

Make Your Meals Easy, Economical and Elegant

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Why Do You Want Meals Easy?

- ❖ Working outside the home
 - ❖ Kids activities in the evenings
 - ❖ Family interests
 - ❖ Lack of cooking skills
 - ❖ Don't like to cook
 - ❖ Tired...lack energy at the end of the day
 - ❖ Takes too much time to plan
 - ❖ Hungry and cranky kids
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What helps make a meal easy?

- ✓ Skills
 - ✓ Recipe selected
 - ✓ Choice in food
 - ✓ Appliances or tools to help
 - ✓ Convenience purchased
 - ✓ Tasks done ahead
 - ✓ Menu pre-planned
 - ✓ Well Stocked pantry/freezer
- 




Skills

😊 With practice, the more adept at meal prep:

- Menu planning
 - Cutting, slicing, chopping
 - “Throwing” a dish together
 - Knowing what to substitute
 - Timing of things cooking
 - “Active” time verses “Total” time
 - Basics on hand
- 




Recipe Selected

- Number of ingredients
 - Type of ingredients
 - Value of equipment used
 - Type of time spent— “active” verses “total”
 - Nutritional quality
 - Preparation steps modified
 - Will we really like it?
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Let's Modify a Recipe!!

- Traditional Lasagna versus Modified Lasagna, what can you see could be done to make the casserole faster and easier????
 - Pre-brown ground beef...have it frozen.
 - Use canned ground beef, OR,
 - Use a Lazy Day Lasagna recipe where noodles are not pre-cooked.
 - Use dried bell pepper and dried onion.
 - Buy pre-grated cheese.
 - Use bottled spaghetti sauce.
 - Pre-mix cheese filling and freeze.
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Choice In Food

- Hamburger patties verses roast
 - Fresh veggies verses frozen veggies
 - Instant rice verses regular rice or brown rice
 - Mini meatloaves verses full sized meatloaf
 - Pre-cooked—meatballs, fish sticks, etc.
 - Canned soups verses soup from scratch
 - Mixes—homemade or commercial
- 



Appliances/Tools

- @ Microwave
 - @ Pressure Cooker
 - @ Good knives
 - @ Apple corer
 - @ Electric skillet
 - @ Slow cooker/crock pot
 - @ Garlic press
 - @ Kitchen shears
 - @ Blender
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Slow Cooker

Adobo Chicken

1 small onion—sliced

8 cloves garlic, crushed

$\frac{3}{4}$ c soy sauce

$\frac{1}{2}$ c vinegar

1 whole chicken—or
breasts

In a small bowl combine the onion, garlic, soy sauce and vinegar. Place chicken in slow cooker and pour mixture over. Cook on LOW 6-8 hrs.

Forgotten Beef


1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 lbs stew meat

1 can Cheddar Cheese soup

1 can Cream of Mushroom
soup


1 pkg. dry onion soup mix

Place beef in slow cooker. Mix all soups together and pour over beef. Cover and cook on Low for 8-10 hours.






Favorite Slow Cooker Meals...

- Stroganoff
 - Chicken Enchilada Soup
 - Sweet and Sour Meatballs
 - Pulled Pork
 - Spaghetti Sauce
 - Chili
 - Pot Roast
 - Lazy Day Lasagna
 - Funeral Potato Casserole
 - Chicken Cordon Bleu
 - Slow Cooker Pepper Steak
 - Mexi-Meatloaf
 - Curry Chicken w/ Chickpeas
 - Cabbage Rolls
 - Stuffed Bell Peppers
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Convenience

Aside from TV dinners, what does your budget allow??

- Fish sticks
 - Pre-cooked meatballs
 - Canned spaghetti sauce
 - Frozen burritos
 - Salad/coleslaw mix
 - Pop and serve biscuits
 - Match stick carrots
 - Pre-cut fruit
 - Bottled sweet and sour sauce
 - Homemade Mixes
 - Muffin
 - Pancake
 - Cake/cookie
 - Gravy
 - Pudding
 - Complete dinner kits
 - Frozen bread dough
 - Frozen hash browns
- 




Tasks Done Ahead

- Meals decided a day ahead--off the menu plan
 - Pre-browned ground beef in freezer
 - Grated cheese in the freezer
 - Homemade mixes pre-made and ready to go!
 - Freeze ahead meals
 - Shape and freeze quantities of hamburger patties or meatballs
 - Meals in a Box...jar, bag, tote
 - Meatloaf mix into meatballs...cooked alongside the meatloaf.
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Menu Pre-planned

