

Family Meals At Home

WHAT IS A FAMILY MEAL

A TIME WHEN ALL FAMILY MEMBERS:

- Sit together
- Eat at a dining table
- Eat a meal without the TV

BENEFITS OF FAMILY MEALS:

- Love, support, and connection
- “Food security” (reliable access to foods from caring parents)
- Saves money
- More fruits and vegetables
- Healthier meals - less fried foods and sweet drinks
- Family time to talk
- Time to give thanks for your blessings
- Time to teach children how to help - meal prep, cooking, cleaning up
- Meals are as essential for nurturing as for nutrition!

The parents provide the food along with the help from the children in preparation, and all join in eating and conversation. Family meals are not the time for conflict or discipline. Everyone is served the same foods; children decide what and how much they will eat. Parents should not be a short order cook for family members.



FAMILY TALK

FOOD IS NOT THE FOCUS; SHARED TIME IS.

Conversations Starters:

- What was the best thing that happened to you today? The worst thing? The funniest?
- If you could invite a famous person over for dinner, who would it be? What would you talk about?
- What is your favorite TV show? Why?
- If you could spend all day with a friend, who would it be and what would you do?
- What's the most delicious food on the table and why?
- If you opened a restaurant, what kind would it be?
- Ask everyone to bring a new word to the table. Practice using these new words in sentences.

HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

PARENTS CONTROL WHAT FOOD COMES INTO THE HOUSE. CHOOSE WISELY!

Ideas to Increase Family Meals at Home:

- Plan menus and shopping lists ahead - encourage children to help.
- Set standard shopping times to always have healthy food choices available.
- Post meal ideas on the refrigerator; take turns choosing the menu.
- Use THE PLATE MODEL for healthy choices and portions.
- Establish regular meal and snack times.
- Try new recipes; cookbooks from the library and newspaper food sections can help.



MY GOAL: _____

Family Meals At Home

TO IMPROVE HEALTH TRY THESE CHANGES

INSTEAD OF:	USE:
Whole Milk, 2%, Chocolate or Strawberry Milk	1% or Fat-Free Milk
Fruit drinks, Soda Pop, Juice, Kool-Aid™, Gatorade™	Water, Sugar-Free Kool-Aid™, Crystal Light™
Lard	Oils (small amounts)
Flour Tortillas	Whole Wheat flour Tortillas or Corn Tortillas
Regular Hamburger	Lean Ground Beef, Chicken, Turkey or Lean Pork
Whole Chicken	Chicken (remove skin or use breasts, skim fat)



QUICK HEALTHY MEALS

1. Crock pot meals with meat, potato, and carrots, salad, and peach	6. Sandwich with lean meat on whole wheat bread, tomato soup, celery sticks, grapes
2. Frozen stir-fry vegetables with leftover meat, brown rice, sliced tomatoes, pineapple	7. Soft-shell taco with lean meat or beans, lettuce, tomato, steamed broccoli, cantaloupe
3. Vegetable omelet with salsa, tortilla, steamed zucchini, sliced orange	8. Frozen pizza, tossed salad, baby carrots, yogurt with frozen berries
4. Frozen fish or chicken, frozen vegetables, microwaved potato, bagged salad, frozen strawberries	9. Rotisserie chicken, whole wheat roll, green beans, salad bar salad, salad bar fruit
5. Spaghetti, sauce, mixed vegetables, green pepper sticks, pear	10. Small fast food burger, side salad, carrot chips, apple slices



FAST FOOD TIPS

- Eat out rarely.
- Choose small burger or chicken sandwich with no cheese or mayo.
- Choose low-fat milk or water.
- Choose salad with light dressing instead of fries.
- Avoid value meals.

DON'T SUPERSIZE!

TEEN CORNER

- Eat out less - SAVES MONEY and SAVES CALORIES (typical value meal = 1600 calories).
- Eat your calories, don't drink them - avoid sweet drinks and soda pop.
- Take along a fruit and a lite yogurt to have with a small burger or chicken sandwich (no mayo, no cheese).
- Choose quick foods at home: apples, oranges, grapes, baby carrots, 1% or skim milk, whole wheat bread, lean deli meats.
- Breakfast at home helps control hunger later in the day (try cereal and fruit).
- Learn to cook healthy meals; volunteer to fix family dinners and shop occasionally.