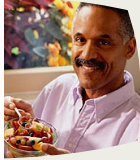




► **PLAN YOUR MENU**



► **NUTRITIOUS, FILLING,
INEXPENSIVE FOODS**



► **RECIPES**

Healthy Eating

without breaking the budget

When you are on a tight budget, the thought of preparing tasty, healthy meals can be a daunting task. It's easy to fall into the routine of eating the same foods over and over. With a little organization and creativity, you can serve your family healthy, delicious meals without breaking your budget.

Set aside regular blocks of time for planning meals, making a grocery list, and shopping. Limit your intake of junk food & alcohol; drink lots of water (at least 8 glasses daily); limit salty and sugary foods; avoid eating many foods that are high in saturated fats; and make "variety" the word when it comes to your meals. Be sure to include healthy snack ideas as well as main menu items. Stock your fridge and pantry with items that are quick and easy to cook (yet kind to your wallet):

- **Beans and lentils**, whether dried or canned, make nutritious, hearty soups, and can be a main course by adding fresh vegetables or rice. By cooking your own dried beans, you save money, reduce sodium and get better flavor, more vitamins and minerals. A 19-year analysis of the First National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey found that people who ate beans 4+ times a week were 22% less likely to develop heart disease than those who ate them less than once weekly. ½ cup of beans costs .52 or less.
- **Brown rice** is a great addition to leftover meats & veggies. Although it is slightly more expensive than white, the nutritional payoff is well worth it. 1 cup brown rice contains 3½ grams of fiber while the same amount of

white has less than 1 gram. We need from 25-38 grams of dietary fiber every day. Cooking with rice is a great money-saving option for a filling, well-balanced meal.

- **Eggs** might be the key to giving your meal more staying power. The combination of high protein & moderate fat make them filling. A study found that people who incorporated eggs into their breakfast felt more satisfied – and ate less lunch – than those who ate a bagel with the same number of calories.
- **Pasta** is quick & easy to prepare, and can be paired with veggies, meat, or a fresh salad. Choose whole-wheat pasta when possible, as it is higher in fiber and contains natural B vitamins & folate, making it a healthy part of a balanced diet. 2 ounces costs .26 or less.
- **Soups** are great for convenience, especially since you can use canned or packet soups as a base, then add veggies and leftover meat. During cold weather, soup is comforting and warms the body and creates greater feelings of satiety than other types of food. When soup is hot, we eat slower and notice when we feel full faster. Chilled soups are a great option during warmer weather.
- **Fresh vegetables and fruit** should be bought at least once or twice each week to ensure optimal taste and nutrition. You can also rely on canned/frozen varieties as additions to last-minute meals.

- **Potatoes** are rich in carbs, vitamin C and potassium. They get a bad rap for being high-glycemic; but they offer fiber when eaten with the skin and it has a place in a healthful eating plan and average .44 each.
- **Beef, poultry, and fish** are healthy, versatile options for dinner and provide zinc, protein, iron, and vitamin B12.

There is no magic formula to cooking healthy on a budget and, like anything else worthwhile in life, it takes planning, creativity, and work. No doubt you'll still occasionally fall back on that quick-fix packaged food or local drive-thru, but if you look at cooking as an adventure, you'll also have days when you find yourself pleased at what you've accomplished.

SLOW-COOKER BEANS

1 lb. dried beans (cannellini, black beans, kidney beans, black-eyed peas, great northern beans or pinto beans)
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
6 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 tsp. dried)
1 bay leaf
5 cups boiling water
½ tsp. salt

Soak beans in enough cold water to cover them by 2-inches for 6 hours or overnight. Drain the beans and place them in a slow cooker. Add onion, garlic, thyme and bay leaf. Pour in boiling water. Cook, covered, on high until beans are tender, 2 to 3½ hours. Add salt, cover; cook about 15 minutes more.

1 cup = 260 calories; 1g fat; 0mg cholesterol; 48g carbs; 15g protein; 19g fiber; 201mg sodium; 726mg potassium

COOKING BROWN RICE

When making long grain brown rice (not minute rice), allow rice to soak in water from 25 to 30 minutes before turning on the heat. Start with a 1:2 ratio (1 cup rice to 2 cups water).

