

Make Time for Family Meals

With homework, music, sports and clubs starting in the fall, time is short for many families. Sometimes eating meals together is lower on the priority list.

Eating meals together is good for kids and families now and in the future. Consider these benefits:

- Kids who eat with their families are less likely to smoke, drink, use illegal drugs or engage in other risky behavior. They also earn better grades in school.
- Kids learn valuable communication skills at the family table.
- Families who eat together eat more healthfully. They eat more fruits, vegetables, grains and calcium-rich foods, and consume fewer soft drinks. Overall, they consume more iron, folate, fiber, and vitamins A and C.
- Family meals can provide pleasant memories that last a lifetime.

Make Family Meals Happen

Family meals take some planning and effort, but they're worth it. Aim for at least four family meals a week. Consider these tips:

- Be flexible in the timing and location to make family meals happen. If dinnertime is too busy, consider a family breakfast. Bring a "picnic meal" to eat before a ballgame.
- Plan your menus for the week. Consider work and school activities that may affect mealtime.
- Keep the menus simple. On a busy day, try an easy menu, such as grilled cheese sandwiches, canned tomato soup, fruit for dessert and milk.
- Make a list of favorite family recipes for quick meals. Keep the ingredients on hand for hectic days.
- Encourage family members to help prepare meals and do cleanup. Consider making a chore list.
- Set some rules for dinnertime. For example, turn off the TV during dinnertime and let the phone ring (or turn off the ringer).

Can you think of some other ideas to make family meals happen? _____



Come 'n Get It!
"family meal time"

Visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise for more information.

This material was funded in part by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

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We received a bagful of apples from our neighbor. What can I do with all these apples? Are they nutritious?



Enjoy apples in a variety of ways. Apples are great snacks for school and work. Be sure to wash them with plenty of running water before eating them.

Try making homemade applesauce. Enjoy some crunchy apple salad, or try baked apples for dessert on a cool fall evening. Baked apples have far fewer calories and fat than apple pie. Apples also can be frozen or dehydrated for later enjoyment. Your county Extension Service office can provide instructions.

A medium apple, which is about the size of a tennis ball, has about 80 calories, 3 grams of dietary fiber and only a trace of fat. Apples contain pectin, a type of fiber that has been associated with lowering blood cholesterol and possibly reducing the risk of heart disease. So, maybe an apple a day really does keep the doctor away!

My school-age kids watch TV a lot!
How much TV is too much?

Pediatricians recommend no more than two hours of “screen time” (including TV and computer games) per day. Encourage kids to get off the couch and play.

“EAT SMART. PLAY HARD.”

Baked Apples

½ c. sugar
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
6 medium-sized apples
2 Tbsp. melted margarine or butter
⅓ c. chopped walnuts (optional)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In a pie plate or shallow dish, combine sugar, flour and cinnamon, mixing well. Peel and partially core apples, leaving bottom end of apple cores in place. Dip apples in melted margarine or butter, then roll in sugar mixture. Place coated apples in shallow baking dish. Combine walnuts, if desired, and the remaining margarine and sugar mixture; spoon into centers of apples. Add water to just cover bottom of baking dish. Bake 45 minutes or until apples are tender.

Makes six servings. Per serving: 198 calories, 34 grams (g) carbohydrate, 8.3 g fat, 4 g fiber and 32 milligrams sodium.

Recipe courtesy of The Washington Apple Commission

Menu idea: Meatloaf, baked sweet potatoes, tossed salad, Baked Apples, low-fat milk.

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Contact the local office of the
NDSU Extension Service
for more information
on food and nutrition or
managing your food dollar.

