

HOW TO FEED A FAMILY ON A BUDGET

By Ida Lee Knapp

With the economy the way it is our money doesn't go very far. We end up cutting where we can and food is one place that gets cut. So how can we still eat healthy with less money? Good nutrition is important for health, energy and learning. Here are some ways foods from the food groups help you stay healthy: dairy products provide calcium and other nutrients to build strong bones. Grains, fruits and veggies provide energy and give you lots of important vitamins and minerals, plus fiber. Lean protein feeds your muscles, skin and hair. Healthy fats provide energy, protect your heart and helps your body absorb vitamins from your food.

To feed a family on a budget involves more than stretching our money at the store. In this lesson we will cover other ways that will help you get the most out of your food dollars. Some of these hints and ideas you may already have been doing and just need a refresher course on doing them. Some others you may want to try and see if it helps with your budget.

Menu Planning

Let's start with the benefits of planning your menus. Reduce stress: after a busy day you know that you have all the ingredients to make that meal. Save money: you will not be making so many trips for fast food or takeout. Waste less: by planning a menu you will be using your food up before it spoils. Save time: if you plan your menus you know what you are having the next day so you can chop things ahead of time and also plan for leftovers. Eat better: you will be using healthy ingredients. More options: you can plan ahead to try a new recipe and have those ingredients on hand. Take inventory: look inside your refrigerator, cupboards and freezer for items that need to be used soon, before they go bad. Think of ways to use those items. Consider your budget: think about how much money you have to spend on groceries. If money is tighter one week, plan to include several meals using the staples like dry beans and pasta that you already have on hand. Consider your schedule: think about how much time you'll have during the week to prepare meals. If it's a very busy week, you'll need to have some quick meals planned. If you aren't as busy one week, you can prepare foods that take longer to cook and freeze them for meals later. Take it easy: don't plan too many complicated meals in one week, especially on weeknights. Save prep time: include two or three recipes that all share the same common ingredients. (see "Get Four Main Dishes from 12 Foods – page 10.) Plan to use leftovers: think about ways you can plan to use a food more than once. Monday's leftover baked chicken could go into Tuesday's stir-fry. Plan to make some dishes in larger amounts for leftovers. Another idea for menu planning is look to see what kind of staples you have like tuna, pasta and frozen vegetables and plan meals around these staples. Plan some meatless meals that use beans or tofu. You might find it helpful when planning your meals to take 30 minutes and make a list of 30 meals your family loves to serve as inspiration if you're feeling a lack of creativity while menu planning. You could have pre-established themes for dinner each week, for example: Monday-Pasta, Tuesday-soup, salad and/or sandwiches, Wednesday-stir-fry, Thursday-crock pot, Friday-pizza, Saturday-something new and Sunday-something new.

Shopping

Now let's go shopping. How can you be a smart shopper? Plan your shopping trips by planning your meals. If you don't want to do that what about thinking about some recipes you would like to try or some recipe that you want to do again. See what ingredients are needed for these recipes and do you have those ingredients. Think about what fruits and vegetables are "in

season". When you think about buying fresh fruit and vegetables get only what you can use in a few days. Some of the fresh fruits and vegetables spoil quickly. Check the grocery ads and plan some meals around the sale items. Some sale items to look for so that you can stock-up your pantry are soups, canned or frozen vegetables, rice and dry beans. Clip coupons for items that you normally buy. Make a shopping list and put your items in categories, for example: vegetables & fruits; breads, rice & pasta; milk, yogurt & cheese; beans & canned food; meat, poultry, seafood; frozen foods. If your list is in categories you will not have to go back to an area to get what you forgot. Stick to your list so you will avoid impulse buying. But if you do find something on sale that is a good price and it is an item you use but not on your list think about getting it while it is on sale. Avoid prepared foods. You can save money making food from scratch. Buy generic items instead of a national brand. Most of the generics taste the same and you save money. Buy in bulk. Compare the prices in bulk to packaged foods. Check the "unit price" of a food. The "unit price" is the price per pound or per ounce. Most stores display the unit price next to the total price on each item, so make sure what price you are looking at. You will often find the larger containers are cheaper. Even though you pay more up front for the larger size, you are getting a cheaper price overall. Remember that if buying a larger size that it is something that you use a lot of. Compare the prices for fresh, canned and frozen vegetables and fruits. Remember that with fresh produce you are paying for unused parts like carrot tops, apple cores, melon rinds, peach pits, etc. Buy nonfat milk along with fresh milk. You can use the dry milk in recipes, cooked cereals, and creamy soups. You can also make the dry milk in a pitcher and add to fresh milk. Use half dry milk and half fresh milk. This will stretch out your fresh milk. Dry milk is also good to have on hand just in case you run out of fresh milk. Check the bulk bins and compare the price of the dry milk in the box. Stock up on evaporated milk. If a recipe calls for 1 cup milk, you can use ½ cup water + ½ cup evaporated milk.

