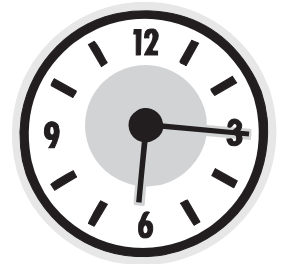


What's for Dinner? Quick and Healthful Meals!

Sometimes after a busy day, preparing a meal may seem like too much work.

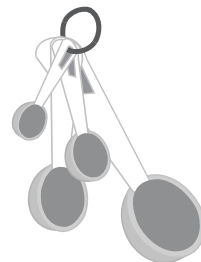
However, eating out can put a dent in your budget.

These easy tips can help you put a meal on the table in minutes and save you money, too.



Mark the tips that will work for you by placing an "X" in the box(es).

- For a quick meal on the go, make a stuffed pita pocket or tortilla wrap. Simply stuff a pita or roll up a tortilla with veggies, meat and/or cheese, and be on your way.
- To boil water faster for cooking pasta, start with hot water and cover the saucepan with a lid.
- Hard cook several eggs for a quick and easy addition of protein to any meal. Add sliced eggs to a chef's salad made with a variety of leafy greens and other vegetables, or make egg salad sandwiches. Use hard-cooked eggs within one week.
- If you have leftover cooked or grilled chicken, cut it up, place recipe- or meal-sized amounts in freezer bags and freeze for up to four months. Or make a quick stir-fry with frozen vegetables and serve it on a bed of rice the next day.
- Cook extra pasta or rice. Drain and toss with a little oil to prevent sticking. Place the desired amount in storage bags and either store in the fridge for up to five days or freeze for up to six months.
- Make your own frozen veggies. Chop, slice or dice fresh vegetables such as onions and bell peppers. Arrange in a single layer on a foil-lined cookie sheet, freeze until firm, place the desired amount into freezer bags and freeze for up to one month. They will be ready to use in your favorite recipes.
- Check the numbers of servings a recipe makes. For do-it-yourself frozen dinners, double the recipe and freeze half in meal-sized portions. For a quick meal, put the "frozen dinners" in the refrigerator to thaw before leaving for the day, then microwave when you return.



Learn more about
cooking quick and
healthy meals
by visiting
www.ndsu.edu/eatsmart

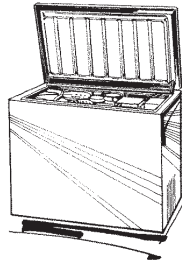
This program is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

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I just bought a freezer. Do you have any tips?

Buying foods that are on sale and freezing them can help stretch your budget. Be sure the food is packaged or wrapped properly before freezing. Good packaging materials should be moisture-proof and easy to fill, seal, mark and store. Some packaging materials, such as freezer bags, are specially made to prevent freezer burn that can lead to food deteriorating in the freezer. Be sure to mark the packages with the date you froze the food. To maintain the quality and safety of your food, set your freezer at 0 degrees F or lower.

You can learn more about freezing fruits, vegetables, meats and other foods by contacting your local office of the NDSU Extension Service or by viewing the food preservation materials on the NDSU Extension website at www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/preservation.html. The website includes information on the proper packaging and storage life of various foods.



Quick Quiz

1. What temperature should your refrigerator maintain your foods? _____ degrees F.
2. What are three ways to safely thaw foods?

Answers
1. 40 degrees F. 2. Microwave oven (if the food is cooked immediately after thawing); refrigerator; under cool running water (70 degrees F or lower).

Cost-saving Tip of the Month

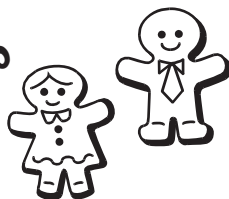
If you buy stew meat, you probably are spending too much. Consider buying a round steak or roast, or get a chuck steak or roast. Often, round and/or chuck cuts of beef are on sale, and the price per pound is less than the price per pound for stew meat. Cut the meat into similarly sized pieces for your stew. By doing a little work, you'll save money and enjoy a lean cut of beef.

Provided by Mary Jean Hunter, Sioux County

Just for Fun

What kind of keys do kids like to carry?

Cookies!



You can make convenience foods more healthful by adding some vegetables. Here's a quick and easy side dish that is ready in short order.

Veggie-Ramen Noodle Side Dish

- 1 Tbsp. canola oil or other salad oil
- 2 c. mixed vegetables (such as fresh or frozen carrots, peas, beans)
- 1 pkg. ramen noodles (any flavor)
- ½ c. water

Place oil in a pan and heat over medium-high heat. Saute vegetables in oil until they are tender-crisp (about five to 10 minutes). Crush ramen noodles and add to vegetables along with the seasoning packet and water.* Cover and simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the water is absorbed and noodles are tender.

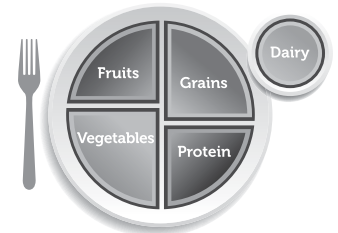
* To reduce sodium, try using half of the seasoning packet. Or experiment with different no-salt seasoning blends.

Note: For a complete meal, you can add 1 cup of leftover roasted chicken during the simmering step. You may need to add a little extra water.

Makes four servings. Per serving (without chicken): 120 calories, 4 grams (g) fat, 3 g protein, 18 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 370 milligrams sodium

Try This MyPlate Idea

Avoid oversized portions. Use a smaller plate, bowl and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. Learn more about healthful eating by checking out www.choosemyplate.gov.



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McKenzie and Williams Counties Family Nutrition Program

Please call for more information on nutrition, food purchasing or food safety.



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