- ◆ Deciding what to have ahead of time saves lots of headache and time.
 - ◆ What are your favorites? Don't try to add in lots of “new” recipes in any one week.
 - ◆ Shop according to menu—that will allow you to have things on hand for a number of meals ahead.
 - ◆ Using your menu, determine what steps can be done ahead--like the night before.
 - ◆ If one dish is labor intensive, keep the other dishes very simple.
 - ◆ Add in lots of fruits and veggies.
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Well Stocked Shelves


Cupboard Staples

- Ready to eat whole grain cereals.
 - Quick cooking oatmeal.
 - Canned fruit—in own syrup or light syrup.
 - Whole grain crackers w/ low sodium option.
 - Peanut butter.
 - Low sodium soup base or boullion.
 - Dried fruit and nuts—raisins, apricots, cherries, cranberries, prunes.
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Well Stocked Shelves


Refrigerator Staples

- Eggs
 - Milk
 - Yogurt
 - Condiments
 - Cheese
 - Fresh veggies and salad fixings
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Well Stocked Shelves


Freezer Staples

- Frozen fruit pieces
 - Whole grain breads
 - Low fat muffins
 - Frozen veggies
 - Fruit juice concentrate
 - Grated cheese
 - Meat mixes ready to use—browned ground beef, cooked cubed chicken, etc.
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Favorite Fast Meals


(besides fast food restaurants)

- Tacos
 - Taco salad
 - Grilled cheese
 - Canned tomato soup
 - Fish tacos
 - Build your own pizza
 - Chicken stir-fry
 - BLT's
 - Enchiladas
 - Mac'n'cheese
 - Spaghetti
 - Ramen
 - Pancakes
 - Tuna sandwiches
 - Fish fillet sandwich
 - Baked tortellini
 - Quesadillas
 - Omelets
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Sample Menu 1


	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Breakfast	Toast Grapes Milk	Cooked cereal Banana Grape juice	Boiled egg Tomato juice Toast
Lunch	Canned soup Crackers Banana	PB&J sandwich Milk Raisins	Grilled Cheese Canned pears Celery sticks
Dinner	Tacos Tossed salad Spanish rice	Apricot Chicken Green beans Baked potato	Tuna Patties Spinach Salad Sherbet w/ fruit






Sample Menu 2

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Breakfast	French Toast Fruit mix Milk	Raisin Bran Cereal Half a grapefruit Grape juice	Smoothie Apple Raisin Muffin
Lunch	Easy Pasta Salad Chocolate Pudding	Egg salad sandwich Cooked carrots	Mini Pizza Apple celery salad
Dinner	Mini Meat Loaves Baked potato Green beans	Stuffed salmon Rice Steamed broccoli	Chili on a Baked Potato Cubed Cantaloupe






Taco Dinner Revised

- Taco
 - Meat from freezer/season
 - Prepared shells
 - Salad
 - Premixed salad...homemade
 - Make dressing Mexi-style
 - Spanish rice
 - Cook instant rice
 - Add salsa
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Mini Meatloaf Dinner Revised

- Meatloaf
 - Baked Potato
 - Green Beans
 - Fruit Cup
 - Make mini-meatloaves ahead and freeze...or microwave the meatloaf
 - Scrub potato and cook in microwave
 - Use canned green beans for speed and convenience
 - Use canned pineapple, mandarin oranges, grapefruit...chill, add sliced bananas
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Making Meals Easy...

- Batch cook—separate into smaller containers and freeze.
 - Use quick cooking ingredients—pasta, instant rice
 - Pan fry or stir fry.
 - Grill.
 - Use the microwave.
 - Build a...soup, salad, sandwich, etc.
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Bottled Spaghetti Sauce

- Skillet Lasagna: sauce, noodles, ground beef, cheese.
 - Italian Soup: sauce, chicken broth, pasta, zucchini, white beans.
 - Calzones: bread dough, spinach, ricotta cheese, Italian seasoning, sauce.
 - French Bread Pizza: sauce, cheese, meat, veggies.
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Rotisserie Chicken

- Lettuce Wraps
 - Chicken Bundles
 - Enchiladas
 - Chicken Salad
 - BBQ Sandwiches
 - White Bean Chili
 - Quesadillas
 - Asian Chicken Wrap
 - Egg Fu Yung
- 




Leftover Roast Beef

- Stroganoff
 - Burritos or Chimichangas
 - Philly Cheese Subs
 - Pot Pie Casserole
 - Fajitas
 - Stew
 - Veggie Beef Soup
 - BBQ
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Salsa