Try to avoid these traps when you are shopping: coupons: only use coupons for items you need to buy anyway. Most coupons are for name brands and it maybe cheaper to buy a generic instead. Shelf level and position: foods at eye level are more expensive. Look at the top and bottom shelves for deals. Samples: Most foods that are for you to sample are the high cost convenience foods. Very rarely are they generic brands or sale items. Ready-to-eat foods are tempting but they cost more and most of these items are not healthy. You will save money by making it yourself. Buy basics: instant rice and seasoned rice cost a lot more than regular rice. Don't pay for packaging: food with less packaging cost less. For example: mini packets of oatmeal cost more per serving than a large container of oatmeal or bulk rolled oats. Don't linger: the more time you spend in the store the more money you spend. Stick to your list and don't shop when you are hungry.

Storing

After you get your groceries home here are some storing ideas. For grains like rice, pasta and cereal put in tightly closed containers to keep the pest out. Store bread at room temperature so it will stay fresh longer. If you buy more than one loaf put the extra loafs in the freezer so that they will not spoil on you. You can also put a loaf in the refrigerator instead of leaving it out. It depends on how fast you use your bread up. If you buy tortillas put a layer of plastic wrap or wax paper between each tortilla and put in the freezer. That way it is easy to take just a few from the package at a time and keep the rest in the freezer. Milk should be good a few days after the "pull date" or "sell by date" on the carton. If the milk smells sour throw it out. If milk is near the end of its shelf life, think about quick recipes you can make use of the milk, such as smoothies or pudding. Keep cheese tightly wrapped in plastic to keep it from drying out. You can freeze shredded cheese but it

does change the texture of it. You can use the frozen shredded cheese in cooked items that way you do not notice the texture change.

To prevent veggies from going bad, don't wash your vegetables before storing them. Wash them well when you're ready to use them. Store most veggies in the refrigerator. If possible, put them in the vegetable crisper drawer. Store them in perforated plastic bags. You can perforate the bag by punching or cutting holes in it. This helps your vegetable stay fresh. Store vegetable away from fruits. Fruits give off ethylene gas, which can change the flavor and texture of vegetables. Potatoes, sweet potatoes and onions keep well at cool temperature outside the refrigerator, in a dark dry place. Store potatoes and onions in separate places. Check your veggies for wilting. Try to cook them before this happens. If you can't eat them all up put the cooked veggies in the freezer to use later. If you can't store your veggies any longer, use them up quickly by: adding them to soups, stews, casseroles, stir-fry, omelets, spaghetti sauce and other main and side dishes. You can shred them and add to baked quick bread recipes or put them on top of a pizza.

Asparagus-Store in the refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 2-3 days for best quality.

Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Spinach, Kale, Collards, Chard, Beet, Turnip & Mustard Greens-Store in the refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 3-4 days. The spinach, kale, collards, chard, beet, turnip & mustard greens do not wash before storing; wash just before use.

Cabbage-Store in the refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 1-2 weeks.

Cauliflower, Celery, Cucumber, Eggplant, Peppers, Snap Beans (also known as green or string beans), Lettuce & Salad Greens-Store in refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 1 week. Don't wash the lettuce & salad greens before storing, wash just before use.

Carrots, Beets, Parsnips, Radishes & Turnips-Remove tops. Store in the refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 2 weeks.

Mushrooms-Don't wash before storing. Refrigerate in a cloth bag or wrapped in paper towels. Use within 2-3 days.

Onions-Store yellow, white or red onions in a breathable container such as a mesh bag. Store green onions in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Use within 3-5 days.

Potatoes-Russet baking potatoes can keep several months in a cool, dark, dry place. If stored at room temperature, use within 1 week.

Summer Squash (yellow & zucchini)-Store in the refrigerator in plastic bags or plastic containers. Use within 3-5 days.

Sweet Corn-Store unhusked and uncovered, in the refrigerator. Use as soon as possible for the sweetest flavor.

Sweet Potatoes & Winter Squash (hard-rind such as acorn squash or pumpkin)-Store at cool temperatures around 60 degrees. They will keep several months. At room temperature, they will keep 1 week.

