.	110 mg	128 mg
SOFT DRINKS			
Mountain Dew	12 oz.	54 mg	72 mg
Dr Pepper	12 oz.	41 mg	55 mg
Coke	12 oz.	34 mg	45 mg
Diet Coke	12 oz.	45 mg	60 mg
Pepsi	12 oz.	38 mg.	51 mg
Sprite	12 oz.	0 mg	0 mg
Crystal Light with Caffeine	12 oz.	60 mg	60 mg
OTHERS			
Premier Protein Cafe Latte	11.1 oz.	120 mg	173 mg
Chocolate Milk	8 oz.	5 mg	10 mg
Dark Chocolate	1 oz.	20 mg	320 mg
Milk Chocolate	1 oz.	6 mg	96 mg
Cold Relief Meds	1 tablet	30 mg	
Vivarin	1 tablet	200 mg	
Excedrin	2 tablets	130 mg	

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Create Safe Food

 **CLEAN**

Wash hands, utensils, and cutting boards before and after contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.

United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2018

 **SEPARATE**

Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs away from foods that won't be cooked.

 **COOK**

Use a food thermometer to determine if your food is properly cooked. You can't tell food is safely cooked by how it looks or feels.

 **CHILL**

Refrigerate leftovers and perishable foods within 2 hours. Keep the refrigerator at 40° F or below.



Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures

MEAT	TEMPERATURE
Beef, Pork, Veal, and Lamb (roast, steaks, chops, fresh or smoked ham)	145° F and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes. (Rest: let meat sit after removing from the heat before cutting or eating it).
Fully Cooked Ham (to reheat)	165° F
Ground Meats	160° F
All Poultry (whole parts or ground)	165° F
Eggs and Egg Dishes	160° F
Leftovers and Casseroles	165° F
Fish and Shellfish	145° F

United States Department of Agriculture, 2015

Clean

Hands. Washing hands is an important step when preparing and before eating a meal. Always wash your hands before preparing food and after handling raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood.

- 1 Wet** your hands with warm, running water and apply soap.
- 2 Lather** hands by rubbing them together to make bubbles with the soap.
- 3 Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Make sure to scrub on the top and bottoms of hands, under fingernails and between fingers. Try singing a song like "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" to track the time. If you find that you sing it fast, sing it twice.
- 4 Rinse** your hands with warm, running water. Turn faucet off with a clean paper towel. (Remember, it was turned on with dirty hands.)
- 5 Dry** hands with a clean paper towel. Use a paper towel to open the bathroom/restroom door. Throw away the towel.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016

Fruits and Vegetables. Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables in water before peeling, eating, or cooking. Do not use soap. Vegetable brushes are helpful. It is not recommended you wash meat or poultry before cooking.

United States Department of Agriculture, 2013

Surfaces. Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot, soapy water before and after preparing food. Wash anything (knives, hands, plates, cutting boards) that touches meat, poultry, and seafood before using it for other foods. Choose plastic or other non-porous cutting boards. Consider using paper towels for kitchen cleanup. If using cloth towels, launder them and switch them out often. Avoid using the same cloth or paper towel for cleaning up foods that should be kept separate.

Separate

Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood separate from other foods in your grocery cart, in your refrigerator and as you prepare food.

GROCERY CART AND BAGS	REFRIGERATOR	FOOD PREPARATION
<p>Keep meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood separate from other items in the cart. Use separate plastic bags in the cart for these items, if possible. Make sure to have these items bagged separately from other foods.</p>	<p>Keep meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood separate from other foods in the refrigerator. Make sure that these items are stored in sealed bags or containers. It is best to keep them on the bottom shelf to avoid dripping on other food.</p>	<p>Use one cutting board for cutting raw meat, poultry, and seafood and another board for cutting other foods. (If only one board is available, make sure to wash thoroughly with soap and water after using it to cut raw meat, poultry, and seafood.)</p>

Cook

Proper cooking kills many types of bacteria that can make people sick. Do not rely on the color or texture of food to determine doneness. The best way to know if meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, leftovers, and casseroles have cooked to a safe temperature is by checking with a food thermometer. Make sure to check the temperature at the thickest part of the food. See the USDA chart on the front page for the recommended safe temperatures.

Chill

Keep your refrigerator between 38° and 40° F and your freezer at 0° F. Make sure to refrigerate or freeze perishables and leftovers within 2 hours. Marinate food in the refrigerator. Always defrost food in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Do not thaw food on the counter. Divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. Do not overfill the refrigerator or freezer.

FIGHT BAC! Partnership for Food Safety Education, 2016

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FightBAC.org

Supported by FIGHT BAC!, a food safety education partnership, this site has more information about the core four practices: clean, separate, cook and chill.

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Benefits of Aerobic Exercise



LUNGS

Enhances the lungs ability to get oxygen to tissues throughout the body



MENTAL HEALTH

Reduces stress, anxiety, and tension

ENERGY

Improves energy, stamina, and endurance



DIABETES

Reduces risk for developing type 2 diabetes



HEART

Strengthens and enlarges the heart making it easier to pump blood throughout the body

BODY COMPOSITION

Reduces body fat and increases lean body mass



SLEEP

Improves sleep



MUSCLES

Strengthens muscles throughout the body

Benefits of Resistance Training

- Improves muscle & bone health
- Reduces body fat & increases lean body mass
- Lowers blood pressure
- Lowers LDL or "bad" cholesterol
- Helps to prevent injury
- Improves self-confidence

Benefits of Balance & Flexibility

- Decreases the risk of injury
- Increases your range of motion
- Decreases soreness associated with other exercise

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WEEK AT A GLANCE

Physical exercise is simply the use of energy to move the body. Walking, gardening, pushing a baby stroller briskly, climbing the stairs, playing soccer, or dancing are all examples of being physically active.

Monday

Aerobic Exercise

MORNING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 15 minutes jogging/walking
- 5 minutes static stretching

EVENING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 15 minutes bike riding
- 5 minutes static stretching

Resistance Training

MORNING, AFTERNOON, OR EVENING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 10 reps push-up
- 5 reps seated row w/band
- 10 reps shoulder raise w/band
- 10 reps squat
- 10 reps crunch
- 10 reps bicep curl w/band
- 5 minutes static stretching



Tuesday

Active Rest Day Find activities that require you to move throughout the day but will allow you to recover from the day before. 30-60 minutes of active rest is recommended.

Wednesday

Resistance Training

MORNING, AFTERNOON, OR EVENING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 8 reps chest fly w/band
- 8 reps bent over row w/band
- 8 reps shoulder press w/band
- 8 reps walking lunge
- 8 reps Russian twist
- 8 reps tricep kickback w/band
- 5 minutes static stretching

Aerobic Exercise

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 5 minutes light elliptical training
- 30 minutes hiking
- 5 minutes static stretching

Thursday

Active Rest Day Find activities that require you to move throughout the day but will allow you to recover from the day before. 30-60 minutes of active rest is recommended.



Friday

Aerobic Exercise

MORNING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 10 minutes jogging/walking stairs
- 5 minutes static stretching

AFTERNOON

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 10 minutes playing basketball
- 5 minutes static stretching

EVENING

- 5 minutes dynamic stretching
- 10 minutes dancing
- 5 minutes static stretching

Saturday

Physical Activities with Family Go to the park, walk the dog together, play sports, etc.)

Sunday

Rest Day

Benefits of Aerobic Exercise



LUNGS

Enhances the lungs ability to get oxygen to tissues throughout the body



MENTAL HEALTH

Reduces stress, anxiety, and tension

ENERGY

Improves energy, stamina, and endurance



DIABETES

Reduces risk for developing type 2 diabetes



HEART

Strengthens and enlarges the heart making it easier to pump blood throughout the body

BODY COMPOSITION

Reduces body fat and increases lean body mass



Zzz

SLEEP

Improves sleep



MUSCLES

Strengthens muscles throughout the body

TRY SOMETHING NEW!

Finding new activities you enjoy will keep your physical activity routine fun and fresh.



Bootcamp



Crossfit



Zumba



Team Sports



Aerobics Class



Rowing



Running/Jogging



Country Swing Dance



Latin Dancing



Ballroom Dancing



Dancing



Water Aerobics



Martial Arts



Boxing



Swimming



Hiking

My Goals

In the next week I will _____

In the next month I will _____

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AEROBIC EXERCISE

Aerobic exercise includes any activity that gets you breathing heavier, your heart beating faster, and your muscles working harder than when you are at rest. The benefits of aerobic activity are felt throughout your entire body.

Aerobic Exercise: What Counts?

Levels of Aerobic Intensity

LIGHT INTENSITY

Includes activities done in everyday life including light housework, shopping, and cooking. While still good for you, these activities do not count toward aerobic activity goals because your body is not working quite hard enough.

MODERATE INTENSITY

Includes activities where your heart is beating faster and you are breathing harder than during normal daily activities. During these activities you are able to talk comfortably, but are not able to sing.

VIGOROUS INTENSITY

Includes activities where you are breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate is elevated. During these activities you will have difficulty saying more than a few words without taking a breath.

Remember, more vigorous intensity is not always better. You can gain just as many benefits from moderate activities. Always remember to discuss new physical activity routines with your medical provider before starting.