MEXICAN BEAN AND RICE SALAD

2 cups cooked brown rice
1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15 oz.) can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 (15.25 oz.) can whole kernel corn, drained
1 small onion, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and diced
1 lime, zested and juiced
¼ cup chopped cilantro leaves
1 tsp. minced garlic

1 ½ tsp. ground cumin

In a large salad bowl, combine the cooked brown rice, kidney beans, black beans, corn, onion, green pepper, jalapeño peppers, lime zest and juice, cilantro, garlic, and cumin. Lightly toss all ingredients to mix well; salt to taste. Refrigerate salad for 1 hour; toss again and serve.

1/10th Recipe = 124 calories; 1g total fat; 0mg cholesterol; 259mg sodium; 26g carbs; 4.8g dietary fiber; 4.7g protein

EGG SALAD

8 eggs
½ cup mayonnaise
1 tsp. prepared yellow mustard
¼ cup chopped green onion
Salt and pepper to taste
¼ tsp. paprika

Place egg in saucepan; cover with cold water. Bring to a boil & immediately remove from heat. Cover & let eggs stand in hot water 10-12 minutes. Remove from hot water; cool, peel and chop. Place chopped eggs in a bowl and stir in remainder of the ingredients. Stir. Makes 4 servings.

BACON AND EGG CASSEROLE WITH TOMATOES

6 large eggs
1 ¾ cups skim milk
4 slices bread, torn into 1-inch pieces
6 to 8 slices turkey bacon, cooked and crumbled
10 to 15 sliced grape tomatoes (or 2 small, diced)
1 ½ cup shredded 2% Cheddar cheese

Heat oven to 350°F. Spray a 2-quart baking dish. Whisk eggs with milk in bowl; set aside.

Arrange torn bread over bottom of the prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with bacon pieces & tomato slices. Top with cheese; pour the egg mixture evenly over the top. Add salt & pepper to taste. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until puffy and lightly browned.

SPAGHETTI WITH QUICK MEAT SAUCE

1 lb. whole-wheat spaghetti noodles
2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 large carrot, finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 lb. lean (90% or leaner) ground beef
1 (28 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
½ tsp. salt
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Cook pasta until just tender, 8 to 10 minutes or according to package directions; drain.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, carrot and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is beginning to brown, 5 to 8 minutes.

Stir in garlic and Italian seasoning; cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add beef and cook, stirring and breaking up with a spoon, until no longer pink, 3 to 5 minutes. Increase heat to high. Stir in tomatoes and cook until thickened, 4 to 6 minutes. Stir in parsley and salt. Serve the sauce over the pasta, sprinkled with cheese.

1 cup pasta with ¾ cup sauce = 384 calories; 9g fat; 48mg cholesterol; 52g carbs; 28g protein; 10g fiber; 416 mg sodium; 655mg potassium. Exchanges: 3 starch, 1 ½ vegetable, 2 lean meat.

COOL GAZPACHO

6 medium tomatoes (about 6 cups)*
1 ½ cups 100% vegetable juice
1 medium cucumber (about ½ cup)*
1 medium onion, finely chopped (about ½ cup)
1 small green pepper, finely chopped (about ⅓ cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup olive oil
2 Tbsp. vinegar
⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
Hot pepper sauce to taste

**tomato should be peeled, seeded and finely chopped; cucumber should be peeled, seeded and diced*

Stir in tomatoes, vegetable juice, cucumber, onion, green pepper, garlic, oil, vinegar, black pepper and hot pepper sauce in a large mixing bowl. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or until ready to serve. Serves 6.

TOMATO TORTELLINI SOUP

2 (10 oz.) cans condensed tomato soup
9 oz. pkg. refrigerated cheese tortellini
1 cup frozen peas
½ cup grated Parmesan or Cheddar cheese

Dilute soup as directed on can. Heat over medium

heat until soup boils, stirring frequently. Add tortellini and peas and bring back to a simmer; cook 3 more minutes until tortellini floats to the surface of the soup and is tender. Serve with crackers or toasted garlic bread if desired. Makes 4 servings.

BROCCOLI ITALIANO

1 lb. fresh (or thawed frozen) broccoli florets

¼ cup fat-free Italian salad dressing

Place broccoli in steamer basket above 2" boiling water. Cover & steam 4 minutes or until broccoli is bright green & crisp-tender when pierced with a fork.

