

Make the most of your food dollar by planning balanced meals around food you already have at home. Check the refrigerator and pantry for foods that may expire or need to be used. Write them in the box to the right. Now think of meals you can make using those foods and write them in under the breakfast, lunch and dinner areas. Lastly make a list of all the ingredients you still need to make those meals. This is your final grocery list. After each day is planned, be sure to check off the number of servings in each food group to be sure your meals are balanced. Are half of the foods at each meal a fruit or vegetable? Are you using non- or low-fat dairy? For more tips on making balanced meals, please visit www.MyPlate.gov.

Weekly Meal Planner

[illegible]

What is in the pantry

[illegible]

Shopping list

[illegible]

Benefits of Family Meals

Did you know?

- Family meals are a great place to share your daily lives. Families who eat together on a regular basis are closer and their children feel like they belong and are loved.
- Serving family meals helps children do better in school. They learn how to be polite and get along with others. Talking at meals teaches children new words, how to express ideas and how to talk with others.
- Children who eat with their families eat better, learn better eating habits and are less likely to develop eating disorders. Children who eat regular family meals are also less likely to be overweight.

Planning for family meals is easy:

- Think about when your family could eat together this week. Plan at least two to three family meals each week. Find a place (away from the TV) where you can enjoy family meals.
- Plan some easy, healthy meals. Think of two to three meals your family likes. Make a shopping list to make sure you have everything already at home. Get the family involved with shopping, cooking and clean up.
- Enjoy your time together to talk and share stories about your day. Avoid mealtime battles over food. For fun, try a special meal theme such as Mexican every Wednesday night.

Find our meal planner on the back and start today!