Types of Aerobic Activity

Light (30 minutes)	Moderate (30 minutes)	Vigorous (30 minutes)
Shopping	Walking Briskly	Jogging or Running
Cooking	Water Aerobics	Swimming Laps
Light Housework	Ride a Bike on Level Ground	Playing Basketball
Laundry	Dancing	Riding a Bike on Hills
Sweeping the Floor	Pushing a Lawn Mower	Heavy Yard Work
Washing the Dishes	Gardening	Tennis
Making the Bed	Canoeing	Skiing (cross country)
Light Walking (around the room)	Cleaning	Aerobics (high impact)
Playing Catch	Bodyweight Exercise (beginning yoga)	Bodyweight Exercise (push-ups)
Fishing	Golf	Hiking (rigorous)

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

The following are Health & Human Services recommendations for aerobic exercise for various age groups.

Age Group	How Often	How Long
Adults 18-64 yrs.	At least 3 days per week	At least 2.5 hrs of moderate aerobic exercise OR 1.25 hrs of vigorous activity weekly
Children 6-17 yrs.	At least 3 days per week	At least 1 hr of moderate or vigorous activity daily <i>Doesn't have to be formal. Playing counts too!</i>
Children 2-5 yrs.	Play actively several times every day	No specific recommendations <i>Short bursts of active play will add up throughout the day!</i>

Aerobic Exercise Safety

It is essential to keep safety in mind when doing any type of physical activity. To stay safe during aerobic exercise, remember to:

Always check with your medical provider before starting a new physical activity routine.

Start slow and build up to your desired level of activity.

Always stretch before and after aerobic exercise.

Wear proper shoes.

Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after aerobic exercise.

Benefits of Resistance Training

- Improves muscle & bone health
- Reduces body fat & increases lean body mass
- Lowers blood pressure
- Lowers LDL or "bad" cholesterol
- Helps to prevent injury
- Improves self-confidence

FITT Principle

FREQUENCY

At least two days per week with at least one day of rest in between.

INTENSITY

It is different for everyone. Choose a weight that is heavy enough it will tire your muscles, but light enough that you can still do the exercise correctly.

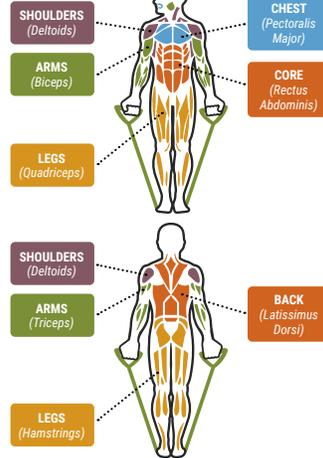
TIME

Complete each exercise anywhere from eight to twelve times. Repeat the exercise again for the same number of times. If you feel strong enough, repeat a third time.

TYPE

Do at least one exercise per main muscle group.

Main Muscle Groups



My Goals

In the next week I will _____

In the next month I will _____

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RESISTANCE TRAINING

Resistance training is a form of physical activity designed to improve your body's muscular strength, power, and endurance.



Resistance Training Exercises

Use the color coded muscle group diagram on back to see which muscle each exercise will strengthen.



PUSH-UP

Get into a plank position with your elbows extended and feet together. Hands should be about shoulder width apart from each other. Take a deep breath. Bend elbows and bring chest as close to the ground as possible. Exhale and push your body back to original position. Mod #1: Drop knees to ground for starting position. Perform push-up normally. Mod #2: Perform on elevated surface, such as a table, chair, etc. Place hands on surface and do push-up normally.

TIP: Keep hands in front of chest!



SEATED CHEST FLY W/BAND

Sit in a chair with a secure back rest. Wrap the resistance band firmly around the back of the chair, and grab each end of the band with your hands so you are facing forward. Sit up tall. Extend your elbows away from the center of your body so the palm of each hand is facing the wall in front of you. Keep a slight bend in the elbows. Take a deep breath. As you breathe out, bring your hands together in front of your body as if you were giving someone a "bear hug." Be sure to keep your back against the chair. Perform 10-15 reps.



SHOULDER RAISES W/BAND

Stand or sit with both feet firmly in the center of the resistance band. Place your arms at your side with a slight bend in the elbows. While holding each end of the band, raise your arms until they are about shoulder level. Slowly bring your arms back down to your side. Breathe out as your arms go up, and breathe in as your arms go down. Bring your feet close together to make the exercise easier. Move them farther apart to make it difficult. Perform 10-15 reps.

TIP: Shoulders are more mobile, but less stable than other joints. Be cautious!



SHOULDER PRESS W/BAND

Stand up tall in the center of the resistance band. While holding each end of the resistance band, bring your arms up so that your elbows are facing the floor and the palms of your hands are facing each other. Breathe in. As you breathe out, press your arms up over your head until they are fully extended. Carefully return to the starting position. Perform 10-15 reps.



BENT OVER ROW W/BAND

Stand on the resistance band with both arms at your sides. Hold onto each end of the band, and bend at the waist until your chest is almost parallel with the floor. Slightly bend your knees to take pressure off your lower back. With your arms extended in front of you, pull the ends of the band back by bending your elbows and squeezing your shoulder blades together. Gently return to the starting position. Perform 10-15 reps.

TIP: Bend knees. Flat back. Elbows close.



SEATED ROW W/BAND

Sit on the floor with your legs extended in front of you. Grab each end of the resistance band and wrap it around your feet. Sit up tall, and breathe in. As you breathe out, bend at the elbows and pull back on the band with each end. Return to the starting position. Perform 10-15 reps.



BICEPS CURL W/BAND

You can do this exercise while standing or sitting. Place both feet in the center of the resistance band. Place your arms at your sides, fully extended. Breathe in. As you breathe out, pull the band up toward your shoulders. Slowly return to starting position. Perform 10-15 reps.



TRICEP KICKBACK W/BAND

Stand in middle of resistance band holding on to each end. For the starting position, bend knees slightly, bend forward at hips, and bend elbows. Once in position, take a deep breath. As you breathe out, extend your elbows. Finish the exercise by returning elbows to bent position.



WALKING LUNGE

Stand up tall with arms at side. Take one step forward into lunge position, bending at the hip and knee. Be sure to keep knee joint at 90 degrees. Return to starting point by bringing opposite leg forward into standing position. Mod #1: While performing lunge, place hand on object for stability (i.e. wall, chair).



SQUAT

Stand up tall. Place arms out in front of you, and sit back so that your hips tilt and your knees stay behind your toes. Drop down to the point you feel comfortable. Make sure to keep the weight of your body in your heels throughout exercise. As you come back to standing position, breathe out. Mod #1: While performing squat, place hand on object for stability (i.e. table, chair). Mod #2: Perform squat normally, but sit on a chair or bench at bottom of exercise.

TIP: Learn to sit before you squat. Weight in heels. Keep chest up.



CRUNCH

Lie down on smooth surface. Bend knees while keeping bottom of feet on the ground. Place hands behind ears or across the chest. Breathe in. As you breathe out, flex your abdominals and curl up to the point you feel comfortable. Return to starting position. Mod #1: Perform the crunch on a stability ball (if available). Mod #2: Use a partner to help perform exercise. Grasp hands and have them give you slight assistance on the way up.



RUSSIAN TWISTS W/BAND

Sit on the floor with both legs out in front of you with a slight bend in the knees. Keep your heels on the floor. Wrap the resistance band around the soles of your shoes, and bring the ends together so that you can hold each end with both hands. Sit firmly with a straight back. Breathe in. As you breathe out, twist your body at the hips so that you move the ends of the band to one side of your body. Then, twist your body until the ends of the band are on the opposite side. For a more challenging exercise, bring your heels off of the floor as you twist. Perform 10-20 reps on each side.

Benefits of Balance and Flexibility Exercises

BASIC STRETCHING TIPS

- Warm up with light exercise before stretching.
- Perform dynamic stretching every time BEFORE you exercise or 3 times a week. Perform static stretching every time AFTER you exercise or 3 times a week. Perform balance exercises 1-2 times a week.
- Do not hold your breath while stretching or balancing.
- Do not bounce while stretching or balancing.

WHY SHOULD YOU STRETCH/IMPROVE BALANCE

- Improve athletic ability
- Decrease the risk of injury
- Increase your range of motion

Types of Stretching

DYNAMIC STRETCHING

- Dynamic stretching consists of controlled leg and arm movements that take you (gently) to the limits of your range of motion. In dynamic stretches, there are no bounces or "jerky" movements. An example of dynamic stretching would be slow, controlled leg swings, arm swings, or torso twists.
- This is most beneficial for warming up BEFORE exercising.

STATIC STRETCHING

- Static stretching consists of pushing the joint to its furthest point and then maintaining or holding that position. Another form of static stretching, known as passive stretching, consists of a person relaxing (passive) while some external force (either a person or an apparatus) brings the joint through its range of motion.
- This form of stretching is most beneficial AFTER exercising and for increasing range of motion.

Balance Exercises



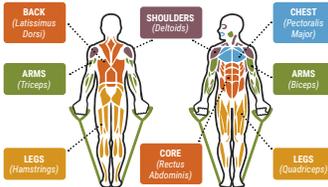
TREE POSE

While standing, press the bottom of your right foot to the inside of your left thigh just above the knee cap. While holding this position, bring your arms to either a prayer-like position or extend them up over your head. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Repeat on other side.