Tomatoes-Store ripe tomatoes uncovered in the refrigerator up to 1 week. Keep unripe tomatoes at room temperature, away from direct sunlight, until they ripen.

Proper storage of fruits keeps them looking and tasting good longer and also helps some fruits ripen. Knowing how long different fruits last helps you to know how much to buy. Using or freezing fruit before it starts to spoil will help make the best use of your food dollars. If fruit is stored on the counter, keep it away from direct sunlight and in uncovered basket or bowl. Sealed bags and bowls make fruit spoil faster. Delicate fruits, such as berries, should not be left at room temperature longer than 2 hours. Store these in the refrigerator. Ripen fruit in a loosely closed paper bag. Put one ripe apple or banana in the bag for every five to seven pieces of unripe fruit.

Once ripened, fruit can keep for about 3 days left on the countertop and likely more if put in the refrigerator. Apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, bananas, berries, cherries and grapes can be put in the freezer once they get ripe and if you can't use them before they spoil. You can use them later in baking, smoothies, pancakes, waffles or bread. You can also just eat them frozen.

Apples-Store ripe apples on the counter for about a week or store them uncovered in the refrigerator for longer (up to a month). Store unripe apples at room temperature until they are ripe and ready to eat.

Apricots, Nectarines, Peaches & Plums-If ripe, refrigerate and use within 3-5 days. If unripe, store at room temperature until flesh begins to soften.

Bananas-Store at room temperature. Bananas will continue to ripen during storage. Bananas may be refrigerated to extend their life but the skins will turn dark. The fruit is still fine.

Berries & Cherries-Don't wash or remove stems before storing. Store covered in the refrigerator to prevent them from drying out. Use within 2-3 days.

Grapes-Store covered in the refrigerator. Use within 3-5 days.

Citrus-Store uncovered in the refrigerator for the longest life (up to a month).

Melons-Keep at room temperature until ripe, then refrigerate. Cover cut melon and store in refrigerator. Use within 2-3 days.

Pear-Ripen on the counter first, then store in the refrigerator.

Pineapple-Do not refrigerate a whole pineapple unless needed to prevent over-ripening. Cut ripe pineapple into pieces and refrigerate. Use within 2-3 days.

Meats and seafood, if you buy in big packages, which sometimes is cheaper, put in smaller packages and put in the freezer. It is best to take the meats and seafood out of the packages you buy them in and put in a food saver bag or storage bag and then put in the freezer.

Leftovers

By using your leftovers you are cutting down on your food waste. When you freeze leftovers instead of throwing them out, you can provide a healthy meal even when you don't have time to cook. Below is a list of common leftover ingredients and ideas for using them in other ways.

Bread-Use dried-out bread, rolls or hamburger buns to make Bread Pudding. Or, cube and toast the bread in the oven to make salad croutons or bread crumbs to top a casserole.

Rice-Make cooked rice into Rice Pudding or Fried Rice, or add to meatballs, soups, casseroles or an omelet. For some recipes to use leftover rice check out Zucchini Pie on Page 13 and Tasty Hamburger Skillet on page 14.

Fruit-Blend leftover canned fruit and serve over pancakes or waffles or add to recipes for bread or muffins. Use overripe bananas in smoothies or make banana bread or pancakes. Freeze fruit juice in ice cube trays and use the cubes to make smoothies or chilled drinks.

Tomato Sauce-Use leftover sauce to make English muffin pizzas

Vegetables-Prepare extra vegetables and freeze in small portions. Use for quick side dishes, soups, omelets, casseroles or on top of baked potatoes. Shred leftover carrots or zucchini to use in tomato sauce, muffins or pancakes. Use leftover canned pumpkin in pancakes or muffins. For some recipes to use leftover vegetables check out Zucchini Pie on page 13 and Broccoli & Everything Salad on page 14.

Chicken-Use leftover cooked chicken to make salads, sandwiches, soups, quesadillas, tacos, enchiladas or chili. For some recipes to use leftover chicken check out Broccoli & Everything Salad on page 14, Chicken & Dumpling Casserole on page 15.

Fish-Use leftover white fish to make fish tacos or add to salads.

Meat-Cook extra ground beef and freeze in small portions. Use later in casseroles, soups, spaghetti sauce, or other main dishes. Slice leftover roast and use to make fajitas or French dip sandwiches. Cube leftover steak and use to make barbecued sandwiches. Check out recipe Tasty Hamburger Skillet on page 14 for use of leftover hamburger.

Here are some ideas for casserole recipes with leftovers or food that you might have on hand.

