

Better You Eat Well for a Busy Life



Making healthy meals doesn't have to take a lot of time or require complicated recipes. There are many ways you can save time in the kitchen and still eat delicious, healthy food. Use time-saving tips and keep your meals balanced and healthy.



Be realistic about what your schedule allows.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you work full-time?
- Are your kids in after school activities?
- Do you participate in activities after work?
- What time is it possible for you to eat?
- How much time do you have to prepare meals?
- Do you have more time on the weekends?

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Try these time-saving tips:

- **Keep your kitchen stocked**
Keeping commonly used foods in your kitchen can help you pull together a quick meal in no time
- **Plan ahead.** Create a menu for the next few days or for the week, make a grocery list, and get the ingredients on hand.
- **Prep your meals ahead of time.** If you have extra time in the morning or on the weekend, think about chopping, marinating or even setting the table to save time later.
- **Cook once, eat twice.** Double your recipe and freeze what you don't eat for another meal.
- **Let the grocery store do the prep.** You can find many foods already cut, washed, and ready to eat.
- **Almost homemade cooking.** Make "almost homemade" meals by starting with one or two prepared ingredients and then adding your own fresh ingredients.
- **Use your slow cooker.** Most slow cooker recipes are quick and easy with minimal ingredients. Do prep work the night before to save yourself a few minutes in the morning.



10 secrets to cooking healthier

- 1. Use heart healthy fats.** Eat less saturated fat (cheese, fatty cuts of meat, cured meats, sausages, bacon, butter, coconut oil, ice cream) and avoid trans fat (listed as partially or fully hydrogenated oils on a label). Replace with monounsaturated fats (almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, olives, avocados) and polyunsaturated fats (walnuts, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, salmon, tuna, mackerel, trout) to reduce your risk for heart disease.
- 2. Go unrefined.** Pick whole grains (amaranth, brown rice, buckwheat, barley, bulgur, farro, millet, oats, rye, quinoa, spelt, teff, wild rice) over refined grains (white, refined and/or enriched flour, many breads, desserts, cereals, crackers, pastries).
- 3. Consume more fruits and vegetables.** Pick produce in a variety of colors to get a range of antioxidants and vitamins.
- 4. Eat less meat.** Meat is a great source of protein but it's also a big source of saturated fat in our diet. Eat small amounts of lean meat, fish and poultry. Fill up the rest of your plate with healthy vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Try meatless meals.
- 5. Choose dairy products.** Dairy is an excellent source of protein, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals like calcium.
- 6. Keep portions reasonable.** One of the easiest ways to manage calorie intake is by eating healthy portions.
- 7. Limit added sugars.** Sugars of any kind, whether corn syrup, white sugar, brown sugar, honey or maple syrup, add significant calories without any nutritive value.
- 8. Watch your sodium.** Whether you have high blood pressure or not, it's wise to keep an eye on your sodium. The 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend less than 2300mg of sodium/day for the general population.
- 9. Go for flavor.** Enhance food with bold flavors from healthy ingredients like fresh herbs, spices and citrus.
- 10. Be mindful and enjoy!** Make conscious food decisions rather than grabbing for what is most convenient.

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Rice Bowl Southwestern Style

(Recipe from foodhero.org) Serves 2

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped vegetables (try a mixture – bell peppers, onion, corn, tomato, zucchini)
- 1 cup cooked meat (chopped or shredded), beans, or tofu
- 1 cup cooked brown rice, or any leftover cooked grain
- 2 tablespoons salsa, shredded cheese or low-fat sour cream

Directions

- In a medium skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. Add vegetables and cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender-crisp.
- Add cooked meat, beans or tofu and cooked rice to skillet and heat through.
- Divide between two bowls. Top with salsa, cheese or sour cream.

Balsamic Glazed Fish

(Recipe from recipes.heart.org) Serves 4

Ingredients

- (4) 4 ounce fish fillets (any type fish)
- Black pepper to taste
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Directions

- Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Season fish with pepper. Place on a cookie sheet or in a 9x13 casserole dish and bake 10-12 minutes.
- While the fish cooks combine the remaining ingredients and whisk well. Microwave covered on 50% heat for 2 minutes, stirring half-way. Drizzle glaze over cooked fish and serve.

Broccoli, Garlic and Lemon Penne

(Recipe from cancer.org) Serves 4

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound penne pasta
- 5 cups broccoli florets or 1 (12-ounce) bag broccoli florets
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 10 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

Directions

- Prepare pasta according to package directions. 2-3 minutes before pasta is ready, add broccoli. Finish cooking, drain, and set aside.
- In a large skillet over medium-high heat, add oil and sauté garlic for 1-2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil for 3-5 minutes or until reduced by half, stirring frequently. Add pasta, broccoli, and lemon zest and cook until coated with sauce. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Transfer to serving bowl and top with cheese.

Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad

(Recipe from recipes.heart.org) Serves 8

Ingredients

- 10 ounces of canned albacore tuna, packed in water, drained
- 6 cups baby spinach
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped red onion
- 1 cup chopped, peeled cucumber
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup crumbled, reduced fat feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Directions

- Add the first 6 ingredients to a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, lemon juice and olive oil. Toss with the tuna mixture.