- Taco Soup: salsa, browned ground beef, corn, chicken broth, black beans.
 - Spanish Rice: salsa, cooked rice, cumin.
 - Zesty Meatballs: salsa, grape jelly, mustard, prepared meatballs.
 - Mexican Omelet: eggs, salsa, black beans, cheese.
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Browning Quantities of Ground Beef

- Place 5 lbs. ground beef on large cookie sheet.
 - Crumble and break apart.
 - Add seasonings, chopped onion, chopped bell pepper.
 - Cover with aluminum foil.
 - Bake at 350 for 30-35 minutes
 - Part way through baking break up pieces again—and drain if necessary using turkey baster.
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What Makes a Meal Economical?

- ✓ Skills
 - ✓ Recipe selected
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 - ✓ Appliances or tools to help
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- 



Money Stretchers

- Wheat
 - Rice
 - Beans
 - Eggs
 - Potatoes
 - Breads—muffins, biscuits, rolls
 - Pasta
 - Oatmeal
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Convenience That Pay\$

Pays...

- Fish sticks
- Rotisserie chicken
- Canned spaghetti sauce
- Frozen burritos
- Pop and serve biscuits
- Frozen juice concentrate
- Cake and pancake dry mixes
- Canned vegetables and fruits
- Plain frozen vegetables
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Match stick carrots
- Bottled sweet and sour sauce

Doesn't Pay...

- Salad Mix and Pre-cut fruit
 - Frozen vegetables in sauce
 - Coating mixes
 - Fresh pasta...i.e. tortellini
 - Frozen entrees or dinners
 - Instant hot cereals
 - Fancy bakery items
 - Ready-to-use frosting
 - Frozen pancake batter
 - Meat “helpers”
 - Seasoned rice
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Cost Per Hour...

- Shredded Cheddar cheese -- \$80.
- Sliced Gala apple -- \$74.84.
- Pre-cut celery -- \$49.22.
- Boxed lunch kit (Lunchables) -- \$20.06.
- Washed and bagged romaine lettuce -- \$13.50.
- Pre-cut watermelon -- \$6.12.
- Frozen bacon-and-egg breakfast -- \$5.18.
- Frozen chicken teriyaki -- \$4.26.
- Frozen pancakes -- \$2.97.
- Canned sliced potatoes -- \$2.35.
- Pre-cut broccoli -- \$1.80.
- Tuna lunch kit -- 77 cents.
- Frozen beef stew -- 12 cents.



What Makes a Meal Elegant?

- Color, flavor, temperature, and texture combinations...with simple garnishes
 - Few distractions
 - Sitting down together
 - Enjoyable conversation with little conflict
 - Lighting
 - Table decor
 - Variety of locations...park, canyon, living room
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Biscuits





Egg Foo Yung

This?

Or This?





Polynesian Meatballs

This?

Or This?





Gnocchi Alfredo





Pasta Frittata



Centerpieces





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Quiz Time...

- During the last week, how many meals did all the family members who live in your house sit down and eat together?






A Bit of a Concern

- *“The average parent spends 38.5 minutes per week in meaningful conversation with their children... “(A.C. Nielsen Co.)*
 - By simply eating dinner together each night and making an effort to talk to your kids, you can easily more than quadruple that time. You get to know your child better and isn't that the whole point of having a family?
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Did You Know....?

- *“Family dinners are more important than play, story time and other family events in the development of vocabulary of younger children.” (Harvard Research, 1996)*
 - The dinner table has always been the social center of families. It is no wonder that that's where our kids learn to talk.
 - Chance to talk, express thoughts, share ideas, bond with family members.
- 




Reason Enough to Eat Together More...

● *“The more often teens have dinner with their parents, the less time they spend with boyfriends or girlfriends, and the less likely they are to have sexually active friends”. (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University – 2004)*

- Not only do your teens have less time to hang out with boyfriends and girlfriends, having a good relationship with you makes them less likely to search for closeness by becoming sexually active.
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And More....

- *“Adolescent girls who have frequent family meals, and a positive atmosphere during those meals, are less likely to have eating disorders”.
(University of Minnesota, 2004)*
 - It is up to you to help your children develop a good relationship with food.
 - Reduce chance of eating disorders.
 - Increase likelihood of more healthy eating choices.
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Nutrition Benefit...

