



NORTH
DAKOTA

FNP News

Family
Nutrition
Program

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Healthy Answers

to eating on the run

My family likes to eat at fast-food places. Is it possible to eat "healthy"?

Fast-food restaurants are known for their high-fat, high-calorie menu items, but you can make healthy choices with these ideas:

- Choose plain burgers and beef sandwiches. Leave off the sauce and mayo.
- Drink water or low-fat milk instead of regular soda pop.
- Stay with the "regular" size. It might cost only 40 cents to add a larger drink and larger fries to your order, but that doesn't add much nutrition. Large sizes add calories and fat, which over time could increase your waistline!
- Enjoy a side order of fruit or a salad with low-fat dressing.
- Ask for a copy of the nutrition information, then make informed choices.

It takes me so long to cook a healthy meal. Do you have any tips?

You'll be surprised how fast you can assemble a meal with a few tips:

- ✓ Plan a week's worth of menus using the store ads.
- ✓ Focus on one menu item and add "easy" side dishes. Try to include all the food groups.
- ✓ Collect quick and easy meal ideas, and keep them in a binder or recipe box.
- ✓ When you have a little time, make extra portions and freeze for later use.
- ✓ If you have a slow cooker, put it to work for you. It might take a little while to assemble a recipe in the morning, but you'll be happy to come home to dinner.
- ✓ Choose five family favorite menus, and try to have the ingredients on hand in your freezer or cupboard. Keep an "inventory list" near your freezer so you don't forget what you have!
- ✓ Finally, do a "kitchen makeover" if necessary. Organize your cupboards and drawers so you know where everything is kept.

We're so busy that we rarely have time to eat as a family anymore. I've been hearing about "family meals" a lot in the news. Are family meals really that important?

It takes some planning and flexibility, but eating together is worth the time! If timing is a problem, consider gathering for breakfast. Family meals don't have to be "fancy." Encourage your kids to help plan, prepare and clean up, too.

Kids who eat with their families eat more fruits and vegetables and less fried foods and soda pop. They also get more calcium, iron, fiber and vitamins. Kids who eat with their families also do better in school, and they're less likely to smoke and drink alcohol.

**For more information,
contact your local office of
the NDSU Extension Service listed
in the box on the back of this sheet.**

Quick Chili

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2 15.5-oz. cans kidney beans, drained (save liquid)
- $\frac{2}{3}$ c. bean liquid
- 2 c. canned tomato puree
- 2 Tbsp. dried onion
(or one medium onion, chopped)
- 3 Tbsp. chili powder (or to taste)

Cook ground beef thoroughly in nonstick pan. (If using fresh onion, cook with beef.) Drain fat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 10 minutes.

*Makes 6 to 8 servings.
Each serving ($\frac{1}{8}$ of recipe)
has 325 calories,
11.5 grams fat,
33 grams carbohydrate and 6 grams fiber.*

Menu idea:
quick chili, tossed salad
with low-fat dressing,
whole-wheat rolls and
juice-packed pineapple chunks

Black-Bean Salad

- 2 15-oz. cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. salsa (mild or medium)

Combine in bowl and refrigerate until serving.

Snack idea
Black-bean salad,
baked tortilla chips,
apple slices, low-fat milk

Makes 8 servings.
Each serving has 100 calories,
16 grams carbohydrate,
4 grams fiber and 1 gram fat.

Is all "fiber" the same? How much fiber do I need?

There are two main kinds of fiber. "Soluble" fiber dissolves in liquid, and "insoluble" fiber does not dissolve. Soluble fiber is found in foods such as apples, dry edible beans and oat bran. It's good **for your heart because it helps** lower blood cholesterol levels. Soluble fiber also may help with managing diabetes, but check with your health-care provider before adjusting your diet.

"Insoluble" fiber is the kind of fiber found in foods such as wheat bran and whole-grain cereals. It works like an intestinal "scrub brush," moving food more quickly through the digestive system and helping prevent constipation.

Aim for 20 to 35 grams of fiber daily, but increase your daily amount slowly on your way to the goal to prevent stomach upset. Good sources of fiber include fruits, vegetables, legumes (beans, lentils), and whole-grain breads and cereals. Aim for three servings of whole-grain foods daily and at least five servings of fruits and vegetables, and you'll be on your way!

Call for more information on foods and nutrition
or managing your food dollar



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