Remove from steam and place broccoli in serving dish. Drizzle with Italian dressing and toss to coat. Serve immediately.

*½ cup = 20 calories; <1g fat; 0mg cholesterol; 88mg sodium; 3g carbs; 2g fiber; 1g sugars; 2g protein.
Exchanges: 1 vegetable*

FROZEN HAWAIIAN FRUIT SALAD

1 (20 oz.) can crushed pineapple in juice

18 oz. frozen, unsweetened pineapple-orange-banana juice concentrate, thawed
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2 medium bananas, quartered lengthwise and diced into bite-sized chunks

1 (15 oz.) can mandarin oranges, drained and rinsed, each slice cut in half

24 paper baking cups

Drain pineapple using a sieve, reserving juice in a 2-cup liquid measuring cup. Add water to reserved juice to make 1 ½ cups liquid. Pour liquid into a large mixing bowl. Add pineapple,

thawed juice concentrate, bananas, and mandarin oranges; mix well.

Line muffin tins with paper baking cups. Spoon fruit mixture into paper baking cups (fill each ¾ full). Cover tightly with plastic wrap, and freeze 2 hours or until firm.

Before serving, remove desired number of cups from freezer and let stand 20 minutes to soften slightly. Remove salad from cups and serve on a lettuce leaf if desired.

*1 baking cup = 85 calories; <1 g fat; 0mg cholesterol; 11mg sodium; 19g carbs; 1g fiber; 15g sugar; 1 g protein.
Exchanges: 1 fruit*

SALT AND VINEGAR ROASTED POTATOES

2 lbs. russet potatoes, peeled & cut into ¾" chunks

1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

¼ tsp. fresh ground pepper and kosher salt to taste

White vinegar to taste

Preheat oven to 450°F and place a rack in the upper third of the oven. Toss potatoes in a large roasting pan with oil and pepper. Roast potatoes, turning

occasionally with a metal spatula, until golden brown and tender, 30 to 35 minutes. Sprinkle with vinegar and salt to taste; toss and serve.

1/6th recipe = 141 calories; 2g fat; 0mg cholesterol; 27g carbs; 3g protein; 2g fiber; 31mg sodium; 630mg potassium. Exchanges: 2 starch, ½ fat

OVEN FRIES

2 large Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into wedges
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4 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil

½ tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. dried thyme, optional

Preheat oven to 450°F. Toss potato wedges with oil, salt and thyme. Spread wedges out on a baking

sheet. Bake until brown and tender, turning once, about 20 minutes total.

¼ Recipe = 102 calories; 5g fat; 0mg cholesterol; 13g carbs; 2g protein; 1g fiber; 291mg sodium; 405mg potassium. Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 fat.

CONFETTI TACOS

1 lb. 95% lean ground beef
2 tsp. chili powder
½ tsp. salt
1 can (11 ounces) corn, drained
1 cup prepared chunky salsa
12 taco shells, warmed

Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add ground beef; cook 8 to 10 minutes, breaking into small crumbles and stirring occasionally. Pour off drippings; season with chili

powder and salt. Stir in corn and salsa; heat through. Serve in taco shells with toppings, such as shredded 2% Monterey Jack cheese, thinly sliced lettuce, sliced ripe olives, chopped tomatoes, etc. *3 tacos = 408 calories, 14g fat, 76mg cholesterol; 1202mg sodium; 35g carbohydrate; 4.4g fiber, 29g protein, 6.4mg niacin, .4mg vitamin B6; 2.3mcg vitamin B12, 3.2mg iron, 18mcg selenium; 6mg zinc.*

TIP: This recipe is an excellent source of protein, niacin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, selenium and zinc, and is a good source of fiber and iron.

ITALIAN PORK ROAST WITH ROASTED POTATO WEDGES

2 lbs. boneless pork loin roast
3 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
4 medium potatoes, cut into wedges
¼ cup Italian salad dressing

Rub Italian seasoning over the surface of the roast. Place roast in shallow pan and roast in 350°F oven for 20 minutes.