Servings: 6

Grains (choose one and cook)

2 cups pasta (macaroni, penne, spiral, bow tie)

1 cup long-grain white or brown rice

1 cup bulgur or whole-grain barley

4 cups noodles

Protein (choose one)

2 cups lean ground beef, cooked

2 cups chicken, turkey, ham, beef or pork, cooked and diced

2 cups hard-cooked egg, chopped

2 (6 to 8 ounces) fish or seafood, flaked

2 cups canned beans (like kidney, pinto) or cooked, dried beans

Vegetable (choose one or more)

1 (10 ounce) package frozen spinach, broccoli, green beans or peas, thawed and drained

1 (16 ounce) can green beans, peas, carrots or corn, drained

2 cups fresh vegetables, washed and sliced

Sauce (choose one)

2 cups white sauce

1 can soup (mushroom, celery, cheese, tomato) mixed with low-fat milk to make 2 cups

1 (16 ounce) can diced tomatoes

Flavor (choose one or more)

1 to 2 teaspoons mixed dried herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram, tarragon)

½ cup celery, chopped

¼ cup onion, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Choose food(s) from each food category or use your own favorites. Combine in a buttered 1-quart casserole dish (or use nonstick cooking spray instead of the butter). Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 50 or 60 minutes or microwave using 50% power for 15 to 30 minutes, rotating or stirring as necessary. (Remember, each microwave is different.) Heat until steaming hot (165 degrees).

After cooking, add topping(s) listed below and return casserole, uncovered, to oven for about 10 minutes or microwave for about 2 minutes.

Topping (optional, choose one or more)

2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, grated

¼ cup Swiss, low-fat Cheddar or low-fat Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

¼ cup whole-wheat bread crumbs

¼ cup nuts, chopped

Substitutions

When you are making a recipe and you find out that you don't have an ingredient that it calls for what do you do? Below is a list of items and what you can substitute for them. When you substitute a different ingredient the recipe may turn out slightly different.

Main Dish Substitutions

<u>Ingredient, amount & variety</u>	<u>Swap</u>
Broth, 2 cups	1 can (14.5 ounces) broth 2 teaspoons powdered broth base mixed in 2 cups boiling water 2 bouillon cubes in 2 cups boiling water
Chili sauce, 1 cup	Mix together: 1 cup tomato sauce + ¼ cup brown sugar + 2 Tablespoons vinegar + ¼ teaspoon cinnamon + dash of ground cloves + a dash of allspice
Cornstarch (for thickening) 1 tablespoon	2 Tablespoon granular tapioca 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
Ketchup, 1 cup	1 cup tomato sauce + ½ cup sugar + 2 Tablespoons cooking vinegar
Mayonnaise	1 cup sour cream 1 cup plain yogurt 1 cup cottage cheese pureed in the blender Any combination of the above
Mustard, 1 teaspoon dry (used in cooked mixtures)	1 Tablespoon prepared mustard
Wine, red	The same amount of grape juice or cranberry juice
Wine, white	The same amount of apple juice or white grape juice
Worcestershire sauce, 1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon bottled steak sauce

Bread and Grain Substitutions

Ingredient, amount and variety

Bread Crumbs, 1 cup

Swap

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup cracker crumbs

Pasta (substituting one type for another)
4 cups cooked

8 ounces of *uncooked* pasta such as elbow macaroni, medium shells, rotini, twists, spirals wagon wheels, bow ties, penne, rigatoni, spaghetti, angel hair, linguine, vermicelli or fettuccini

13 ounces *uncooked* egg noodles
(approximately 8 ounces *uncooked* egg noodles will make 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups cooked noodles)

Vegetable and Fruit Substitutions

Ingredient, amount and variety

Garlic, 1 small clove

Swap

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon garlic powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon instant minced garlic

Lemongrass, 1 Tablespoon

1 Tablespoon lemon peel

Lemon juice, 1 teaspoon

1 teaspoon vinegar

Lemon zest (fresh grated lemon peel) 1 teaspoon

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon extract

Mushrooms, 1 pound fresh

3 ounces dried mushrooms
6 ounces canned mushrooms

Onion, 1 small fresh

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped onion
1 Tablespoon dry minced onion

Tomatoes, 2 cups chopped fresh

1 can (15 to 16 ounces) cut or diced tomatoes

Tomato juice, 1 cup

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup tomato sauce + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

Tomato sauce, 2 cups

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup tomato paste + 1 cup water. Stir well

