



Metropolitan  
LIBRARY SYSTEM

OKLAHOMA COUNTY  
EXTENSION

*Get Cooking:*

**COOKING FOR  
ONE OR TWO**

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*Can be a problem for anyone...*

- Youth/families at home preparing food just for themselves
- Young adults
- Divorced, widowed
- Elderly
- Anyone on their own for the first time



*Leading to poor nutrition*



- Increases risk of illness
- Prolongs recovery from illness
- Leads to poor quality of life

# Keys to Success

1. Planning ahead



2. Shopping wisely



3. Preparing—the "how"



a. Preparing, handling, & Storing

IF NOT  
NOW,  
WHEN?

WHAT  
MOTIVATES  
YOU ?

# *Lack of Skills May Lead to:*

- Snacking, eating out a lot
- Diets high in fat, cholesterol, sodium & sugars
- Diets low in vitamins & minerals, fiber
- More money spent on food
- Foodborne illness
- Malnutrition, disease



# Planning: Set Goals!

- Nutrition
- Reduce fats, cholesterol, calories, sodium, refined carbohydrates  
other individual needs
- Increase fruits and vegetables, whole grains
- Money—budget
- Time
- Flavor
- Keep physical limitations in mind



Start easy.  
Choose 2-3  
goals & grow  
from there!



# Planning - Saves Time 🕒 and Money 💰

## 1. Take inventory

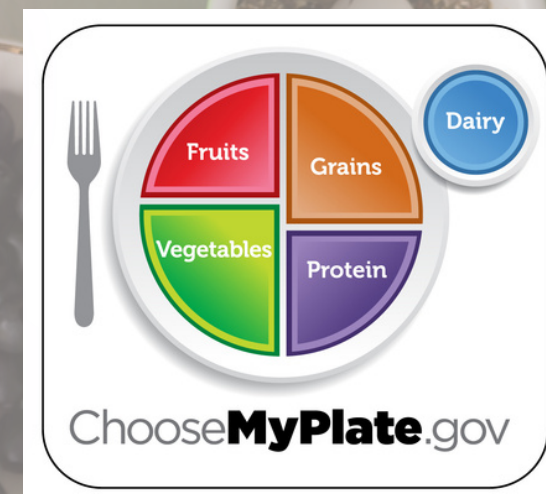
- The pantry (spices too), refrigerator, freezer, & equipment, including products to properly freeze foods

## 2. Choose recipes, ideally using up already on hand food

## 3. Write out master shopping list

- a. Identify easy snacks & recipes you'll cook

**INCLUDE AS MANY  
FOOD GROUPS  
INTO ONE MEAL!**



Planning



# Looking for recipes—Keep goals in mind

- Healthy choices
- Food budget—look for recipes using ingredients:
- You have on hand or that use ingredients you have on hand that can substitute for one called for in the recipe
- Are on sale
- That freeze well if it makes enough for more than 1 meal
- Are in season

## Where to Find Recipes?

- CHECK WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS
- MAGAZINES THAT FOCUS ON HEALTHY CHOICES
- ON- LINE
- SOMETIMES TV, NEWSPAPER

Planning



# Shopping

Take the list to store!

- Food group shopping hacks
  - Fresh, frozen, canned, dried fruits and vegetables, proteins, and grains
- Keeping Cost Low
  - Comparison Shopping & Bulk Buying





# *Fresh Fruits & Vegetables*

- Buy some that will keep well 1 week, others that keep longer
- Buy in season
- Look for smaller versions or precut pieces
- Prep &/or freeze for later use
- Keep produce visible during the week



# Fruits and Vegetables: Canned, Frozen, dried

- All are healthy choices—eat a variety
- Read labels for sodium, sugar
- Buy frozen in plastic bags, remove needed amount and reseal
- Dried stores well but are concentrated calories



# *Proteins: Meats, Poultry, and Fish*

- Look for smaller packages or individually wrapped portions in larger packaging
- Ask store to repackaged into 1 or 2 meal portions or do it at home
- Trim, cut, label & freeze if not to be used in 3-4 days



# Breads, Whole Grains

- Consider freezer storage for breads—refrigeration increases the rate of staling
- Remove the amount needed a few minutes ahead to thaw
- Whole grains (such as whole wheat flour) keep better refrigerated or frozen



# Comparison Shopping

- Become familiar with prices
- Use memory or start a “price book”
- "SALE" doesn't mean you get a lower than normal price
- Don't buy more than you need
- Read unit price, not just package price
  - Unit price information is usually on sticker located on shelf
  - Package price only tells cost of the entire item
  - Unit price shows cost per pound, ounce, etc.



# Activity....

- You have put "potatoes" on your grocery list. At the store you find many alternatives for potatoes including:
  - 10 pounds of Idaho potatoes, \$4.59
  - 5 pounds of red potatoes, \$3.49
  - Individually wrapped baking potatoes, \$1.09 each
- **WHAT FACTORS WOULD YOU CONSIDER WHILE DECIDING WHICH IS THE BEST BUY FOR YOU?**



# Bulk Buying

- Have a plan before you buy
  - How will you use it
  - How will you store it
- Find a store with a bulk bin section
  - Will you pay the same per pound for a large or small amount?
- Buy only foods that store well
- Store bulk purchases correctly
- Buy meats on sale & freeze
- Buy largest container usable without waste



Shopping



# Preparing

- Smaller recipes
  - Look for new recipes specifically for 1 or 2
  - Modify favorites for smaller amounts
- Batch cooking
- Planned overs
- Shared cooking
- Using convenience foods
- Freezing