HALF MOON POSE

While standing, bring right leg off the ground keeping it straight and behind you. Bring your left arm to the ground (or to a stool for those not as flexible) while your right arm extends up. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Repeat on other side.



My Goals

In the next week I will _____

In the next month I will _____

Extension
UtahStateUniversity.



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CREATE
BETTER HEALTH



BALANCE AND FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is a form of physical activity achieved through stretching and by moving a joint through its range of motion. Balance is the ability for the body to remain in a stable position when performing particular movements.



NECK STRETCH

Gently tilt your head to one side as if your ear was listening to your shoulder. Repeat on the other side.



CHEST STRETCH

While standing or sitting, place hands behind your back and interlock fingers. Straighten arms, sit up tall, and push chest forward. Hold for 5-10 seconds.



TRICEPS STRETCH

Gently bend arm behind head as if scratching your back. Then, place the opposite hand on elbow and pull down. Hold, and repeat on other arm.



SEATED TWIST

While seated, place your left hand on your right knee. Position your right hand behind you. Twist towards your right hand. Hold position for 5-10 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.

■ UPPER BODY ■ CORE ■ LOWER BODY

STATIC STRETCHING



SHOULDER STRETCH

While standing or sitting, hold one arm out in front of you. Grab shoulder with opposite arm and pull it across your body.



ABDOMINAL STRETCH

Lay face down on the ground. Lift your upper body upward while your lower body stays touching the floor.



HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

Keep back straight, tuck bottom under, lunge forward on front leg.



SEATED ABS STRETCH

While seated, extend arms over head and feet out in front of you. Extend your arms as high as you possibly can in the air while still sitting.



LUMBAR STRETCH

Reach forward with arms, push chest toward floor, arch back down, backside behind knees.



HAMSTRING STRETCH

Start with knee slightly bent, then push knee straight as tension allows, push chest toward foot and try to touch your toes.



ADDUCTOR STRETCH

Sit on the floor. Place the bottoms of your feet together. Next, push down with elbows on knees very gently. Keep back straight.



QUADRICEPS STRETCH

Stand on one leg, balance, pull foot toward buttocks.



CALF STRETCH

Keep knee straight and heel down, feet facing forward. Lean toward the wall in front of you.



GLUTE STRETCH

While lying on ground, place left ankle on right knee. With both hands, pull right knee toward your face. Stretch will be in left glute muscle. Perform on both sides.

DYNAMIC STRETCHING



TIP-TOE WALKING

Walk on toes for 45 sec.



LEG SWINGS

With one arm outstretched to the side and the other against the wall. Swing your outside leg in front and then behind you. Repeat 10 times.



PUSH UP WITH ROTATION

Start in push-up position. Push up until arms and back are straight. Rotate left hand into the air and lift left foot off the ground and place it on right foot. Repeat on the other side.



SCORPION

Lie on your stomach with arms outstretched and toes pointed. Kick left foot toward right arm and vice versa Repeat 10 times.



HURDLER'S KNEE RAISE

While moving forward, raise your leg as if stepping over an object just below waist height, then return to normal walking stride. Repeat 10 times.



INCH WORM

Stand up, legs together. Bend over, stretch hands in front and place them on ground. Walk your feet toward your hands, then back. Repeat 10 times.



AIRPLANES

Stretch your arms out straight to the sides and spin them in circles. Alternate directions. Do for 45 sec.



SWIMMER'S STRETCH

Swing your arms out wide and then bring them in, giving yourself a big hug. Repeat 10 times.



HEEL-UPS

Rapidly kick heels toward buttocks while moving forward.



SIDE LUNGES

Spread legs wide and lean side to side. Keep weight on the heel of the foot as you lean. Repeat 10 times.

ADULTS



What's your move?

You know you need physical activity to stay healthy.
But did you know it can help you feel better right away?



Boost your mood



Sharpen your focus



Reduce your stress



Improve your sleep

So get more active — and start feeling better today.

How much activity do I need?

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.



AND



Tight on time this week? **Start with just 5 minutes.** It all adds up!

Or get the same benefits in half the time. If you step it up to **vigorous-intensity** aerobic activity, aim for at least **75 minutes** a week.



Create Amazing Veggies

Create delicious and nutritious vegetable dishes from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each dish serves four adults.

1 Choose one or more vegetables to make 4 cups

- Arugula
- Asparagus
- Avocado
- Bamboo Shoots
- Bell Pepper
- Beets
- Bok Choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Collard Greens
- Corn
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Green Beans
- Jalapeno
- Jicama
- Kale
- Leek
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms
- Mustard Greens
- Okra
- Onion
- Parsnip
- Peas
- Potato
- Pumpkin
- Radish
- Rutabaga
- Shallot
- Spinach
- Squash
- Swiss Chard
- Sweet Potato
- Tomatillo
- Tomato
- Turnip
- Water Chestnut
- Watercress
- Yam
- Zucchini

2 Choose a cooking method

- **Fresh:** no cooking method required (salads, veggie trays, etc.).
- **Roast:** Chop vegetables into uniform 1” cubes. Combine with 1-2 tablespoons olive oil and herbs as desired. Put on a baking sheet in single layer. Roast at 425°F til tender, 10-50 minutes depending on vegetable. Stir occasionally. Roasting brings out naturally sweet flavor of vegetables!
- **Steam:** Bring water to a boil in sauce pan with steamer basket. Place vegetables in the steamer. Cover and steam until tender (3-10 minutes depending on vegetable). If vegetables are green, leave lid askew to help retain color. Season as desired.
- **Sauté:** Heat a small amount of oil or water on low heat. Turn heat to medium-high and when pan is hot, add food. Don't over-crowd food. The goal is to create a crust around each piece of food in the pan so that it is browned and crispy outside and tender inside. Do not over-stir.
- **Grill/broil:** Spray grill rack or broiler pan with cooking spray. Heat grill or broiler pan for 10-15 minutes. Add cubed or sliced vegetables. Leave ¾ inch between food items to ensure even cooking. “Flip” vegetables only once during cooking to sear. Use seasonings for flavor; add sticky sauces just before serving or pass sauce around table.
- **Boil:** Place cubed vegetables in large pot and add enough water or stock to barely cover. Cover and bring to low boil over high heat; reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are tender. Do not overcook.

3 Choose one or more flavors (optional)

- Chopped onion, celery, green pepper, hot pepper
- Minced garlic and/or ginger
- Lemon juice and/or zest
- 1 – 2 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, sage, dill, etc.)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, red wine vinegar, sesame oil, or olive oil

4 Choose one or more extras (optional)

- ¼ cup breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese

Directions

Select vegetables and cooking method. Choose flavors and extras. Cook according to instructions above. Add extras before serving.

Amazing Veggie Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting vegetables like these!

ROASTED POTATOES

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon chili powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- 6 cups diced baking potato
- Cooking spray
- Aluminum foil

Preheat oven to 400°F. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and stir to coat potatoes in seasonings and oil. Line baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking spray. Spread potatoes on sheet in a single layer. Bake 30 minutes or until browned.

Yield: 5 (1 cup) servings

SWEET SEASONED CARROTS

- 6 – 8 large carrots, thin sliced on the diagonal
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1 – 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste

Place carrots, onion, and butter in large skillet with just enough water to cover carrots. Bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer until water is evaporated and carrots are tender but not mushy.

Add brown sugar and seasonings. Stir well to coat each carrot with seasoning and cook another 5 minutes.

Yield: 4 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create a Casserole

Create a tasty casserole from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each casserole serves four adults.

1 Choose one starch

- **Brown Rice:** 1 cup rice, 2 cups water: Combine rice and water. Bring to boil. Turn heat to low and cover pan with lid. Simmer until water is absorbed, about 45 minutes.
- **Whole grain pasta or noodles:** 2 cups pasta or 3 cups noodles, 6 cups water: Heat water until it boils. Stir in pasta or noodles. Cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain. Look on the package for specific instructions.
- **Potatoes:** 3 cups diced potatoes, 6 cups water. Heat water until it boils. Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain.
- **Whole grain tortilla:** Flour or corn.

2 Choose one protein

- 1 (15 oz.) can or 2 cups cooked dried beans or lentils (pinto, black, white, kidney, etc.)
- ½ pound cooked ground beef
- 1½ cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, fish, or pork
- 2 cups chopped hard-boiled eggs
- 1 (6-8 oz.) can beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, or other fish
- 1 (12-16 oz.) package extra firm tofu, drained

3 Choose one to three vegetables: Broccoli, carrots, corn, green beans, peas, squash, mixed veggies

- 2 cups fresh vegetables, cooked
- 2 cups frozen vegetables, cooked
- 1-2 (15 oz.) canned vegetables

4 Choose one sauce

- 1 (10 oz.) can soup (cream of mushroom, cream of chicken, cream of celery, tomato, cheese, etc.)
- 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice
- **2 cups gravy:**
 - 2 tablespoons cornstarch OR 4 tablespoons flour
 - ¼ cup COLD water
 - 2 cups HOT chicken, beef, or vegetable stock

Mix cornstarch or flour into cold water with fork. Make sure you have no lumps. Slowly add mixture to boiling stock, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and continue to cook and stir with whisk until thickened.

5 Choose one or more flavors

- ½ cup chopped onion, celery, green pepper, or salsa
- ¼ cup sliced black olives
- 1 - 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- Cook onion, garlic, celery, and peppers in small amount of water or broth
- 1 - 2 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, sage, etc.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

6 Choose one or more topping (optional)

- ¼ cup breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese, ¼ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese

Directions

Select a food from each category or use your own favorites. Combine all ingredients except toppings in a 9x13 pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350° F until bubbly (30-45 minutes). Add toppings and return to oven for about 10 minutes.

Casserole Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with good whole foods will help you create great tasting casseroles like these.

POTLUCK CHICKEN CASSEROLE

- ½ cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1¼ cups milk
- 4 cups cooked and cubed chicken
- 3 cups cooked rice
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ¾ cup crushed corn flakes or breadcrumbs

Sauté mushrooms, onion, and garlic in canola oil until tender. Stir in flour, then gradually add milk and bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until mixture is thickened and bubbling. Remove from heat and add chicken, rice, celery, peas, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Mix well and spoon into 9x13 baking dish. Sprinkle corn flakes or breadcrumbs over casserole. Bake uncovered at 350° F for 30 minutes or until bubbly.

Yield: 8-10 servings

STUFFED PEPPERS

- 4 bell peppers, any color
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups (or 15 oz. can) cooked, drained black beans
- 2 cups fresh or frozen corn
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- Juice from one lime
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 400° F. Slice peppers in half lengthwise, remove seeds, and set aside. Sauté onion and garlic in ¼ cup water over medium heat until they are soft. Add remaining ingredients and heat through. Fill pepper halves with bean mixture, piling each pepper high. Place peppers on baking sheet, cover with foil, and bake 30 minutes or until peppers are tender.

Yield: 4-6 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create Easy Eggs

Create a tasty omelet from simple foods. Just follow each step. Use your imagination!
 Each omelet serves one adult.

- 1 Prepare fillings of choice; set aside**
 - **Vegetables**—onion, green pepper, mushroom, tomato, salsa, green chili, broccoli, squash, etc.
 - **Grated cheese**—cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, American, parmesan, feta, etc.
 - **Cooked meat**—ham, bacon, Canadian bacon, chicken, etc.
- 2 Crack two eggs in a small bowl**
- 3 Add salt, pepper, water, and herbs to bowl and gently stir.**
 - **Water:** 2 tablespoons
 - **Herbs:** 1 tablespoon of chives and/or parsley (optional)
- 4 Heat omelet pan or non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Spray with cooking spray.**
- 5 Add egg mixture to pan and tilt to evenly coat bottom of pan with eggs.**
- 6 Pull cooked egg from edge of pan with spatula and let liquid eggs run underneath.**
- 7 Add fillings down center of omelet.**
- 8 Fold omelet in thirds and slide onto plate.**

Directions

The pan should be hot when you add the cooking spray so that it sizzles. Pour the egg mixture into the pan. Spread the mixture evenly over the bottom of the pan. Gently start pulling the cooked egg to the center of the pan and let the liquid egg run underneath. When the eggs are mostly set but the top is still a little runny, add any filling of choice. Fold the omelet with a spatula and carefully slide it onto a plate.

Omelet Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting skillet meals like these!

MEXICAN STYLE OMELET FILLING

- Pinto or black beans—refried or whole
- Salsa
- Avocado slices
- Monterey Jack cheese
- Cumin and chili powder (added to eggs)

GARDEN STYLE OMELET FILLING

- Sliced mushrooms
- Sliced yellow summer squash
- Sliced zucchini
- Diced red pepper
- Diced onion
- Parmesan cheese
- Basil and garlic powder (added to eggs)

No time for an omelet? Here are some other quick and easy ways to make eggs.

Hard Boiled Egg	Cover eggs with water in a pot. Cover pot and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and let stand, covered for 20 minutes. Remove eggs and rinse under cold running water. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.
Scrambled Eggs	Crack eggs into a bowl. Add 1 tbsp. of low-fat milk or water per egg. Mix together using fork or whisk. Heat skillet over medium heat. Spray with non-stick cooking spray. Pour eggs into pan. Stir occasionally until eggs are firm.
Microwave Scrambled Egg	Combine 2 eggs and 2 tbsp. of low-fat milk or water in a microwave safe dish. Microwave on high for 45 seconds. Stir. Microwave on high for another 45 seconds or until eggs are set and firm.
Frittata Similar to an omelet, but easier to make to feed a crowd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare filling ingredients, precook any that you may want cooked (onions, mushrooms, etc.).• Crack 6 to 10 eggs into bowl and whisk them.• Heat large skillet sprayed with cooking oil over medium heat.• Gently stir filling ingredients into eggs.• Pour entire mixture into skillet, cover, and cook over low heat for 10-20 minutes, or until center is set.• If top is still a little runny, you can stick the pan under the boiler for a minute or so to set the top.• Cut into wedges and serve.



Create a Fruity Dessert

Create a delicious fruity dessert from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each dish serves four adults.

1 Choose one or more fruits to make 4 cups

- | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| • Apple | • Chokecherry | • Grapes | • Mango | • Pineapple |
| • Apricot | • Clementine | • Guava | • Nectarine | • Plum |
| • Banana | • Coconut | • Honeydew | • Orange | • Pomegranate |
| • Blackberry | • Cranberry | • Huckleberry | • Papaya | • Raspberry |
| • Blueberry | • Dragon fruit | • Kiwi | • Passion Fruit | • Rhubarb |
| • Cantaloupe | • Elderberry | • Lemon | • Peach | • Strawberry |
| • Cherry | • Grapefruit | • Lime | • Pear | • Watermelon |

2 Choose a preparation method

- **Fresh:** Just wash, peel, and slice before enjoying the fruit.
- **Crumble:** Preheat oven to 375° F. Cut fruit into uniform 1" cubes and layer on the bottom of a 9" baking dish. Combine the topping ingredients together in another bowl. Distribute the topping mixture evenly over the fruit. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until the fruit is bubbling and the topping is golden brown.

Crumble Topping

- ½ cup oats
 - ¼ cup brown sugar
 - ¼ cup whole-wheat flour
 - 2 tablespoons canola oil
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- **Parfait:** Wash and cut fruit into bite-sized pieces. Choose any variety of base ingredients and toppings; layer base, fruit, and toppings. Enjoy!
 - **Base:** yogurt (Greek), cottage cheese, oats, pudding
 - **Toppings:** crumble topping from above, granola, nuts, honey, crumbled graham crackers

Directions

Select fruit and preparation method. Follow instructions for desired method. The options and combinations are truly endless, so use your creativity in putting the fruity dessert together and the whole family is sure to enjoy your creation.

Fruity Dessert Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting fruity desserts like these!

RHUBARB AND STRAWBERRY CRUMBLE

Filling:

- 4 cups rhubarb, cut into ½" pieces
- 2 cups strawberries, quartered
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole-wheat flour

Crumble Topping:

- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 tablespoon fruit juice (any flavor)
- ¼ cup chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl, toss together rhubarb, strawberries, sugar, and flour. Place this mixture in a 9" square baking dish. In the same bowl, combine oats, flour, brown sugar, butter, and oil. With a fork or your fingers, combine the ingredients until the mixture is crumbly. Stir in the juice and nuts until evenly moistened. Distribute the topping mixture over the fruit. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until the fruit is bubbling and the topping is golden.

MAKE-AHEAD FRUIT AND YOGURT PARFAITS

- 6 ounces low-fat yogurt
- 1/3 cup old fashioned oats, uncooked
- 2 tablespoons skim milk
- 1 cup fruit of choice

In a bowl combine yogurt, oats, and milk. Stir to combine. Layer with the fruit in a mason jar or any other container. Refrigerate for a few hours or overnight.

Yield: 1 serving



Create a Grain Bowl

Create a satisfying grain bowl. Let your family express themselves! Individual grain bowls are a great way to use leftovers, allow for personal tastes, and enjoy whole grains. Each serves one adult.

1

Prepare a base (3/4 cup cooked per serving)

- Prepare a grain; cook according to package directions or use leftovers from a previous meal. Add extra flavor by cooking in low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth.
 - Quinoa, brown rice, white rice, barley, oats, wild rice blend, whole grain pasta in a variety of shapes or vegetable-based pasta

2

Select a variety of fruits or vegetables (1-2 cups vegetables or fruit)

- Vegetables (raw, roasted, steamed, or sautéed)
 - Avocados, carrots, zucchini, broccoli, winter squash, sweet potatoes, green beans, radishes, asparagus, peppers, mushrooms, broccoli, cauliflower, snap peas, green onions, celery, cherry tomatoes, spinach, beets, cucumbers, corn, tomatoes, jicama, cabbage, leafy greens (kale, arugula, spring mix lettuce)
- Fruits (fresh, canned, frozen)
 - Mandarin oranges, mangoes, pineapple, berries, apples, grapes, nectarines, peaches, bananas, raisins, fruit in season (on sale), pomegranate arils

3

Choose a protein (1/3 cup cooked or 2-3 tablespoons; if using meat, cut in bite size pieces)

- Egg (over easy, sunny side up, or scrambled)
- Legumes
 - Garbanzo beans, black beans, small red beans, pinto beans, white beans
- Lentils
- Meat protein sautéed or left over from another meal, prepared with salt and pepper or marinated ahead of time for flavor
 - Chicken, beef, pork, turkey, fish, shrimp

4

Select a sauce or dressing (about 2 tablespoons per bowl)

- Teriyaki, red chili sauce, marinara, salsa, salad dressings, soy sauce, seasoned rice vinegar, BBQ sauce, pesto, olive oil, lemon or lime juice
- Make your own dressing

5

Choose one or more toppings (1-2 tablespoons)

- Cilantro, sesame seeds, tortilla strips, nuts, avocados, green onions, grated cheese, dried fruit, raisins, cranberries, parmesan cheese, bacon crumbles, feta cheese, croutons, crispy rice noodles, roasted chickpeas, fresh diced tomatoes, olives

Directions

In a bowl, add a base layer of the prepared grain. On top of the grain, place the vegetables or fruit, covering $\frac{3}{4}$ of the bowl, saving room for the protein. If using meat, cut into bite-sized pieces. Add prepared protein to the bowl. Drizzle with chosen sauce or dressing, and garnish with a topping. Enjoy!

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use.

For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley

Grain Bowl Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting grain bowls like these!

Breakfast Bowl

- ¾ cup preferred grain, cooked
- 1 cup low-fat milk (or milk alternative such as soy, almond, rice, or coconut milk)
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon or ½ teaspoon vanilla

Heat through or serve cold.

Add fresh or dried fruit and nuts. Suggestions: diced apples, orange segments, bananas, fresh strawberries, golden raisins, dried cranberries, slivered almonds, chopped pecans.

Latin influence

Try a combination of these toppings on your favorite whole grain base: corn kernels, black beans, diced tomatoes, diced avocado, cilantro, salsa, or pico de gallo.

LATIN CREAMY DRESSING

- ½ cup light sour cream or plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon chipotle paste (can substitute with ½ teaspoon of chili powder and ½ teaspoon of cumin)
- 1 clove garlic, pressed or finely chopped
- Juice of ½ lime or 1 tablespoon of bottled lime juice
- ½ teaspoon of granulated sugar (optional to help with the tartness of the lime and sour cream)
- Pinch of salt to taste
- 1-2 tablespoons of milk to thin out to preferred consistency

Mix in a small bowl until smooth. Drizzle over the grain bowl.

Mediterranean influence

Try a combination of these on your favorite whole grain base: tomatoes, cucumbers, feta cheese, beets, garbanzo beans (can marinate in dressing), kalamata olives or marinated artichokes, fresh lemon wedges, greens like spring mix or arugula.

GREEK DRESSING

- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder or 1 clove of fresh garlic, minced

Add all ingredient to a jar with a lid and give it a good shake. Store leftovers in refrigerator.

Asian influence

Try any combination of the following before dressing with peanut sauce: whole wheat spaghetti, marinated teriyaki chicken, shredded purple cabbage, bean sprouts, julienne carrots, cilantro, chopped roasted peanuts.

PEANUT SAUCE

- 3 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 tablespoon reduced sodium soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2-3 tablespoons water or chicken broth
- Red pepper flakes for spice (optional)

Warm ingredients in microwave or on a stove top. Whisk together peanut butter, lime juice, soy sauce, brown sugar, red pepper flakes (optional), and 2-3 tablespoons water or chicken broth in a small bowl; set aside until ready to dress your grain bowl.



Create a Kabob

Create a delicious kabob any time of year using simple, fresh ingredients. Choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each batch of kabobs serves 4 adults.

1 Prepare one or two proteins

- 1 pound raw chicken, pork tenderloin, beef sirloin, sausage or salmon cut into 1- to 1½-inch pieces
- 4-6 partially cooked bacon strips, cut into thirds
- 15-20 shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound extra-firm or super-firm tofu, drained and pressed, cut into 1- to 1½-inch pieces

2 Marinate protein

Marinade suggestions:

- **Lemon garlic:** 1/3 cup olive oil, 1/3 cup lemon juice (2-3 lemons if fresh), 1 ½ tablespoons soy sauce, 2 cloves minced garlic, ½ teaspoon oregano, ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper
- **Mediterranean:** 1/3 cup olive oil, ½ teaspoon garlic powder, ½ teaspoon onion powder, 1 teaspoon oregano, ½ teaspoon cumin, ½ teaspoon thyme, ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- **Honey garlic:** ¼ cup olive oil, 1/3 cup soy sauce, 1/3 cup honey, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, 2 cloves minced garlic
- **Mexican:** ¼ cup olive oil, juice from 1 lime, 2 cloves minced garlic, 1 teaspoon chili powder, ½ teaspoon cumin, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper
- **Honey mustard:** ¼ cup honey, 1/3 cup mustard, ½ teaspoon paprika, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper, 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar, ½ teaspoon garlic powder, ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, 1 tablespoon olive oil
- **Hawaiian teriyaki:** ½ cup brown sugar, ½ cup soy sauce, ¼ cup pineapple juice, 2 cloves minced garlic, ¼ teaspoon pepper, ½ teaspoon salt
- **Honey soy:** 2 tablespoons honey, 3 tablespoons soy sauce, 1 tablespoon minced garlic, ½ tablespoon minced ginger
- **Italian:** ½ cup olive oil, 1/3 cup soy sauce, ¼ cup lemon juice, ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce, 1 tablespoon garlic powder, 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning, 1 teaspoon pepper, ½ teaspoon salt

Place protein and oil/marinade in a bowl or gallon bag, seal and store in fridge. Let protein marinate in the fridge for 8 hours or overnight.

3 Prepare produce

- 1-2 bell peppers (red, orange, yellow or green), red or sweet onion, or mushrooms, sliced into 1-inch sections.
- 1 zucchini, yellow squash, eggplant or 2 potatoes, diced into 1- to 1½-inch cubes
- 10-15 cherry or grape tomatoes, whole
- ½ head of broccoli or cauliflower pieces
- 2-3 ears of corn (on the cob, cut into 1-inch sections)
- 4-5 beets, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 sweet potatoes, diced into 1-1½-inch cubes
- 1 can or 1 pineapple, chunked
- ½ cantaloupe or honeydew, diced into 1-1½-inch cubes
- Small strawberries, whole or large strawberries, halved
- Red or green grapes
- ½ watermelon, diced into 1-1½-inch cubes
- 2-3 bananas, cut into 1-inch chunks

Directions

Build your kabob. Use a metal skewer, wooden skewer (soaked in water for 5-10 minutes beforehand) or sheet pan (if cooking in oven, or skewers are unavailable). Build your kabob using a pattern of the protein and produce (e.g., bell pepper, onion, pineapple, marinated chicken, and bacon). Repeat two or three times until skewer is full. Repeat, using all remaining ingredients.

Preheat your grill on medium-high heat to 400° F. Place skewers on the grill. Rotate every 5-10 minutes until protein reaches desired internal temperature, about 20-30 minutes. Remove and enjoy!

If cooking your kabobs in the oven, preheat to 350° F. Cook for 30 minutes, or until protein reaches desired internal temperature. Remove pan from oven and turn broiler on low. Place pan back in oven. Keep an eye on your veggies and meat; you just want a light char. Rotate and broil each side 3-5 minutes to achieve the charred look and flavor you would get from a grill.

Kabob Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting kabobs like these!

GARLIC PARMESAN STEAK KABOBS

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound beef sirloin, cut into 1- to 1½-inch pieces
- Mushrooms, whole or sliced
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into 1½-inch pieces
- 1 onion, sliced into 1½-inch pieces

Combine olive oil, parmesan cheese and garlic in a small bowl. Mix until combined. Add to a bag with the beef pieces. Let marinate for 8 hours or overnight. Prepare vegetables. Using metal or wood skewers, thread the beef, mushrooms, green bell pepper and onion.

Heat grill to medium-high heat. Cook kabobs, rotating every 5-6 minutes until internal temperature of meat reaches 145° F. Remove from heat and let rest for at least 3 minutes. Enjoy!

FRUITY DESSERT KABOB

- 10-15 small strawberries, whole or 5-8 large strawberries, halved
- 2-3 bananas, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 1 can or 1 pineapple, chunked
- ½ cantaloupe or honeydew, cut into 1- to 1½-inch cubes
- honey, to taste

Using metal or wood skewers, thread the strawberries, bananas, pineapple and melon. Heat grill to medium-high heat. Cook fruit kabobs, rotating every 2-3 minutes, until fruit is slightly charred. Remove from heat and drizzle with honey, to taste. Enjoy!

HONEY GARLIC CHICKEN KABOBS

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/3 cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound chicken, cut into 1-1½-inch pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 orange bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 red onion, sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 1 can pineapple chunks, canned in water or 100% juice

Combine olive oil, soy sauce, honey, black pepper and garlic cloves in a small bowl. Mix until combined. Add to a bag with chicken pieces. Let marinate for at least 8 hours. Prepare produce. Using metal or wood skewers, thread the chicken, bell peppers, onion and pineapple.

Heat grill to medium-high heat. Cook kabobs, rotating every 5-6 minutes until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165° F. Serve with brown rice.



Create a Pizza

Create a delicious pizza from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each pizza serves four adults.

1 Choose/Prepare a crust

- **Options:** homemade crust (see recipe below), premade crust from store, flour tortilla, flat bread, pita bread, English muffin, bagel, French bread.

Whole-Wheat Pizza Dough Recipe

- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 1 ½ tablespoons yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons sugar
- ¾ – 1 ¼ cups warm water
- 1 teaspoon canola oil (optional)

2 Choose a sauce

- Tomato paste thinned with water or tomato sauce + basil + oregano + pepper
- Refried beans or bean dip
- Barbeque sauce
- Sweet chili sauce (found in Asian aisle of grocery store)
- Peanut sauce – peanut butter thinned with hot water + soy sauce + sugar + garlic + crushed red pepper
- Hummus
- Salsa

3 Choose flavors

- 1 – 2 teaspoons dried herbs as needed according to sauce (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, ginger, soy sauce, garlic, crushed red pepper, etc.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

4 Choose toppings

- | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------|
| • Tomato | • Jalapeno | • Corn | • Broccoli | • Sausage |
| • Spinach | • Mushroom | • Squash | • Eggplant | • Cheese |
| • Onion | • Banana pepper | • Carrot | • Chicken | |
| • Green pepper | • Olive | • Pineapple | • Ham | |
| • Red pepper | • Avocado | • Dried cranberries | • Ground beef | |

Directions

Prepare homemade crust and set aside to rise. Preheat oven to 425°F. Prepare sauce and toppings. Spray baking pan or pizza pan with cooking spray. Roll crust out and place on pan. Top with sauce and toppings. Bake approximately 10-12 minutes or until crust is cooked and sauce is bubbly.

Pizza Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting homemade pizzas like these!

MEXICAN SPICY BEAN PIZZA

- 1 whole-wheat pizza crust (see below)
- 1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
- ½ to 1 (15 oz.) can refried beans
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- ¾ cup sliced bell pepper
- ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
- ½ cup grated Monterey jack cheese (optional)
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ cup mango

Preheat oven to 425°F. Put pizza crust on baking sheet or pizza pan. Spread tomato paste and refried beans over crust. Arrange corn, bell pepper, and onion over beans. Sprinkle with cheese and red pepper flakes. Bake 15 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Garnish with fresh cilantro.

Yield: 4 servings

WHOLE-WHEAT PIZZA DOUGH

- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 1 ½ tablespoons yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons sugar
- ¾ – 1 ¼ cups warm water
- 1 teaspoon canola oil (optional)

Mix dry ingredients in bowl. Add water and oil and mix well. Take dough out of the bowl and knead a few times to incorporate all of the flour. Form dough into ball. Let rise 10 minutes while covered with clean towel. Roll out in pizza shape. Cover with favorite toppings.

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley

CARAMELIZED ONION AND MUSHROOM PIZZA

- 1 small yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ¼ cup water or broth
- Pinch of sugar
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 large whole wheat flour tortillas or flat bread
- Cooking spray
- ¼ cup shredded parmesan cheese (optional)
- 6 – 8 button mushrooms, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 450° F. Sauté the sliced onions in olive oil and small amount of water or broth and cook 30 minutes or more, stirring occasionally, until the onions reach a dark brown color. Add water in small amounts as needed to keep onions from burning. Add a pinch of sugar and the balsamic vinegar. Cook a few more minutes and remove from heat. Line baking sheet with parchment paper and spray with cooking spray. Place tortillas or flatbread on baking sheet and lightly spray each one with cooking spray. Sprinkle each tortilla with cheese, then mushrooms, then caramelized onions, then salt and pepper. Bake until the crust is crisp and brown, 5-10 minutes.

Yield: 2 servings



Create a Quick Bread

CREATE A SAVORY QUICK BREAD

Create a delicious savory quick bread from simple foods. Just follow each step and use your imagination! Each quick bread makes 12 slices.

1	In a liquid measuring cup
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place 2 teaspoons lemon juice or vinegar, add milk (dairy, soy, or almond) to make $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, let sit for 5 minutes. Other options: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup buttermilk; $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain yogurt
2	In large bowl
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lightly beat 2 eggs with fork OR mix 2 tablespoons ground flax seed with 6 tablespoons warm water. Stir in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pureed white or pinto beans OR $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil Milk mixture from step one
3	Add flavor to bowl (select one)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 teaspoons dried thyme, sage, rosemary, parsley, basil, chili powder, cumin, or combination of several (optional) 1-2 teaspoons garlic powder
4	Add dry ingredients to bowl
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup whole wheat flour $\frac{2}{3}$ cup oatmeal or cornmeal $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar 2 teaspoons baking powder $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
5	Add extras to bowl (optional): Gently fold in any of the following as desired (do NOT over-mix):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> $\frac{1}{2}$-1 cup any of following: onion, green onion, corn, chives, jalapeno, green chili, bell pepper, olives $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh or canned vegetables like shredded zucchini or carrot or pumpkin puree 2 tablespoons tomato paste $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded cheese $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts/seeds like walnuts, pecans, or almonds $\frac{1}{4}$ cup or less sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, poppy seeds

Directions

Combine ingredients in order listed. Stir to incorporate ingredients, but do not over mix. Pour batter into loaf pan sprayed with cooking spray and bake in preheated oven at 350° F for 40-50 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool slightly and remove from pan. Slice to serve. **Option:** Bake in muffin tins for 18-20 minutes.

Suggested combinations:

- Corn meal, onion, corn, jalapeno or green chili, chili powder, cumin
- Green onion, cheddar cheese, sesame seeds
- Onion, bell pepper, tomato paste, mozzarella cheese

CREATE A SWEET QUICK BREAD

Create a delicious sweet quick bread from simple foods. Just follow each step and use your imagination! Each quick bread makes 12 slices.

1	In a liquid measuring cup <ul style="list-style-type: none">Place 2 teaspoons lemon juice or vinegar, Add milk (dairy, soy, or almond) to make $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, let sit for 5 minutes.Other options: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup buttermilk; $\frac{3}{4}$ cup yogurt
2	In large bowl <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lightly beat 2 eggs with fork OR mix 2 tablespoons ground flax seed with 6 tablespoons warm water. Stir in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">$\frac{1}{2}$ cup pureed white or pinto beans OR $\frac{1}{2}$ cup applesauce OR $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mashed banana OR $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil1 teaspoon vanillaMilk mixture from step one
3	Add flavor to bowl (select one) <ul style="list-style-type: none">1-2 teaspoons extract such as lemon, almond, coconut, banana1-2 teaspoons cinnamon or ginger or allspice or combination of several$\frac{1}{4}$-$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon nutmeg or clove or cardamom or combination2-3 tablespoons zest from lemon, lime or orange
4	Add dry ingredients to bowl <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup whole wheat flour$\frac{2}{3}$ cup oatmeal$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar (if using applesauce or banana in step 2, use only $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar)2 teaspoons baking powder$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
5	Add extras to bowl (optional): Gently fold in any of the following as desired (do NOT over-mix): <ul style="list-style-type: none">$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh, canned, or dried fruit like chopped apple, blueberry, peach, cherry, raisins, dried cranberry, dried apricot, OR $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh vegetables like shredded zucchini or carrot or pumpkin puree$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts/seeds like walnut, pecan, almond$\frac{1}{4}$ cup or less sunflower seed, sesame seed, poppy seed

Directions

Combine ingredients in order listed. Stir to incorporate ingredients, but do not over mix. Pour batter into loaf pan sprayed with cooking spray and bake in preheated oven at 350°F for 40-50 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool slightly and remove from pan. **Option:** Bake in muffin tins for 18-20 minutes.

Suggested combinations:

- Lemon zest, dried cranberries, poppy seeds
- Pumpkin puree, cinnamon, pecans
- Cinnamon, cloves, zucchini, walnuts
- Orange zest, diced tart apple, dried cranberries



Create a Salad

Create a delicious salad from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each salad serves four adults.

1 Choose one base

- **Lettuce or salad greens:** Romaine, spring greens, arugula, etc.
- **Whole wheat pasta or noodles:** 2 cups pasta or 3 cups noodles, 6 cups water: Heat water until it boils. Stir in pasta or noodles. Cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain.
- **Brown rice:** 1 cup rice, 2 cups water: Combine rice and water. Bring to boil. Turn heat to low and cover pan with lid. Simmer until water is absorbed, about 45 minutes.
- **Potatoes:** 3 cups diced red, yellow, or gold potatoes, 6 cups water. Heat water until it boils. Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain.
- **Whole grain:** Cooked wheat berries, quinoa, barley, etc., or dense whole grain bread torn in bite size pieces and toasted.

2 Choose one protein

- 1 (15 oz.) can or 2 cups cooked dried beans (pinto, black, white, kidney, lentils, etc.)
- ½ pound cooked ground beef
- 1½ cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, fish, or pork
- 2 cups chopped hard-boiled eggs
- 1-2 (6-8 oz.) canned beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, or other fish
- 1 (12-16 oz.) package extra firm tofu, drained and marinated in soy sauce and fruit juice

3 Tomato, cucumber, broccoli, carrots, corn, green beans, peas, squash, etc.

- 2 cups fresh vegetables
- 2 cups frozen vegetables, thawed and cooked
- 1-2 (15 oz.) cans of vegetables

4 Choose one or more fruits (optional)

- Apple, orange, raisins, dried cranberries, etc.

5 Choose one or more flavors

- ½ – 1 cup diced onion, celery, green pepper
- ¼ cup sliced black olives
- ½ cup salsa
- 2–4 tablespoons fresh herbs or 1–2 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, sage, etc.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

6 Choose one dressing (optional)

- If desired and/or as necessary, use a fat-free or low-fat dressing to help hold the salad ingredients together, add flavor, and keep salad from being too dry.

