

Healthy Fast Food: Healthy Meals in 30 Minutes or Less

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Healthy eating can be a struggle for those with busy lives. When you have kids to get to soccer practice, an 8 a.m. meeting or an upcoming deadline, it can be easy to turn to fast food. The good thing is, eating on the go doesn't have to be unhealthy. This handout is intended to provide tips and recipes to help fuel busy lifestyles.

Where to Find Fast Healthy Recipes

There are a variety of recipes available that can be prepared in 30 minutes or less. If you are unsure where to find healthy recipes, try using the USDA What's Cooking? Mixing Bowl.

This website allows you to search through hundreds of recipes using filters including SNAP approved, available equipment and various nutrition goals. Follow this link to find a recipe that works for you: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>.

Breakfast on the Go

Woke up late? No worries, this recipe only take 6 minutes to prepare! That's less time than you'll spend in the fast food drive-thru!

6 Minute Microwave Denver Scramble Slider

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MICROWAVE DENVER SCRAMBLE SLIDER

Yield: 1 slider
Serving Size: 1 slider

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
2 tablespoons chopped red or green bell peppers	Place peppers and onions in a small bowl. Microwave on high 30 seconds; stir. Serve in bun. Tip: Use pre-chopped frozen veggie to speed up the preparation process. Add egg, ham and water, beat until egg is blended. Microwave on high 30 seconds; stir. Microwave until egg is almost set, 30 to 45 seconds longer. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.
1 tablespoon chopped onion	
1 egg	
1 slice deli ham (chopped)	
1 tablespoon water	
1 slider-size bun or whole wheat English muffin (split and toasted)	

Nutrition Comparison

	Fast Food Breakfast Egg Sandwich	Denver Scramble Slider
Calories	300	240
Fat	12 g	6 g
Saturated Fat	6 g	2 g
Cholesterol	245 mg	185 mg
Sodium	750 mg	550 mg
Carbohydrates	30 g	29 g
Fiber	2 g	4 g
Protein	18 g	16 g

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DIY TV Dinner

Freezer meals are another good way to decrease your time in the kitchen throughout the week. Although this method isn't for everyone, it may be beneficial to those who are willing to spend some prep time during the week-end to save time during the week. You can prepare multiple recipes, or just one, and save them for those days you just don't have time to cook. Certain recipes, such as soups and casseroles, tend to freeze better than others.



FREEZER BEAN BURRITOS

Yield: 5 burritos

Serving Size: 1 burrito

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	Preheat oven to 350 degrees F, then put tortillas on baking sheet and warm in oven for about 2 minutes. Or warm tortillas in a microwave for about 10 seconds. Place oil, onion, bell pepper and garlic in the skillet and cook for 5 minutes. Pour beans and cooked brown rice into skillet. Cook 5 minutes while stirring. Add herbs and spices and mix well. Spoon bean mixture evenly down center of the warm tortillas. Place 1 slice of romaine lettuce and some chopped tomatoes on top of mixture. Serve immediately.
3/4 cup chopped onions	
2 garlic cloves, minced	
1 cup chopped red bell pepper	
1 cup chopped green bell pepper	
Optional Additions: • 1 cup chopped broccoli florets • 1 cup chopped mushrooms	
15.5 oz. canned black beans, rinsed	
1 cup brown rice, cooked	
1 tablespoon cumin	
1/2 teaspoon chili powder	
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro	To freeze: Spoon bean mixture only into tortilla, roll tortilla, and individually wrap each burrito in plastic wrap and place in freezer.
Salt and pepper to taste	Reheating Instructions Microwave only: Remove frozen burritos from plastic wrap. Place on a microwave-safe plate, covered with a microwave-safe bowl, and defrost at high power for 3 to 4 minutes; uncover, and microwave on high 3 to 4 minutes longer. Add lettuce and tomato as desired and serve immediately.
5 whole wheat tortillas	
5 romaine lettuce leaves	
1 cup chopped tomatoes	

Nutrition Comparison

	Fast Food Black Bean Burrito	Freezer Bean Burrito
Calories	390	320
Fat	11 g	9 g
Saturated Fat	4 g	0 g
Sodium	1,020 mg	540 mg
Cholesterol	10 mg	0 mg
Carbohydrates	60 g	52 g
Fiber	8 g	9 g
Protein	12 g	10 g

3-Minute Frozen Bean Burritos

Freezer recipes can also benefit those who have short lunch breaks and need something they can pop in the microwave. Prep these Frozen Bean Burritos for the days you can't get out of the office!

