

Tips for Busy Families

Plan Your Meals

- ♥ Plan weekly meals based on your family's schedule

Use a Shopping List

- ♥ Save Money and time by making only one trip to the store. Make and use a shopping list.

Share Meal Preparation Tasks

- ♥ Teach your family how to grocery shop.
- ♥ Include your spouse and children in preparing meals and cleaning up.
- ♥ Clean up as you cook – you will have less cleanup after you finish cooking.
- ♥ Share cooking duties with other family members or neighbors. For example, your family can cook enough to share with another family.

Cook in Advance

- ♥ Prepare some foods in advance (like spaghetti sauce). Use them for quick meals. You can add chicken breast or beef to the sauce and serve it over spaghetti or rice.
- ♥ Prepare parts of a meal the night before (such as: marinate chicken in the refrigerator overnight).
- ♥ Pack your lunch the night before.
- ♥ Make enough salad for 2 days. Do not add dressing.

- ♥ Cook 2 or 3 dishes on your day off and freeze part of them. Use the frozen dishes on the days when you don't have time to cook.

Cook Simply

- ♥ Steam vegetables and broil meats.
- ♥ Use frozen vegetables without sauces.
- ♥ Make one-pot meals, like stews and casseroles.
- ♥ Use frozen chopped vegetables (such as green beans and carrots).
- ♥ Use the microwave for cooking or defrosting.
- ♥ Learn simple recipes that can be made in less than 30 minutes.

Use Herbs & Spices

- ♥ Chop fresh herbs and place in ice cube trays. Fill trays with water and freeze. Store the frozen cubes in a plastic bag. Use when you need fresh herbs.
- ♥ Grow cilantro, basil, or thyme on a sunny window sill.
- ♥ Keep dried herbs on hand. One teaspoon of dried herbs is equal to 3 teaspoons of fresh herbs.

Keep Quick Snack on Hand

- ♥ Try these healthy snacks:
 - Fat free and low fat yogurt
 - Fat free and low fat cheese
 - Baked corn tortilla chips
 - Whole grain breads.