

Tips for Quick, Easy, and Nutritious Meals

- **Prepare 2-in-1 ingredients:** Choose ingredients that can be used for more than one meal. Roast a whole chicken, remove the skin and use meat for soups, casseroles or main entrée. Use leftovers for salads and sandwiches. This same method can be applied to turkey and pork tenderloin.
- **Pre-chop vegetables:** Chop and slice in advance to save time during the week.
- **Keep frozen vegetables on hand:** Frozen vegetables are picked when fresh and frozen immediately to preserve the nutrients. Frozen vegetables are already washed and chopped which takes a lot of the work out of preparing them. Purchase plain frozen vegetables in steamer bags for an easy side dish.
- **Cook rice and other grains in advance:** Cook a large batch of grains at the beginning of the week and keep in the refrigerator. Add a small amount of liquid at the bottom of a dish and cover with plastic wrap to reheat.
- **Plan ahead:** Plan your meals at the beginning of the week to save time and stress on weeknights. Write out your meals on a calendar, make your grocery list and stick to it!
- **Have breakfast for dinner:** Make omelets or frittatas with lots of vegetables. Pair with a side salad and whole wheat toast or fruit to make it a complete meal.
- **Make extra for leftovers:** Make 2-3 meals each week that will give you leftovers. These can be repurposed for a quick dinner or lunch.
- **Use a crock-pot:** Slow cooker meals are easy and ready when you get home after a busy day. Slow cookers can also be used for roasting whole chickens or turkeys (see tip #1).
- **Go meatless at least once a week:** Try using beans for taco night instead of meat. Add tofu or shelled edamame to stir-fry or make Portobello mushroom burgers instead of using beef.
- **Make fish in a packet:** This can be done with any fish, such as tilapia, cod, salmon, red snapper, trout, halibut, and shrimp, fresh or frozen! Cut a piece of foil or parchment paper into a rectangle about twice the size of the piece of fish. Place fish on one half of the foil/ paper. Top with desired seasonings, such as dill weed, lemon pepper, white wine, and lemon juice. Add ~1/2 cup of chopped vegetables, such as carrots, green beans, bell peppers, snap peas, peas, or corn. Fold foil/paper over fillet to make a packet. Fold over packet edges to seal, but do not make it too tight. It is good to have some space for the fish to steam. Place the packet on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes at 375F.
- **Taco bar:** Set out various toppings such as seasoned black beans, grilled chicken, romaine lettuce, shredded low-fat cheese, chopped tomatoes or chunky salsa, plain nonfat Greek yogurt (instead of sour cream), and whole wheat tortillas. Let your family build their own tacos or taco salad.
- **Keep frozen veggie burgers on hand:** These can make for an easy meal. Top with your favorite toppings and serve on a bun or open-faced on a bed of greens.
- **Homemade pizzas:** Buy pre-made pizza dough or Naan bread. Top with your favorite toppings, especially vegetables, and bake in the oven. Naan pizzas can be easily cooked on the grill.
- **Stir-fry:** Use leftover rice and vegetables to make a quick dinner. Add edamame, tofu, or meat for protein.



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