One Pan Recipes

One pan and one pot recipes are a great way to speed up your dinner routine. It is easy to see the appeal in throwing random ingredients in a pan and letting it simmer while you take care of other chores or enjoy some much needed leisure time. While the prep work is usually quick, the cooking times can vary for this style of cooking. Examples of one pot/pan recipes include casseroles, soups/stews, foil-wrapped meals and many others.

Last Resort 3-Can Chili

Try this simple and cheap chili recipe next time you find yourself short on time.



LAST RESORT 3-CAN CHILI

Yield: 6 servings

Serving Size: 1/6th of recipe

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
1 can beans, low-sodium undrained*	Place the contents of all 3 cans into a pan. Add chili powder to taste. Stir to mix. Continue to stir over medium heat until heated thoroughly.
1 can corn, drained**	
1 can crushed tomatoes, undrained (15 ounces)	
Chili powder (to taste)	
Ingredient Variations: *Bean variations: 15.5 pinto, kidney, red, or black (15.5 ounces) **Corn Variations: 15 ounces, or 10-ounce package of frozen corn	

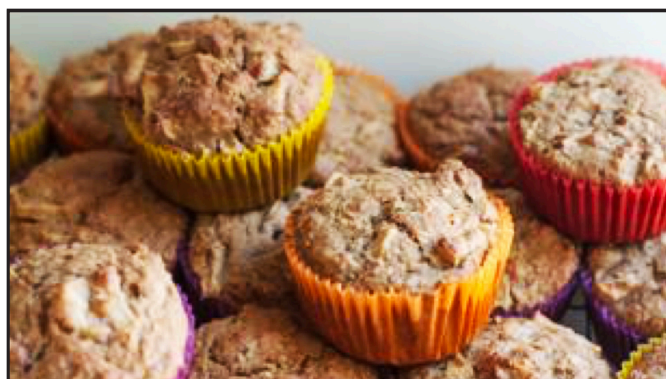
Nutrition Summary

Calories	129	Sodium	418 mg
Fat	1 g	Carbohydrates	27 g
Saturated Fat	0 g	Fiber	6 g
Cholesterol	0 mg	Protein	6 g

Healthy, tasty, fast food can be prepared at home in minutes! A few ingredients, a few recipes and a few minutes can all equal fast (and healthy) food!

Apple Oatmeal Muffins

Buy apples while they are in season and on sale and make batches of these muffins to put in the freezer for later. You can also substitute whole wheat flour to make your muffins heartier and more nutritious.



APPLE OATMEAL MUFFINS

Yield: 1 serving

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
1/2 cup milk, non-fat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preheat oven to 400°F. Place 6 cupcake holders in baking tin. In a mixing bowl, add milk and applesauce. Stir until blended. Stir in flour, oats, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon. Mix until moistened (do not over mix). Gently stir in the chopped apples. Spoon into cupcake holders. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 5 minutes before serving. Store unused portions in an airtight container. Freeze for up to one month.
1/3 cup applesauce	
1/2 cup flour, all-purpose	
1/2 cup quick-cooking oats (uncooked)	
1/4 cup sugar	
1/2 tablespoon baking powder	
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon	
1 apple (tart, cored & chopped)	

Nutrition Summary for One Muffin

Calories	125	Carbohydrates	28 g
Total Fat	1 g	Dietary Fiber	2 g
Saturated Fat	0 g	Protein	3 g
Cholesterol	0 mg		

Chicken with Vegetables and Rice

Carrots and green peas are the vegetables used in this recipe. Just one pan is needed to cook it. Use low sodium bouillon and/or carrots to lower sodium content.

CHICKEN WITH VEGETABLES AND RICE

3 servings, 1 cup each

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
1 can carrots, drained, about 15 ounces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Combine carrots, chicken, bouillon and ½ cup water in medium-size saucepan. If using basil, add that too. Bring to boil. Stir in rice; then add peas. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand 2 minutes. Stir gently and serve.
1 cup cooked chicken, about 5-6 ounces (diced)	
1/2 chicken bouillon cube (or 1/2 teaspoon instant chicken bouillon granules)	
1/2 teaspoon basil (dried, if you like)	
1/2 cup water	
1 cup white rice (cooked)	
1 cup low-sodium green peas, about 8 1/2 ounces (8 1/2 ounce can, drained)	

Nutrition Summary for 1 serving (1 cup) of Chicken with Vegetables and Rice

Calories	230	Sodium	412 g
Total Fat	2 g	Carbohydrates	33 g
Saturated Fat	1 g	Dietary Fiber	6 g
Cholesterol	35 mg	Protein	19 g

References

- 3-Can Chili. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/3-can-chili>.
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- <https://www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/about-our-food/nutrition-calculator.html>.
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