Tomato soup, 1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounce can

1 cup tomato sauce + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water

Vegetables, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 cups fresh

1 can (16 ounces) drained vegetables
1 package (10 ounces) frozen vegetables

Dairy Substitutions

Ingredient, amount and variety

1 cup Buttermilk

Swap

1 Tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar + milk to make 1 cup. Stir well and let stand 5 minutes.

Milk

1/3 cup dry milk + water to make 1 cup. Stir well

1/2 cup evaporated milk + 1/2 cup water

Ricotta cheese

1 cup cottage cheese, liquid drained

Sour cream

1 cup plain yogurt

1 cup buttermilk

Yogurt-plain

1 cup cottage cheese, blended until smooth

1 cup sour cream

Protein Foods Substitutions

Ingredient, amount and variety

Egg, 1 whole

Swap

3 Tablespoons egg substitute

2 egg whites

Eggs, 2 large

3 small eggs

Baking Substitutions

Ingredient, amount and variety

Baking powder, 1 teaspoon

Swap

1/4 teaspoon baking soda + 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

1/4 teaspoon baking soda + 1/4 cup molasses

(decrease liquid in recipe by 1 to 2

Tablespoons)

1/4 teaspoon baking soda + 1/2 cup plain yogurt or buttermilk (decrease other liquid in recipe by 1/2 cup)

Chocolate, 1 ounce unsweetened

3 Tablespoons cocoa + 1 Tablespoon butter or regular margarine or vegetable oil

Corn syrup, 1 cup

1 cup granulated sugar + 1/4 cup water or other liquid called for in recipe

1 cup honey

Cream of tartar, ½ teaspoon	1 ½ teaspoons lemon juice or vinegar
Flour, 1 cup pastry or cake	7/8 cup all purpose flour (1 cup minus 2 Tablespoons) 7/8 cup (1 cup minus 2 Tablespoons) rice flour 1¼ cups rye flour 1/8 cup soy or carob flour + 7/8 cup all purpose flour
Flour, 1 cup white, all-purpose	1 cup minus 1 Tablespoon whole wheat flour 1 1/3 cups rolled oats 1 ½ cups bread crumbs 5/8 cup potato flour
Sugar, 1 cup	1 cup honey (decrease liquid in recipe by ¼ cup) 1 cup corn syrup (decrease liquid in recipe by ¼ cup) 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed 1 ¾ cup powdered or confectioner's sugar, packed
Sugar, 1 cup brown	1 white sugar + 2 Tablespoons molasses
Yeast, 1 package dry	2 ½ teaspoons loose active yeast
Herb and Spice Substitutions	
<u>Ingredient, amount and variety</u>	<u>Swap</u>
Allspice, 1 teaspoon	½ teaspoon cinnamon + ½ teaspoon ground cloves
Herbs, 1 Tablespoon finely cut fresh	1 teaspoon dried leaf herbs ½ teaspoon ground herbs
Italian seasoning, 1 teaspoon	Mix together: ¼ teaspoon basil + ¾ teaspoon dried parsley + a pinch of oregano

GET FOUR MAIN DISHES FROM 12 FOODS

With these 12 foods on hand, you have what you need to make four quick, tasty and healthy meals. You can add a green salad, some fruit and bread with these recipes.

1. Mozzarella cheese
2. Parmesan cheese
3. Plain nonfat yogurt
4. Pesto or Ranch dressing
5. Spinach
6. Tomatoes
7. Chicken
8. Lean ground beef
9. Pasta
10. Potatoes
11. Spaghetti sauce
12. Pizza crust

Mediterranean Pizza

Servings: 4

$\frac{3}{4}$ pound chicken or lean ground beef or sausage

2 cups fresh spinach, washed or 10 ounces frozen spinach, chopped thawed and drained well

1 to 2 Tablespoons pesto or 2 Tablespoons ranch dressing

1 large pizza crust

1 large tomato, washed

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup Parmesan cheese

In a skillet, brown ground beef, then drain. Add spinach and mix together over heat. Cut tomato in half and squeeze out most of juice and seeds, then chop. Spread pizza crust with pesto or ranch dressing. Spoon beef mixture on top of crust, and top with tomatoes and cheese. Bake at 450 degrees F. for 6 to 8 minutes. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Chicken Pesto Pasta

Servings: 4

8 ounces pasta (4 cups cooked)

1 cup plain nonfat yogurt

$\frac{3}{4}$ pound chicken, cut into chunks

1 large tomato, washed, cubed

1 to 2 tablespoons pesto or ranch dressing

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper

Cook pasta according to package directions. In a large skillet, stir-fry chicken and add tomato. Heat thoroughly. In a small mixing bowl, blend pesto or ranch dressing with yogurt. Toss pasta, chicken and tomatoes with sauce. Add salt, pepper and top with Parmesan cheese. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Italian Spuds