- Studies from the University of Minnesota, Harvard and Rutgers that have looked at family eating habits of nearly 40,000 middle-school students and teenagers. The research has shown that those who regularly have meals with their parents eat more fruits, vegetables and calcium-rich foods, ingest more vitamins and nutrients, and consume less junk food.
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Nutrition and Emotional Health...

- Children depend on their parents for the ABCs of good health. 71% say they get information about how to be healthy from their mother; 43% from their father.
- 19% of teens who have fewer than three family dinners per week report that there is a great deal of tension or stress between family members, compared to 7% of teens who have at least five family dinners per week.




Research Shows Benefits:

- Socialization
 - Role modeling
 - Developing healthy eating habits
 - Family unity & traditions
 - Safety & security for young children
 - Increased literacy, language development, academics
 - Structure adds to children's well being
 - You and your kids will talk more.
 - You'll be more likely to hear about a serious problem.
 - Kids will feel like you're proud of them.
 - There will be less stress and tension at home.
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Kids Who Have Frequent Family Meals Are:

1. At 70% lower risk for substance abuse
 2. Half as likely to try cigarettes
 3. Half as likely to be daily cigarette smokers
 4. Half as likely to try marijuana
 5. Half as likely to get drunk monthly
 6. One third less likely to try alcohol
 7. Likelier to get better grades in school
 8. Less likely to have friends who drink alcohol & use marijuana
 9. Likelier to have parents who take responsibility -teen drug use
 10. Almost 40% likelier to say future drug use will never happen
- 



Who Eats Together?

- **Ate a meal together everyday:**

- Hispanic – 53.8%

- White – 42.0%

- Black – 42.6%

- Multi-racial, non-Hispanic – 49.0%

- Asian – 61.2%

- Other, non-Hispanic – 59.6%


- Note: Lower income families more likely to eat together much more frequently than middle/upper income families. Families with older kids ate together less often.

Source: 2007 National Survey of Children's Health






What's Keeping You Away?

- Juggle the schedules to accommodate more mealtimes together.
 - Hold a family council.
 - Plan time saving menus.
 - Figure in “fix it” time...as a form of family activity.
 - Get the right groceries in the house.
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Go For It...

- Set a goal. Twice a week, perhaps? Build from there.
 - Keep it simple. Work salads and vegetables into meals.
 - Focus on familiar favorites.
 - Be prepared. Keep ingredients for healthful meals on hand.
 - Keep healthy 'appetizers' on hand.
 - Use the crock pot.
 - Avoid portion distortion. Keep serving sizes under control.
 - Make it enjoyable.
 - Set the mood. Play soothing music. Put flowers on the table. Light a candle. Create a relaxing environment.
- 




Go For IT...

- *Think like a chef.* While tonight's dinner is cooking, start on tomorrow's prep.
 - *Capitalize on convenience.* Time-savers include pre-packaged salad greens, tomato sauces, individually quick-frozen chicken breasts, bake-and-serve rolls, and pre-cut, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables.
 - *Cook once, eat twice.* Double favorite recipes, freezing extra servings.
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Mealtime Rules:

- Everyone eats together on _____, _____, _____, and Sunday.
 - The table is a safe place.
 - No distractions.
 - Practice good manners...please and thank you are a must.
 - “High” and “Low”
 - Inside voice only.
 - Only compliments to the Chef.
 - Everyone helps cleanup.
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Conclusion...

- Just because we eat together does not mean we eat right: Domino's alone delivers a million pizzas on an average day.
 - Just because we are sitting together doesn't mean we have anything to say: children bicker and fidget and daydream; parents stew over the remains of the day.
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- Yet for all that, there is something about a shared meal--not some holiday blowout, not once in a while but regularly, reliably--that anchors a family even on nights when the food is fast and the talk cheap and everyone has someplace else they'd rather be.
 - On those evenings when the mood is right and the family lingers, caught up in an idea or an argument explored in a shared safe place where no one is stupid or shy or ashamed, you get a glimpse of the power of this habit and why social scientists say such communion acts as a kind of vaccine, protecting kids from all manner of harm.

Source: Time Magazine



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- Feeding is the most basic animal form of caring, sharing meals is one of the most central family bonds.
 - Supper is only the occasion...the excuse. The subject is actually family...establishing, enjoying, and maintaining ties. The goal is creating and reinforcing a secure place for your loved ones.
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THANK YOU!

Resources:

- Taste of Home
 - EFNEP/FSNE recipes
 - USU Extension
 - Family Fun Magazine
 - Pinterest
 - www.goodcheapeats.com
 - www.mealsmatter.org
 - www.poweroffamilymeals.com
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