

Cook More, Save More



If you're like most of us, you're eating out more and cooking less.

But did you know that if you cook at home, you often make better food choices for yourself and your family?

Cooking can be a fun, rewarding experience that also saves money.

How Much Can You Save?

Ordering pizza, fast food or Chinese food for a family of five can cost between \$20-\$40. Frozen meals like macaroni & cheese can cost \$7.

What if you could feed a family for \$3-6, with leftovers??



How to Get Started

- Make recipes you know your family will like.
- Be realistic. If you don't usually cook, start slowly. Cook once a week and work up to cooking more often.
- A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits, and smaller portions of protein and whole grains. Half your plate should be vegetables and fruit.
- Plan your meals, and keep healthy staple foods (like tuna, canned beans, pasta, canned tomatoes, peanut butter) on hand.
- Try the low-cost, family-friendly recipes on the back of this sheet!



Problems and Solutions

<p>"I'm tired of being the only one who cooks."</p>	<p>Make cooking a family event. Children can learn to help with prep work. This helps teach them about healthy eating and is a way to spend time together.</p>
<p>"I don't have time to cook a big meal every night; it's easier to just order out."</p>	<p>Cooking does take time, it is true. Try making parts of the meal the night before, or in the early morning. You can also cook an extra big meal on the weekend and freeze some of it for later. Buying frozen or canned fruits and vegetables can help save prep time.</p>
<p>"My family prefers to eat out; when I cook at home, they complain."</p>	<p>Changing a family pattern is difficult at first. Start by eating one more meal at home each week than you normally do. Tell your family this is a way to eat healthier and save money. Ask what they like and make a list of easy recipes that everyone enjoys.</p>

Meal Planning 101

Meal planning helps you save money, waste less food and make healthier meals. Follow these 3 helpful steps for successful meal planning!

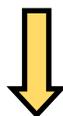
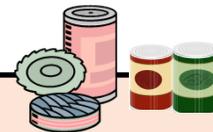
Step 1: Before You Shop

- Make note of what you already have in your freezer, cabinets, and refrigerator.
- Plan your meals around family favorites and foods on sale.
- Write down what you will eat for each meal for 1 week or whatever works for you!
- Make a shopping list from your meal plan.
- Attach any coupons to your list and use them at checkout.
- Remember to choose foods and beverages from each MyPlate food group.



Step 2: When You Shop

- Stick to your shopping list and buy mostly store brands.
- Look for the reduced priced section near the produce, deli, or bakery area.
- Mix in canned and frozen fruits and vegetables. They often cost less and will not spoil as quickly as fresh.
- Buy fresh produce when it is in season. It will taste better and cost less.
- Limit prepared foods and frozen meals. They are often more expensive and contain lots of fat, sugar, salt, and calories.



Step 3: After You Shop

- Store cold foods in the refrigerator or freezer. Put older food items in front and place new items behind them.
- Try preparing ingredients over the weekend or whenever you have a little extra time. Chop up onions or vegetables and save them for the dish you will prepare.
- When cooking, double the recipe and freeze the extras. This will give you a quick meal for a day when you do not have time to cook.
- Label and date your foods so you will use them before they spoil.



ON-LINE MEAL PLANS & RECIPES

Eat Well on \$4/Day by Leanne Brown

This book has tips, recipes, costs per serving and beautiful photos, but most important, **the author understands the challenge of eating well on a budget.**

For example, one of her tips is, “buy in bulk. Buying larger amounts usually brings the price down. *When you’re working within a tight budget, you won’t always be able to afford to shop for the future, but do it when you can.*” She gets it.

This 179- page book (89 printable PDF pages) is too big to print. Visit it online at the link below (or Google the title and author name to find it). One advantage to viewing it online is that you can use the PDF search tool to look for specific ingredients or recipes.

<https://cookbooks.leannebrown.com/good-and-cheap.pdf>



USDA SNAP Nutrition Education

This site has great resources in English and Spanish about cooking and meal planning on a budget.

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/meal-planning-shopping-and-budgeting>



For USDA SNAP recipes → <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/recipes>

Make the Most of the Food You Have

Sites like www.Allrecipes.com and www.recipepuppy.com allow us to search for recipe ideas based on the ingredients we have on hand. General online searches offer great results, too.