Servings: 4

4 large baking potatoes, washed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup low-fat mozzarella cheese, shredded

$\frac{3}{4}$ pounds lean ground beef

1 cup spaghetti sauce

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups fresh spinach, washed or 5 ounces frozen, chopped spinach

Bake potatoes. In a large skillet, brown ground beef and drain. Add spinach and spaghetti sauce, and heat thoroughly. Split potatoes and top with ground beef mixture, then cheese. Broil to melt cheese, if needed. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Quick Chicken Mozzarella

Servings: 4

8 ounces pasta (4 cups cooked)

4 skinless chicken pieces (breast or thigh)

2 cups spaghetti sauce, divided

1 cup low-fat mozzarella cheese, shredded

$\frac{1}{4}$ olives, chopped (optional)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup mushrooms, chopped (optional)

Cook pasta according to package directions. In a 9x9 inch baking pan, broil chicken until brown or until juices run clear. Remove chicken from pan and put pasta in pan. Spoon 1 cup spaghetti sauce onto pasta and place chicken on top of pasta. Top with remaining spaghetti sauce and olives or mushrooms, if desired. Spread with cheese. Bake at 350 degrees F. until bubbly, about 15 minutes. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Recipes

Gingerbread Pancakes

Servings: 4 (2 pancakes per serving – 4-inch)

½ cup whole wheat flour

½ cup all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon baking soda

2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

1 egg

2 tablespoons molasses

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 cup low-fat buttermilk

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. In another bowl, beat egg. Stir in molasses, oil and buttermilk. Pour milk mixture into dry ingredients; stir together lightly. Bake on a hot, lightly greased griddle.

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: No pumpkin pie spice? Use ½ teaspoon cinnamon, ½ teaspoon dry ginger and 1/8 teaspoon cloves or nutmeg. No buttermilk? Place 1 Tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar in measuring cup and fill to the 1 cup line with milk. Stir and let set to thicken slightly.

Nutrition Facts (2 pancakes-4inch): calories 200, calories from fat 50, total fat 6g, saturated fat 1.5g, trans fat 0g, cholesterol 45mg, sodium 530mg, total carbohydrate 33g, dietary fiber 2g, sugars 11g, protein 7g

Favorite Pancakes (without eggs)

Servings: 4 (1 pancake per serving)

1¼ cups all-purpose flour

1 Tablespoon baking powder

1 Tablespoon sugar

¼ teaspoon salt

1 cup non-fat or 1% milk

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil

2 Tablespoons water

Mix together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt in medium bowl. Combine milk, oil and water. Add to dry ingredients. Stir just until moistened. Bake on hot greased griddle. Pancakes are ready to turn when tops are bubbly all over, a few bubbles have burst and the edges begin to appear dry. Use a quick flip with a broad spatula to turn pancakes. Turn only once. Continue to bake until bottoms are brown and dry. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: Top with applesauce, fresh fruit or yogurt. Try adding fresh bananas or blueberries to the batter before cooking.

Nutrition Facts: (1 pancake) calories 240, calories from fat 70, total fat 8g, saturated fat 2g, trans fat 0g, cholesterol 5mg, sodium 590mg, total carbohydrate 36g, dietary fiber 1g, sugars 7g, protein 6g.

Mediterranean Tuna Salad

Servings: 10 (1/2 cup per serving)

3 can (5 ounce) tuna in water, drained

1 cup shredded carrot

2 cups diced cucumber

1 ½ cups peas, canned or frozen

¾ cup low-fat Italian salad dressing

Place drained tuna in a medium bowl. Use a fork to break apart chunks of tuna. Add carrot, cucumber, peas and salad dressing. Mix well. Serve immediately or make ahead and store covered in the fridge until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: Serve on lettuce leaves or make sandwiches. Try with whole wheat slices or pocket (pita) bread.

Nutrition Facts: (1/2 cup) calories 100, calories from fat 25, total fat 2.5g, saturated fat 0g, trans fat 0g, cholesterol 20mg, sodium 180mg, total carbohydrate 5g, dietary fiber 1g, sugars 2g, protein 11g

Zucchini Pie

Servings: 6

(This recipe is good for leftover rice and zucchini)

1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 large zucchini, grated (about 1 ½ cups)

1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning

1 clove garlic

5 large eggs, beaten

1 ½ cups cooked brown rice

½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

½ cup skim milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Coat a 9 inch pie plate with nonstick cooking spray. In a large nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the zucchini, Italian seasoning, and garlic and cook until the zucchini is tender, about 5 minutes. In a large bowl, combine zucchini mixture, eggs, rice, cheddar cheese, ¼ cup Parmesan cheese and milk. Pour the mixture into the prepared pie plate, top with the remaining ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, and cook until golden brown, 30-35 minutes.