Place potato wedges and Italian dressing in plastic bag and toss to evenly coat wedges. Add potato wedges to roast and return to oven for 20-35 minutes, or until internal temperature of roast reaches 160°F and potatoes are tender. Remove roast from oven; let rest about 10 minutes before slicing. Serves 6.

CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS

1 (4 lb.) chicken, cut up, breast reserved for other use
3 quarts water
2 cubes reduced-sodium chicken bouillon
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 carrot, peeled and finely chopped
¼ tsp. garlic powder
¾ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground black pepper
1 tsp. dried parsley flakes
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1 cup cold water
3 cups biscuit mix
1 cup skim milk

Place chicken, 3 quarts water, bouillon, onion, celery, and carrot in a 2-gallon stockpot. Cover and bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and cook for 30 minutes or until meat is tender and pulls away from the bone.

Remove chicken from broth. Skim fat from top of broth. Discard fat. Debone chicken. Discard skin and bones, shred meat, and return shredded meat to defatted broth. Add garlic powder, salt, pepper, and parsley; return to boil over high heat.

In liquid measuring cup, dissolve flour in 1 cup cold water, whisking well. Add to boiling liquid and stir until slightly thickened.

Place biscuit mix and milk in a medium mixing bowl and stir to combine. Drop by tablespoons into boiling liquid. Reduce heat to medium, cover pot, and simmer for 20 minutes or until dumplings are fluffy; gently stir periodically.

1 cup = 157 calories; 1g fat; 19mg cholesterol; 472mg sodium; 27g carbs; 1g fiber; 5g sugars; 10g protein. Exchanges: 1 ½ starch, 1 very lean meat.

SEASONED PAN-FRIED CATFISH

½ cup instant potato flakes
½ tsp. seasoned salt
⅛ tsp. ground black pepper
1 lb. catfish fillets
1 egg, beaten
Butter-flavored cooking spray

In a shallow dish, combine potato flakes, seasoned salt, and pepper. Dip catfish fillets in beaten egg, then coat well with seasoned potato mixture. Place

in a large nonstick skillet coated generously with cooking spray, and cook over medium heat until fillets are golden, about 10 minutes.

Spray remaining uncooked side of fillets with cooking spray, turn over, and continue cooking until golden and fish flakes easily with a fork (about 10 more minutes). Turn only once during cooking.

¼ Recipe = 165 calories; 5g fat; 158mg cholesterol; 233mg sodium; 7g carbs; <1g fiber; 0g sugars; 23g protein. Exchanges: ½ starch, 4 very lean meat

TURKEY AND BALSAMIC ONION QUESADILLAS

1 small red onion, thinly sliced
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
4 (10-inch) whole-wheat tortillas
1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
8 slices deli turkey, preferably smoked (8 ounces)

Combine onion and vinegar in a bowl; let marinate for 5 minutes. Drain, reserving the vinegar for another use, such as salad dressing.

Warm 2 tortillas in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat for about 45 seconds, then flip. Pull the tortillas up the edges of the pan so they are

no longer overlapping. Working on one half of each tortilla, sprinkle one-fourth of the cheese, cover with 2 slices of turkey and top with one-fourth of the onion. Fold the tortillas in half, flatten gently with a spatula and cook until the cheese starts to melt, about 2 minutes. Flip and cook until the second side is golden, 1 to 2 minutes more. Transfer to a plate and cover to keep warm. Make 2 more quesadillas with the remaining ingredients. Serves 4.

1 Quesadilla = 328 calories; 12g fat; 56mg cholesterol; 30g carbs; 24g protein; 2g fiber; 871mg sodium; 33mg potassium. Exchanges: 1 ½ starch, 3 lean meat

FREE COUPON CLIPPING CONTEST

Join our FREE coupon clipping contest, running from **March 14th through July 15th, 2011**. Begin collecting & using coupons (not just grocery stores but department stores, restaurants, home improvement, or any service that provides a coupon). Each week that you call in your savings from coupon use, your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card from a local supermarket.

BASKET WEAVING WORKSHOP

We are offering a Basket Weaving Workshop, Tues. **April 26, 2011**. The cost is \$25 and pre-registration is required. Call 870-779-3609 or email Chaley@uaex.edu.



All activities announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audiotapes, etc.) should notify the county Extension office as soon as possible prior to the activity.

Sincerely,

Carla M. Haley
County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences

