



Tips for Packing Healthy Snacks and Meals

Making healthy meals can be quick and easy. Planning can go a long way in helping you have healthy meals.

Planning ahead will help you:

- Eat well by varying your food choices throughout the day and week.
- Save time by reducing trips to the grocery store.
- Get meals and snacks prepared faster with less stress.



Follow these meal-planning steps:

- Follow Eating Well with *Canada's Food Guide* and make sure you include all four food groups every meal.
- Jot down your meal and snack ideas on paper, a calendar or a meal planner.
- Using your meal plan, make a grocery list of items you'll need to buy that you don't already have on hand.
- If possible, stock up on basics such as vegetables and fruit, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta and brown rice, milk, yogurt, lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts and seeds.

Save time while making healthy meals

Here are some ideas to help you save time when making meals for yourself and your family.

- Plan your meals and snacks and make a shopping list so you have the ingredients in your kitchen to pull together meals quickly.
- Choose some healthy convenience products to help speed up preparation time. For example, canned or bottled low-salt (sodium) tomato-based pasta sauces, frozen or canned vegetables that are lower in salt (sodium), frozen or canned fruit, bagged salad greens, canned tuna or salmon, canned beans or lentils that are lower in salt (sodium).
- Prepare some foods in advance and keep in the freezer (such as soups, stews, casseroles, pasta dishes, cooked rice, or pizza dough).
- Cook once and eat twice. Purposely cook double the amount and freeze the leftovers for another meal night.
- Cook twice the chicken or ground beef you need and keep extras in the fridge to make chicken salad or sandwich, enchiladas, chili or spaghetti sauce the next day.
- Chop extra veggies and fruit when preparing meals, so you have extra for lunches, snacks or meals the next day.
- Ask your family to help get meals started. By involving children in planning and preparing meals, they'll appreciate the meal more and learn important life skills.

Adapted from www.healthycanadians.gc.ca