

Quick, Tasty Meal Ideas

These meals are healthy, cost less than fast food, and are easy to make when you have little time to cook.

- Fill pita bread halves with a mixture of canned chicken or tuna, cream of mushroom or chicken soup, and two cups of frozen mixed vegetables (thawed). Heat and serve.
- Top a big green salad with chili beans and cheese. Serve with whole wheat bread or cornbread.
- Make homemade mini pizzas. Heat whole wheat bread or tortillas topped with tomato or pizza sauce, sliced vegetables (fresh or thawed) and cheese. Serve with fruit or banana pudding.
- Spread tortillas with refried beans (fresh or canned), then top with corn and cheese. Heat. Serve with salsa.
- Scramble some eggs. Add cooked vegetables and your favorite sauce or seasoning. Serve over whole wheat toast, tortillas, cornbread or pasta.
- Top whole wheat bread with canned tuna or chicken, diced tomatoes and/or peppers, and sprinkle with cheese. Heat until cheese melts.

Make a meal of a hearty soup, sandwiches and fruit for dessert.



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ML-025118 2/04



To provide quick, tasty meals that cost less, use

- Grains (such as rice, noodles, macaroni)
- Beans (like red, white, black, pinto, kidney, garbanzo or lentils)

Plan to serve some meals that use mostly grains and beans.

- Stir-fry rice or noodles with lots of vegetables and a small amount of meat.
- Use beans in place of meat in casseroles, stews and spaghetti sauce.
- Mix rice, noodles or beans with a variety of soups. This makes a more hearty soup.
- Serve homemade or canned chili over rice.



Have your children help you plan meals. They will:

- learn how to choose foods wisely.
- be more likely to eat meals they've helped to plan.

Plan meals ahead of time.

- Make a menu of simple meals for the week.
- Include some of your children's favorite foods in your plans.
- Buy foods needed for your planned meals.

Note: you will buy less fast food, save money, and eat better, too.

To save money:

- buy foods on sale.
- cook meals that include foods you already have at home and need to use.



To save time:

- cook double or triple the amount you'll need for one meal. Put extra food in the fridge and use it for other meals within two days, or freeze it for later use.
- make soups, stews or casseroles on the weekend and freeze for later.

- do some tasks (like making a salad, or cooking pasta or ground meat) a few hours before or a day before your meal.
- make no-cook meals. Toss cold cooked pasta and cold peas with canned tuna or chicken and a small amount of reduced fat mayo or salad dressing.
- broil, stir-fry, or microwave foods—baking takes longer.
- cook once. If your child likes plain veggies, pasta, rice or meat, set some aside before you add other ingredients.
- stock your kitchen with foods you can use in a hurry, such as canned meat, poultry, or fish; canned soups, beans or stew; canned or frozen vegetables; and canned fruit, rice, pasta, and cheese