Nutrition Facts: 201 calories, 10g fat, 3.5g saturated fat, 18mg cholesterol, 257mg sodium, 14.5g carbohydrates, 1.5g fiber, 13g protein

Tasty Hamburger Skillet

Servings: 7 (1 cup per serving)

1 pound lean ground beef or ground turkey

1/3 cup chopped onion

1/3 cup green pepper, chopped

2 cups water

1 cup long grain white rice

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 tablespoon chili powder

1 1/2 cups canned diced tomatoes, with juice

3/4 cup canned whole kernel corn, drained

3/4 cup canned red kidney beans, drained

1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese

Cook ground beef, onion and green pepper in large frying pan (medium heat) until hamburger is no longer pink. Drain excess fat from pan. Add water, rice, garlic powder, chili powder, tomatoes with juice, corn and beans. Cook, uncovered, for about 20 minutes or until rice is soft. Remove from stove top, sprinkle with grated cheese and serve hot. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes

Tip: garnish this dish with a tablespoon of low-fat sour cream. Favor boosters: green chilis, jalepenos more garlic. Make extra. Leftovers make a great filling for tacos or burritos or as a topping for baked potatoes.

Nutrition Facts: (1 cup) calories 250, calories from fat 30, total fat 3.5g, saturated fat 1g, trans fat .g, cholesterol 35mg, sodium 280mg, total carbohydrate 35g, dietary fiber 4g, sugars 3g, protein 19g

Broccoli and Everything Salad

Servings: 8 (2/3 cup per serving)

3 cups raw broccoli or frozen, chopped

1 medium carrot, peeled and diced

2 stalks celery, thinly sliced

1/2 cup raisins

1/4 cup onion, chopped

1 cup cooked ham, chicken, turkey or salad shrimp

1/4 cup light mayonnaise

1/2 cup plain, non-fat yogurt

1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon vinegar

Wash and prepare vegetables. If using frozen broccoli, thaw. In a large bowl mix together broccoli, carrot, celery, raisins, onion and meat. Mix together mayonnaise, yogurt, sugar and vinegar in a separate bowl. Add mayonnaise mixture to salad and mix well. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: Try adding apples or jicama. You can use dried cranberries instead of raisins. This salad can be prepared the day before and stored in the refrigerator.

Editors Note: When I made this salad I also add cucumbers and instead of an onion I add green onions. This salad would make a very good leftover salad. One time I just used mayonnaise

instead of yogurt with the mayonnaise. This salad would be good for a snack after a big Thanksgiving dinner and you could use turkey in it.

Nutrition Facts: (For Broccoli & Everything Salad) (2/3 cup) calories 100, calories from fat 30, total fat 3.5g, saturated fat 0g, trans fat 0g, cholesterol 10mg, sodium 260mg, total carbohydrate 15g, dietary fiber 2g, sugars 10g, protein 4g

Chicken and Dumpling Casserole

Servings 8 (1 cup per serving)

3 tablespoons oil

1 cup chopped onion (about 1 medium)

1 cup chopped celery (about 2 stalks)

1 cup chopped carrots (about 2 small)

3 cups low sodium chicken broth

3 tablespoons flour

2 cups cooked chicken, bit sized

1 cup frozen peas

Salt and pepper (try ¼ to ½ teaspoon)

Heat oil in a large skillet and sauté onions, carrots and celery until soft. Add a small amount of unheated broth to the flour and stir until smooth. Slowly stir in remaining broth and add to skillet. Stir over medium heat as the mixture thickens. Add the chicken, peas, salt and pepper, Heat on low while making dumplings. Pour the chicken mixture into a lightly oiled or sprayed casserole dish.