7 Choose one or more toppings (optional)

- ¼ cup slivered almonds, chopped walnuts or pecans
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese

Directions

Select a food from each category or use your own favorites. Combine all ingredients except dressing and toppings in a large salad bowl. Either dress salad before serving or allow family members to add dressing and toppings as desired.

Salad Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting salads like these!

TACO SALAD

- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups frozen corn
- 3 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 (15 oz.) can kidney or pinto beans, drained
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1–2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, divided
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ cup salsa
- 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
- Crumbled tortilla chips
- Shredded cheese
- Lime wedges
- Sour cream or Greek yogurt (optional)

Heat small amount of water or vegetable broth in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and corn and cook until the onion begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add diced tomatoes, beans, rice, chili powder, and oregano. Stir to combine. Mix cilantro into salsa. Toss lettuce in a large bowl with the bean/rice mixture. Serve sprinkled with tortilla chips and cheese, with lime wedges and salsa at table.

Yield: 4 servings

THAI NOODLE SALAD

- 10 ounces spaghetti noodles, cooked and cooled
- ¼ cup rice vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- ¼ teaspoon red chili flakes (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon sesame oil (optional)
- 1 (15 oz.) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ¾ cup shredded carrots
- 2 green onions, finely diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- ½ cup chopped peanuts
- ½ cup chopped cilantro

Place noodles in large bowl. In small bowl, combine vinegar, soy sauce, lime juice, sugar, garlic, red chili flakes, and sesame oil. Stir to combine and dissolve sugar. Pour over noodles. Add chickpeas, carrots, green onions, bell pepper, and peas. Stir to coat veggies with dressing. Add peanuts and cilantro just before serving. Toss to mix.

Yield: 4 servings

Simple Salad Dressing: Mix together 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard, 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey. Especially good on green, grain, and pasta salads!

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create a Sandwich/Wrap

Create a tasty sandwich, wrap, or pocket from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each serves one adult.

1 Choose one wrap

- 2 slices of whole grain bread
- 1 whole grain bun or roll
- 1 corn or whole wheat tortilla
- ½ whole wheat pita

2 Choose one or more proteins

- Cooked dried beans (pinto, black, chick pea, kidney, etc.)
- Peanut or almond butter
- Hummus
- Refried beans
- Cooked, sliced, or cubed roast, chicken, turkey, or ham
- Sliced, cubed, or shredded cheese
- Hard-boiled or scrambled egg

3 Choose one or more fillings

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| • Lettuce | • Green pepper | • Potato | • Grapes | • Honey |
| • Spinach | • Banana pepper | • Avocado | • Pear | • Nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, pine nuts) |
| • Tomato | • Celery | • Corn | • Pineapple | |
| • Onion | • Olives | • Shredded carrot | • Jam | |
| • Sprouts | • Pickles | • Apple | • Jelly | |

4 Choose one or more spreads (optional)

- Low-fat mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup, ranch dressing, Italian dressing, hummus, etc.

Directions

Some wraps or sandwiches are better eaten cold and others are better cooked.

For a cold wrap/sandwich: Select foods from each category. Place spread directly on bread or tortilla or inside pita pocket. Build wrap by placing remaining ingredients on one side of bread or tortilla or inside pita pocket. Cover sandwich with other slice of bread or roll up tortilla.

For a cooked wrap: Select foods from each category. Cook filling ingredients in 1 tablespoon water or broth until soft. Add protein and heat through. Add spread to moisten the mixture. Place mixture on one side of bread or tortilla or inside pita pocket. Cover sandwich with other slice of bread or roll up tortilla.

Sandwich/Wrap Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting wraps or sandwiches like these!

HEARTY VEGGIE QUESADILLAS

- ½ cup cooked pinto or black beans
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- ½ bell pepper, chopped
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 2 (6 inch) whole-wheat flour tortillas
- 2 tablespoons salsa
- Lettuce
- ½ cup of cheddar cheese

Combine beans, tomato, pepper, onion, and carrots in medium bowl. Set aside. Warm skillet over medium heat. Place a tortilla in pan and warm one side, then flip tortilla over. Place half of ingredients from bowl on one side of tortilla and fold tortilla in half over the filling. Cook about 3 minutes or until filling is heated through. Transfer quesadilla to a plate and keep warm. Repeat for 2nd quesadilla.

Yield: 2 servings

Use your imagination and add any veggie, bean, or cooked rice that you have on hand to your quesadilla.

CHICKPEA PITAS WITH NUTTY SAUCE

- 2 cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 4 ribs celery, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, finely diced
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- ½ cup walnuts
- ½ cup water
- 1½ teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons mustard
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Romaine lettuce or fresh spinach
- 3 whole wheat pita pockets, cut in half

In medium bowl, lightly crush chickpeas with vegetable masher. Add celery, onion, basil, parsley, and avocado. Stir to mix well. In blender or food processor, place walnuts, water, vinegar, mustard, and garlic powder. Blend until smooth. Add blender ingredients to chickpea mixture and mix well. Place lettuce or spinach in each pita pocket then add chickpea mixture.

Yield: 6 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create a Skillet Meal

Create a tasty skillet meal from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each meal serves four adults.

1	Choose one protein
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (15 oz.) can or 2 cups cooked dried beans (pinto, black, white, kidney, etc.) • ½ pound ground beef • 1 pound chicken, turkey, pork chops, fish, or ham • 1 (6-8 oz.) can beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, or other fish • 1 (12-16 oz.) package extra firm tofu, drained and cubed
2	Choose one starch
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup uncooked rice • 2 cups uncooked pasta • 4 cups uncooked noodles • 2-3 cups cubed raw potatoes <p>Optional: cook starch beforehand and top with skillet contents (example – sweet’ n sour chicken over rice). Reduce liquid and sauce in recipe.</p>
3	Choose one or more flavors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup chopped onion, celery, green pepper • 1 – 2 cloves minced garlic • ½ cup salsa • 1 – 2 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, sage, etc.) • Salt and pepper to taste
4	Choose one to three vegetables
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broccoli, carrots, corn, green beans, peas, squash, mixed veggies, etc. • 2 cups fresh vegetables • 2 cups frozen vegetables • 1-2 (15 oz.) canned vegetables
5	Choose one liquid as needed*
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ½ cups water, broth, tomato juice, milk, etc.
6	Choose one sauce (optional)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (10 oz.) can soup (cream of mushroom, cream of chicken, cream of celery, tomato, cheese, etc.) • 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice • 2 cups gravy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tablespoons cornstarch OR 4 tablespoons flour • ¼ cup COLD water • 2 cups HOT chicken, beef, or vegetable stock <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Mix cornstarch or flour into cold water with fork. Make sure you have no lumps. Slowly add mixture to boiling stock, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and continue to cook and stir with whisk until thickened.</i></p>
7	Choose one or more toppings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese • ¼ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese or breadcrumbs

Directions

Select a food from each category or use your own favorites. Brown meat, if using. Add remaining ingredients to pan, cook over medium heat, stirring frequently to prevent sticking and burning, until meat is thoroughly cooked and vegetables and starches are tender, 15-45 minutes. Add toppings if desired.

**Add more liquid as needed to allow starch to cook, to prevent dish from becoming too dry, and/or from sticking/burning.*

Skillet Meal Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting skillet meals like these!

SPANISH MACARONI

- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ green pepper, chopped
- 1 ½ cups water
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 (15 oz.) can tomatoes
- 2 (15 oz.) cans pinto or kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 ½ cups macaroni (uncooked)

In large skillet, sauté onion in 1 tablespoon water on medium heat until translucent. Add green pepper and cook another 2 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, except macaroni, and cook until vegetables are tender. Stir macaroni into mixture and reduce heat to low. Cover and cook until macaroni is tender, 10-15 minutes, adding additional water as needed.

Yield: 4 servings

SKILLET PENNE WITH VEGGIES

- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups water
- 2 ½ cups whole grain penne
- 1 small tomato, chopped
- 2 small zucchinis, chopped
- 1 (15 oz.) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 ½ teaspoons dry basil or ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese

In large nonstick skillet, cook penne in broth and water over high heat until penne is tender, about 12-15 minutes. Add tomato, zucchini, beans, and dried basil (if using fresh basil, add after veggies have cooked). Cook until veggies are tender. Stir in cheese and fresh basil if using.

Yield: 4 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create a Smoothie

Create a delicious and nutritious smoothie from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each smoothie serves one adult.

1

Choose produce (2-3 cups)

- **Fruit:** fresh, frozen, or canned such as strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, cranberry, banana, pineapple, peach, pear, plum, cherry, melon, apple, kiwi, mango, papaya, orange, lemon, lime.
- **Vegetable:** fresh spinach, chard, kale, green pepper, avocado, carrot, cooked, frozen, or canned pumpkin, squash, sweet potato, peas.

2

Choose a liquid (½ to 1½ cups, depending on desired consistency)

- **Water:** inexpensive, easy, and calorie free.
- **Milk:** dairy, soy, almond, rice, hemp, coconut, etc.
- **Fruit Juice:** use sparingly for added flavor, and combine with water or milk.

3

Choose extras (optional)

- ¼ to ½ cup raw oats
- 1-2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1-2 tablespoons ground flax seed
- 1-2 tablespoons chia seed
- ½ diced avocado
- ½ cup yogurt
- cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla
- ice as needed

Directions

Select a food from each category, or use your own favorites. Combine all ingredients in blender or food processor in order listed. Blend until smooth. **HINT:** You will need minimal to no ice if using mostly frozen produce. You will need more ice if using fresh, canned, or cooked produce. Do not overload blender, and chop any large pieces of fruit or vegetables for the best texture.

Smoothie Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with good whole foods will help you create great tasting smoothies like these!

POPEYE SMOOTHIE

- 6-8 ounces yogurt, any flavor
- ½ cup skim milk
- ½ fresh or frozen banana
- ½ cup fresh or frozen fruit
- 1 cup packed fresh spinach

Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.

Yield: 1 big delicious smoothie

**Surprised to see spinach in a smoothie? Don't worry, you won't taste it at all, and it really boosts the nutrition of this great smoothie!*

MANGO AVOCADO SMOOTHIE

- 1 fully ripened avocado, pitted and peeled
- 2 cups frozen mango or other frozen fruit (not thawed)
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 cup water

Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.

Yield: 2 large or 4 small smoothies

** The avocado gives the smoothie a rich, smooth texture!*



Create a Soup

Create a tasty soup from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each pot of soup serves four adults.

1	Sauté one medium chopped onion
2	Choose one or more vegetables (2-3 cups, chopped) The following can be fresh, canned, or frozen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celery • Green pepper • Green beans • Carrots • Peas • Corn • Zucchini • Squash • Mushrooms • Cauliflower • Broccoli • Cabbage
3	Choose one protein
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (16 oz.) canned beans (pinto, kidney, black, white, chick peas, etc.) • 1 pound beef, chicken, ham, sausage, etc. • 1 (16 oz.) can beef, chicken, ham • 1 cup grated cheese
4	Choose one starch
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 – 4 cups diced potatoes • 2 (16 oz.) canned beans (pinto, kidney, black, white, chick peas, etc.) • 4 oz. whole grain egg noodles, macaroni, pasta • ½ cup uncooked brown rice
5	Choose a broth or base - you need 4 cups (1 quart)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 (16 oz.) cans vegetable, chicken, or beef broth • 4 cups water and vegetable, chicken, or beef bouillon • 1 can crushed or diced tomatoes and 2-3 cups water • 4 cups milk and bouillon • Any combination of above to make 1 quart
6	Choose one or more seasonings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2–3 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, parsley, etc.) • Bay leaf • 2–4+ tablespoons fresh herbs • Minced garlic • Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

In large pot, cook onion in ¼ cup water or broth until slightly browned. Add vegetables and protein. Brown protein as needed. Add remaining ingredients (except fresh herbs). Partially cover pot and simmer until meat is thoroughly cooked and starch and vegetables are tender (about 20–30 minutes). Add fresh herbs. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer another 5 minutes. Serve.

Note: Beans can serve as either protein or starch.

Soup Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting soups like these!

AFRICAN BEAN SOUP

- ½ cup water
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 small sweet potatoes or yams, peeled and diced (about 2 cups)
- 1 large carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 (15 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 (15 oz.) can garbanzo beans
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 - 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 4 cups cooked brown rice

Heat water and soy sauce in a large pot. Add onion and cook over high heat, stirring often, until onion is soft, about 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except for rice. Stir to mix, then cover and simmer until vegetables are tender when pierced with a fork, about 15-20 minutes. To serve, place ½ cup cooked rice in a bowl and top it with a generous ladle of soup.

Yield: 8 servings

BLACK BEAN CHILI

- 1 large diced onion
- 1 – 3 minced cloves garlic
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- 2 (16 oz.) cans vegetable broth
- 1 small can diced green chilies
- 1 (14 oz.) can stewed tomatoes
- 1 (28 oz.) can black beans (3 cups), drained and rinsed
- Cooked brown rice
- Cilantro
- Lime slices
- Grated cheddar cheese

In a Dutch oven, sauté onion, garlic, and pepper flakes in ¼ cup water. Add herbs, broth, and chilies and bring to boil. Add tomatoes and beans. Simmer 1 hour. Remove half of chili, cool slightly, and puree until smooth. Add pureed mixture back into pot and stir to combine. Serve Chili over brown rice. Garnish with cilantro and cheese.

Yield: 4 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley



Create a Stir Fry

Create a delicious stir fry dish from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each stir fry serves four adults.

- 1 Prepare one protein**
 - 1-2 cups cooked beans or lentils
 - 1 package firm tofu cut into ½ inch cubes
 - 1 pound raw chicken, beef, or pork cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 Marinate protein**
 - 1 tablespoon soy sauce + 1 tablespoon water, chicken broth or apple juice
- 3 Prepare produce**
 - 1 onion, cut in wedges + 1 – 2 cloves garlic, minced + 1 tablespoon grated ginger +
 - 2 cups fresh vegetables from choices below:

• Carrots	• Celery	• Bean sprouts
• Cabbage	• Green pepper	• Zucchini
• Mushrooms	• Red pepper	• Yellow squash
- 4 Warm skillet on very low heat**
- 5 Make a sauce of glaze**
 - **Sauce:** ¼ cup vegetable or chicken broth, ¼ cup soy sauce, 1-2 teaspoons sugar, 2-4 teaspoons vinegar.
 - **Glaze:** 2 teaspoons cornstarch, 2 tablespoons water, broth or apple juice.
- 6 Turn heat under skillet to medium-high**
 - Make sure all ingredients are close at hand.

Directions

Add 2-4 tablespoons water or broth to pan. When hot, add half of protein. Stir fry until well browned and cooked through, about 2-3 minutes. Transfer to clean bowl, add more water, and stir fry remaining protein the same way. Transfer to bowl. Cooking the protein in batches helps to keep pan hot.

Add more water to pan. Add onion and stir fry until browned but still crisp, about 1 minute. Add garlic and ginger; stir. Add half of vegetables and stir a few minutes, then add remaining vegetables. Stir fry until vegetables are tender-crisp. Do not overcook vegetables.

Return protein to pan and stir in sauce until everything is well coated. Add glaze and stir until sauces in pan are glossy.

Serve immediately with noodles or rice.

Stir Fry Recipes

A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting stir fries like these!

FLAVORFUL VEGGIE STIR FRY

- 1 (16 oz.) package extra firm tofu
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 5 tablespoons soy sauce, divided
- ¼ cup apple juice or vegetable broth
- 3 cups broccoli florets, cut in bite-sized pieces
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 (6 oz.) package frozen pea pods, thawed
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 (8 oz.) can sliced water chestnuts, un-drained
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- Hot cooked rice, spaghetti noodles, or soba noodles

Cut tofu into 1-inch cubes and place on baking sheet. In a bowl, combine sugar, 3 tablespoons soy sauce, and apple juice or water until smooth. Pour over tofu and set aside. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, stir fry broccoli, carrots, pea pods, and onion in 1 tablespoon water or broth for 1 minute. Stir in water chestnuts. Cover and simmer for 4 minutes; remove from pan and keep warm. In the same skillet, stir fry tofu until outside is crispy. Return vegetables to pan. Combine 2 tablespoons soy sauce and cornstarch. Mix well and pour over vegetables. Stir fry until glossy. Serve over rice or noodles.

Yield: 4 servings

TERIYAKI CHICKEN

- 2-3 chicken breasts
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1-2 green peppers chopped
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons water

Cut chicken into 1-inch cubes. Combine soy sauce, ginger, garlic, ½ cup water, and sugar in small bowl. Add chicken and soak 30–60 minutes. Over medium-high heat, stir fry chicken in water or broth until done. Remove from pan and keep warm. Add vegetables to pan and stir fry until crisp tender. Add chicken back into pan. Combine cornstarch and water; add to pan and cook until thick. Serve with hot brown rice.

Yield: 4-6 servings

You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:

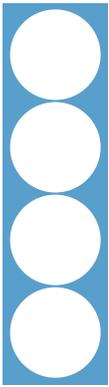
Mexican-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

Italian-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

Asian-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

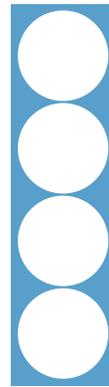
Savory/Thanksgiving-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley





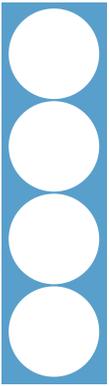
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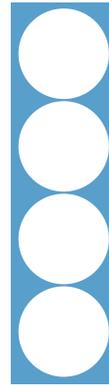
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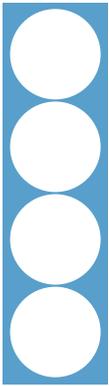
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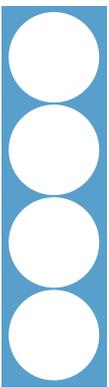
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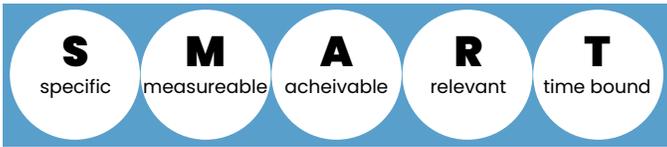
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