For **FREE** help accessing the above websites, and with budgeting, controlling expenses and improving your credit, contact Donna Andreozzi, **Money Sense** Coordinator @ Community Care Alliance, 401-413-5209 or dandreozzi@CommunityCareRI.org



Low-Cost Family Recipes that Save \$\$

TEX-MEX MACARONI

- * ½ box whole wheat pasta
- * 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- * ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- * 2 teaspoons chili powder
- * ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- * 1/2 teaspoon salt
- * 2 tablespoons flour
- * 1 15-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, drained
- * 1¼ cup fat-free or low-fat milk
- * 1 6-ounce container plain non-fat yogurt
- * 1 15-ounce can pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- * 1 cup reduced fat shredded cheddar cheese



1. Cook pasta according to package directions.
2. Melt butter in large saucepan. Add garlic powder, chili powder, pepper, salt, and flour. Cook and stir 1-2 minutes, until golden brown.
3. Add tomatoes, milk, yogurt, beans, and cooked pasta. Cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring often.
4. Mix in cheese and stir until melted. Remove from heat and serve.

Makes 6 (1-cup) servings: 260 calories, 4 grams fiber, 16 grams protein per serving, great source of calcium

Cost: \$5.56 per recipe, \$0.93 per serving

PASTA WITH GREENS AND BEANS

- * 8 ounces pasta (try whole wheat penne)
- * 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- * 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- * 10 ounces frozen spinach
- * 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes with juice
- * 1 15-ounce can white beans, drained
- * 1 teaspoon salt
- * ½ teaspoon pepper
- * ½ cup grated parmesan cheese



1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in large skillet. Add garlic and cook on low until soft.
3. Add spinach, tomatoes with juice, drained beans, salt and pepper.
4. When the mixture bubbles, cook gently (uncovered) for 5 minutes.
5. Add pasta and parmesan to spinach mixture. Toss well and serve.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2-3 hours.

Tip: Six cups of fresh chopped spinach, Swiss chard or kale can be used in place of frozen spinach.

Makes 8 (1-cup) servings; 290 calories, 4 grams fiber, 11 grams protein

Cost: \$4.33 per recipe, \$0.54 per serving

EASY CHEESY CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI



- * 1 14.5-ounce can low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
 - * 2 cups instant brown rice
 - * 4 cups fresh or frozen broccoli florets
 - * ¼ cup parmesan cheese
 - * 1½ cups shredded reduced fat cheddar cheese
 - * ½ teaspoon garlic powder
 - * 1 cup cooked, diced chicken (or 1 10-ounce can chicken, drained)
1. Place broth in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
 2. Stir in rice. Place broccoli and chicken over rice but do not stir in. Cover and cook 5 minutes.
 3. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes.
 4. Stir in cheeses and garlic powder. Let stand, covered for 5 minutes, then serve.

Makes six (1½ cup) servings; 260 calories, 3 grams fiber, 26 grams protein per serving

Cost: \$5.74 per recipe, \$0.96 per serving

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DHS office, or call the URI SNAP-Ed nutrition program at 1-877-Food-URI (1-877-366-3874). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Get Creative with Leftovers

Leftovers can be a great way to save money, use all of the food you buy, and eat healthy meals. The following recipe will give you some ideas for how you can use the leftover ingredients in your next meal!

Sweet Potato Quesadillas

Servings per recipe: 2
Serving size: ½ quesadilla

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

½ cup mashed, cooked **sweet potato***
¼ cup canned low sodium **black beans**, rinsed & drained
2 whole wheat **tortillas**, 8 inch size
2 tablespoons chunky salsa
2 tablespoons reduced fat shredded **cheddar cheese**
Non-stick cooking spray

Directions

- 1) In a medium size bowl, mash the sweet potato with the beans.
- 2) Coat a skillet with cooking spray on medium heat.
- 3) Place one tortilla in skillet. Spread the sweet potato and black bean mixture into it. Top with salsa and shredded cheese. Cover with the other tortilla.
- 4) Cook for 2-3 minutes then flip with a wide spatula and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Remove from pan to a cutting board and slice into quarters.

*You can use a fresh medium sweet potato or canned.

1 sweet potato = about 1 cup
1 (15 ounce) can sweet potatoes = 1½ cups

Leftover cooked sweet potato:

- Cut up and add to a soup or salad
- Add to a casserole dish
- Serve mashed sweet potatoes as a side dish

Leftover beans:

- Add to a soup or salad
- Use for tacos, burritos, or wraps
- Mash and use as a dip
- Use in a stir-fry with vegetables

Leftover tortillas:

- Use for tacos or vegetable fajitas
- Make a sandwich or wrap for lunch

Leftover cheddar cheese:

- Add to a sandwich, wrap or salad
- Add to a breakfast omelet
- Sprinkle on your soup



List some of your or your family's favorite meals below to help you start meal planning!

Breakfast

Lunch



Dinner

Snacks

Menu Planner and Shopping List for the Week of _____

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Shopping List
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				
Notes:				