Dumplings

1 cup flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

1 egg

1/3 cup non-fat or 1% milk

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt together into a mixing bowl. Add the egg to the milk and beat until well blended. Stir into the flour until well combined. Drop dumpling dough by spoonfuls onto chicken mixture. Makes about 8 dumplings. Bake uncovered at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until the dumplings are golden brown. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Nutrition Facts: (1 cup) Calories 220, calories from fat 70, total fat 8g, saturated fat 1g, trans fat 0g, cholesterol 55mg, sodium 370mg, total carbohydrate 22g, dietary fiber 2g, sugars 3g, protein 16g

Resources

Oregon State University web site www.foodhero.org

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program of USDA (SNAP) helped fund the material in this web site

University of Missouri Extension web site <http://missourifamilies.org>

The SNAP program also helped fund the material in this web site

You walk into a grocery store expecting to buy only the items on your list, yet you leave with a cart full of extras you may not really need—and a considerably lighter wallet. An accident or a lapse in judgment? Actually, the store setup is likely to blame. “You want to get in and out quickly, but the folks in charge want you to linger as long as possible, spend as much as possible, and ideally spend it on the highest-profit items,” explains Ali Benjamin, coauthor of *The Cleaner Plate Club: Raising Healthy Eaters, One Meal at a Time*. How, exactly, do they entice you to stick around and load up on items you never meant to buy? Here are eight ways to guarantee a healthier (and cheaper) experience every time.

1. **DON'T SUPERSIZE YOUR CART**

“We don’t feel like we are done shopping until we have some sort of visual cue, like a full cart,” says Benjamin. So the trick is to look at the cart like a dinner plate. “Choose the smallest cart you possibly can,” says Diane Henderiks, RD, a personal chef and culinary nutritionist in Oakhurst, NJ. “It’s like choosing a smaller plate, only here you’ll save calories *and* money.” Or, abandon the cart entirely. “Our studies show that, for a week, a typical family needs only what they can carry,” says Martin Lindstrom,

author of *Brandwashed: Tricks Companies Use to Manipulate Our Minds and Persuade Us to Buy*. If you have a large family, enlist your spouse to help carry the groceries.

2. **LEAVE CREDIT CARDS AT HOME**

Cash can help you avoid impulse buys. “I spend less when I use cash rather than credit,” says Benjamin, and research has proven her right. Lindstrom advises shoppers to use a \$100 bill for grocery purchases. “We find it emotionally harder to break a larger bill, so we spend less,” says Lindstrom. “We don’t have an emotional

connection with a piece of plastic or numbers on a credit card statement.”

3. **QUESTION HEALTH HALOS**

You may not read labels as carefully in a health-food store as you would in a large bargain grocery store, says Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg, president of Monetized Intellect Consulting, in Brooklyn, NY. “The whole atmosphere in the health-food market makes you feel like everything in the store must be good for you,” he notes. “In a regular grocery store, you’ll look closer at the nutritional information on an item.”



4 **TUNE OUT THEIR MUSIC**

Typically, the store manager pipes in music to keep you on the store's schedule. "Slow hours mean slow music—they want you to linger and buy. Fast music at the busy hour means they want you moving, moving, buying," says Ginzberg. Toting your own tunes helps you set the pace and also make food shopping more fun. "If you're using a music player and headset, it also removes you from sensory stimuli," says Lindstrom. "And if you play music you don't like at a fast beat, it will shorten your trip—and make you shop in a more rational way."

5 **SHOP ALONE**

Whenever possible, leave the kids at home. Even if they're not begging for goodies, parenting while walking the aisles can drive

you to distracted buying, so you miss the best values.

6 **BEWARE OF BULK BUYING**

"Stores advertise pricing in a way that encourages you to buy in bulk," says Janel Ovrut Funk, MS, RD, LDN, a Boston-based dietitian who writes at *eatwellwithjanelblog.com*. "Just because you can purchase 10 jars of tomato sauce for \$10 does not mean you *have* to buy all 10 at once. You can still get the sale price when buying only one jar. This can prevent you from overbuying and overeating, especially when it comes to sale foods that never should have made it into your cart to begin with."

7 **READ EVERY PRICE TAG**

Many markets have lower prices on staples, like milk,

eggs, and toilet tissue, so you come away with the impression that every item in the whole store is cheaper. But stores mark up other common items by 10% because they know that you've already decided you're getting a better value in that store.

8 **LOOK ALL OVER THE PLACE**

Impulse items are stocked at eye level on the shelves, so if you're hunting for healthful choices, or even a lesser-known organic or all-natural brand (that doesn't have the bucks to buy primo placement), focus on items that aren't in your natural sight line, says Ginzberg. "Some stores mark down items on the end cap to draw you down the aisle too," he notes. "Once you are there, they don't have any reason to give you the best price."

66 Impulse items are stocked at eye level on the shelves, so if you're hunting for healthful choices, focus on items that aren't in your natural sight line. 99