

HEALTHY CHOICES

FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

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University of Kentucky
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Bring the benefits of family meals to your table

Research into regular family meals continues to show benefits for children. These benefits extend beyond improved nutrition and lower rates of obesity. Family meals three or more times a week show physical, mental, and emotional benefits. Benefits like improved academic performance, higher self-esteem, a greater sense of resilience, and a lower risk for substance abuse, pregnancy, depression, and likelihood of developing an eating disorder. Now that you know the benefits, you may be wondering how to start a routine of family meals with your family. Here are some tips for spending more mealtimes together:

- **Plan your meals.** Avoid stress at mealtime by planning a weekly menu and posting it in a location for everyone to see, like a chalkboard in the kitchen.

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Bring the benefits of family meals to your table

- **Prep ahead.** Have ingredients for the week ready. After you shop, cut vegetables and measure ingredients in advance for quick meal assembly later.
- **Make mealtime a priority.** Make time for family meals when planning your household's schedule each week. Try to cook, eat, and clean up together!
- **Think beyond dinner.** If evenings are too hectic at your house, consider other meals for family time such as a weekend brunch or even afternoon snacktime.
- **Keep meals fun and focused.** Keep the family table a media-free and stress-free zone. Use your valuable family time to “unplug,” interact, and focus on each other.

Source: USDA Choose MyPlate



FOOD FACTS

Iron

Iron is a mineral that is naturally present in many foods, added to some food products, and available as a dietary supplement. Iron helps the body provide oxygen to the muscles, supports metabolism, and is necessary for growth, development, cell functioning, and synthesis of hormones. There are two types of dietary iron: heme and nonheme. Plants and iron-fortified foods contain nonheme iron only, whereas meat, seafood, and poultry contain both heme and nonheme iron. The amount you need each day depends on age and gender. It is recommended to meet your needs through foods, if possible. Food sources of iron include breakfast cereals fortified with iron, oysters, several varieties of beans and lentils, beef liver, spinach, and sardines. Iron deficiency is uncommon, but some groups of people are at higher risk. These include infants and young children, pregnant women, adolescent girls, and people with certain health conditions.

Source: National Institutes of Health



BASIC BUDGET BITES

Where is your money going?

One of the first things recommended for getting your finances in order is knowing where your money currently is being spent. Use your bank statements or simply take notes of where you are spending money each day. At the end of the month take an inventory of how much you are spending for things like clothes, food, and entertainment. Look for “spending leaks” — things that don’t cost a lot, but over time add up — like a daily latte from a coffee shop or grabbing snacks at the gas station. Once you have identified where your money is going, you can set goals and implement strategies to start saving instead of spending.

Source: University of Kentucky Managing in Tough Times Initiative

COOKING WITH KIDS

Baked Chicken Nuggets

- 5 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 egg, beaten slightly
- 2 tablespoons skim milk
- 1 cup crushed cornflake-type cereal
- ½ teaspoon Italian herb seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly grease a cooking sheet or line with parchment paper.
2. Remove any skin and fat

from chicken; cut thighs into bite-sized pieces.

3. Place cereal in a plastic bag, and crush using your hands or a rolling pin.
4. Add remaining ingredients to the crushed cornflakes. Close bag tightly and shake until blended.
5. Lightly beat the egg in a bowl and add milk.
6. Dip a few chicken pieces at a time into egg and milk mixture then place into the cereal crumb

mixture. Shake to coat evenly.

7. Place chicken pieces on cooking sheet so they are not touching.
8. Bake until golden brown, about 12 to 14 minutes. Use a meat thermometer to check for an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

Number of servings: 4

Serving size: ¾ cup

Source: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl



RECIPE

Chicken Fajita Pasta

- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 diced medium white onion
- 2 diced bell peppers
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup skim milk
- 1 10-ounce can tomatoes with green chilies
- 8 ounces uncooked penne or elbow pasta

1. Mix cumin, chili powder, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a small bowl.

2. Cut chicken breasts into bite-sized pieces. Season chicken pieces with half the seasoning mixture.
3. Heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a skillet on medium-high. Add chicken pieces to the skillet. Stir occasionally, and cook until golden brown on both sides. Chicken should reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
4. Remove chicken from the pan and place to the side.
5. Heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in skillet on high. Add diced onion and bell peppers. Add remainder of seasoning mixture to the vegetables. Cook until vegetables are soft.
6. Turn heat to low and add

garlic. Stir well, and remove vegetables from skillet. Place to the side with chicken.

7. Add chicken broth, milk, diced tomatoes, and uncooked pasta on high in the same skillet. Bring to a boil, cover, and cook for 15 minutes on medium-low heat.
8. When liquid is absorbed and pasta is soft, add chicken and vegetables back to the skillet.
9. Stir well to combine. Remove from heat and serve.

Number of servings: 5

Serving size: 1 cup

Source: Amy Singleton, Regional Extension Agent for Nutrition Education Program

PARENT'S POW-WOW

Encourage intuitive eating

Intuitive eating simply stated is listening to your body when it comes to food. Trusting your body to tell you when to eat and when to stop. Babies and toddlers naturally eat in this way, but as we age, we sometimes lose trust in our ability to do this. Here are some tips for encouraging your child to continue this skill as they grow.

- **Skip the food rules.** Most of us can remember these from when we were kids ourselves; “clean your plate to get dessert,” or “no leaving the table until you have finished your vegetables.” These rules cause overeating and less reliance on our bodies’ cues to tell us when we are full.
- **Stick to a routine of meals and snacks.** Offer meals and snacks at the same times, then allow kids to eat if they are hungry or wait until the



next offered meal. Avoid forcing kids to take a prescribed number of bites. Remind them when the next meal or snack will be and let them eat what their body is telling them it needs.

- **Offer a balanced meal.** If your child doesn’t eat green vegetables or skips over the grilled chicken, just continue

to provide those options. Parents should continue to provide a variety of colors and textures, allowing the child to navigate and decide what to eat on their plate. Avoid labeling foods as “good” or “bad.”

Source: Amy Singleton, Regional Extension Agent for Nutrition Education Program

SMART TIPS

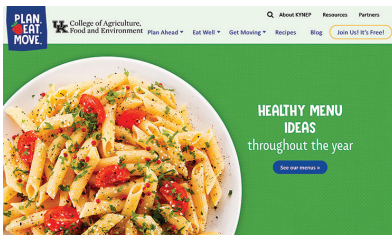
Rinse fresh produce just before eating

- Just before use, rinse the fruits and vegetables you plan to eat under running water only, including those with skins or rinds that are not eaten.
- Firm-skinned fruits and vegetables should be rubbed by hand or scrubbed with a clean brush while rinsing under running tap water.
- Do not wash packaged fruits and vegetables labeled “ready-to-eat,” “washed,” or “triple washed.”
- Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth or paper towel.
- Do not use soap or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables. These products are not intended for consumption.

Source: Partnership for Food Safety Education



LOCAL EVENTS



Feeling better happens one small step at a time.

We know, because that's what we've done – and we're here to show you how you can do it too. A step here, a step there and soon you'll be eating well, planning good meals, and moving more. Most of all, you'll be feeling great! So take a look at some of our useful tips and maybe even take a free class for free tips.

PlanEatMove.com

Connect with or contact your county to learn about free classes in your community! Visit PlanEatMove.com/free-classes to learn more.

If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.

VISIT US ONLINE AT
EXTENSION.CA.UKY.EDU/COUNTY