# Modifying Recipes for 1 or 2

- Be willing to try a recipe more than once—keep notes of what you did, what worked, what didn't
- Measure ingredients—even when making familiar recipes
- Smaller margin of error with smaller amounts
- Prepare to adjust cooking time
  - Example: mini meat loaves may bake in 15–30 minutes less than original
- Use smaller pots & pans—small amounts cooked in large pans are more apt to dry out and/or burn
- Use math to reduce ingredients but check for flavor, moistness

# Leftovers, Planned Overs, Batch Cooking

- Plan for leftovers. Prepare enough for more than one meal, cover, label, refrigerate
  - Use refrigerated leftovers within four days, or freeze to serve later
- Prepare a full sized recipe, cook and serve enough for 1 meal, freeze remainder in meal sized portions for later
- Avoid ingredients that don't freeze well
  - Substitute or add when used



# Activity...

- You purchased 3 pounds of skinned, boneless chicken breast.
  - Discuss how to make three meals for 2 people:



# Shared Cooking

- Find a friend or family member to share the work, cost and maybe the meal
- Each of you prepare a main course, either in your own home or together in one kitchen
- Packaged food into 1 or more serving freezer containers; labeled with name of recipe, preparation instructions, and date; divided among those sharing to take home and freeze
- Most casseroles freeze well for 3 months at 0oF
- Keep food safety in mind when moving food from one location to another



# Smart Convenience Cooking

- How does it fit your goals
- Read labels
  - Ingredients list
  - Nutrition facts
  - Health claims
  - Price per serving



# Frozen Dinners

- Advantages
  - Quick, easy
  - Taste good or at least okay
- Disadvantages
  - High fat, sodium, calories
  - Low in produce
  - Expensive



# Frozen Dinner Fixes

- Choose those with:
  - No more than 10g fat/300 calories
  - Less than 800mg sodium/serving

## Add to Frozen Dinner Meals

- Vegetables/fruits
- Whole grain bread
- Lowfat/nonfat milk

**Nutrition Facts**  
1 serving per container  
Serving size 1 Package (226g)

Amount per serving	Calories 260
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 7g	9%
Saturated Fat 4g	20%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 710mg	31%
Total Carbohydrate 36g	13%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 14g	18%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 330mg	25%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 180mg	4%

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

**Lean Cuisine**  
ORIGINS  
Ricotta Cheese & Spinach Ravioli  
IN A RICH TOMATO BARBECUE SAUCE

**Lean Cuisine**  
MARKETPLACE  
Sesame Chicken  
SESAME BREADED WHITE MEAT CHICKEN TOPPED WITH PASTA AND VEGETABLES

**Lean Cuisine**  
FAVORITES  
Chicken Enchilada Suiza  
WITH A MILD CREAM SAUCE & MEXICAN STYLE BEANS

**Lean Cuisine**  
COMFORT  
Meatloaf with Mashed Potatoes

**feed your phenomenal**

Whether you crave comfort food or culinary adventures, Lean Cuisine® provides delicious recipes to fuel your personal journey.

THOUGHTFUL PORTION™  
1 PORTION = 1 DISH  
For a balanced menu enjoy with a side salad.

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NOGMO INGREDIENTS\*\*

Good Food, Good Life  
Nestlé

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# Freezer

- Freeze leftovers in tight containers
- Follow cooking instructions for commercially frozen foods
- Freezer burn is a food-quality issue, not a food safety issue
- Occurs when food is not securely wrapped in air-tight packaging





# Make Meals at Home Special

- Set a nice table
- Add music, turn off the television
- Eat at a different places in the house



# *Eating Nutritious at Restaurants*

- Read entire menu
- Ask for extra vegetables
- Order nutrient dense appetizers as main course
- Try something new—place to eat or dish
- Ask for a description of the cooking methods and ingredients to make sure it fits your goals
- Pack a takeout container when your meal is served

# Working with Fast Food Meals

- Right size—kids meals may be the right size for you
  - Make sure the foods on the kids meal fit your goals
- Toppings
  - Mayonnaise & mayo based sauces, cheese, bacon, sausages
- Drinks
  - Choose water or nutrient dense options such as milk
- Descriptor words
  - Choose roasted or grilled more often than crispy, fried or smothered



# Using a slow cooker for one or two

- Plan on leftovers (planned overs)
  - Store leftovers in shallow covered containers and refrigerate within two hours after cooking
    - Wrap well, date and freeze if food will not be used within 3 days
  - Reheating leftovers in a slow cooker is not recommended
  - Reheated food on the stove, in a microwave, or in a conventional oven until it reaches 165°F



**QUESTIONS?**

**THANK YOU!**

# Resources

- Bastin, S. (Revised, 10/12) Cooking for One or Two. University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. FN-SSB.016 at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/hes/fcs/factshts/FN-SSB.016.PDF>
- Bellows, L., Moore, R. and Gross, A. (Revised 10/13) Healthy Eating for 1 or 2. Colorado State University Cooperative Extension no. 9.351 at [www.ext.colostate.edu/./Pubs/foodnut/09351.pdf](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/./Pubs/foodnut/09351.pdf)
- Garden-Robinson, J. (9/11) Cooking for One or Two. NDSU Cooperative Extension Service FN521 (Revised) at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/foods/fn521.pdf>
- Slow Cooker and Food Safety, (2012) USDA FSIS at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/a181017c-cc51-4261-bfeb-f78cfc24c022/Slow\\_Cookers\\_and\\_Food\\_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/a181017c-cc51-4261-bfeb-f78cfc24c022/Slow_Cookers_and_Food_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES)