



Fuel Up:

TASTY MEALS BUDGET SMART

Created by: Wake County Youth Health Council



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Letter from Authors.....3
- Nutrient Recommendations.....4
 - Healthy Foods with a Big Boost.....5
 - Good Food that's Good for your Wallet....6
- Creating Lasting Habits.....7
- Meal Plan.....8
 - Breakfast
 - Lunch
 - Dinner
 - Snacks
- Meals Across the Globe.....16
- Do your Own Meal Plan.....21
- Weekly Meal Planner.....22
- Healthy Facts.....25



Letter From Authors

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We're so excited to share this Meal Plan Guide, created by the Youth Health Council just for you! Our mission was to design meals that are easy to make, delicious to eat, and gentle on your budget—all while supporting your health and fitting into your busy life.

Inside, you'll find:

- Beginner friendly recipes that are fun and flavorful
- Affordable ingredients that won't stretch your wallet
- Simple tips to make meal prep quicker and easier
- Encouragement to help you build lasting healthy habits

We hope this guide inspires you to try new foods, cook together as a family, and feel great every day. Remember—small steps can lead to big changes!

Thank you for being part of this journey toward better health. We're cheering you on every step of the way.

**With health and happiness,
The Youth Health Council**



NUTRIENT RECOMMENDATIONS



Colorful Fruits & Vegetables: Power from the Rainbow

WHY: Full of vitamins, fiber, and minerals that protect against diseases.

TIP: Eat at least **five** handfuls a day.

- Sweet potatoes, Mango, Bell peppers, Collards, Oranges



Healthy Fats: Fuel for Your Heart

WHY: Supports brain growth and heart health.

Replaces unhealthy fats like lard or shortening.

TIP: Swap fried foods for grilled or baked versions.

- Avocado, olive oil, nuts, and fish like salmon



Water Over Sugar: Drink to Feel Your Best

WHY: Prevents dehydration and supports focus and energy.

TIP: Add lime, berries, or mint for natural flavor.

- Herbs can be grown on window seals!



Whole Grains & Fiber: Steady Energy

WHY: Helps to balance blood sugar and improves gut health. Is key for preventing diabetes

TIP: Choose to eat fiber packed foods

- Chia seeds, corn tortillas, oats, beans.

HEALTHY FOODS WITH A BIG BOOST

Foods with 15% or more with key nutrients

Protein “Muscle Maker”	Chicken, Ground Pork, eggs, salmon, peanut butter, beef
Vitamin D “Sunshine Vitamin”	Salmon, Orange Juice, Tuna, Egg Yolk
Fiber “Tummy Cleaner”	Collards green, cabbage, rolled oats, apples, banana, blueberries, squash, collards, cauliflower, broccoli
Vitamin A “Strong Eyes”	Salmon, eggs, apples, banana
Vitamin B6 “Body Fixer”	Bananas, Chicken, Potatoes
Vitamin B12 “Energy Booster”	Milk, Turkey, Chicken (dark meat), Eggs
Folate/ Vitamin B9 “Cell Grower”	Collards greens, Broccoli, Grains, Clementines
Vitamin C “Germ Fighter”	Clementines, apples, banana, blueberries
Calcium “Bone Builder”	Milk, Greek Yogurt, salmon, beef, cabbage, collards, squash, potatoes
Iron “Energy Booster”	Rolled oats, eggs, apples, beef, cabbage, collards, squash, potatoes, strawberry
Magnesium “Body Balancer”	Brown Rice, rolled oats, eggs, apples, banana, beef, cabbage, collards, potatoes
Potassium “Heart Helper”	Bananas, apples, beef, cabbage, collards, potatoes, Clementines, strawberry
Zinc “Germ Blocker”	Chickpeas, Black beans, pumpkin seeds, Cashews, Milk
Omega-3s “Brain Boosters”	Salmon, Tuna, Chia seeds, Flaxseed, eggs (some brands will note “with omega-3s”)
Vitamin E “Skin & Cell Shield”	Nuts, Seeds, Sunflower oil, Spinach
Iodine “Thyroid Helper”	Iodized Salt, Yogurt, Cod, Shrimp, Seaweed

GOOD FOOD THAT'S GOOD FOR YOUR WALLET

Nutritious foods + prices

Protein	Vegetables	Fruits	Grain	Dairy
Chicken breast \$2.67/lb	Green cabbage Head \$2.70/ea	Apples \$1.24/lb	Brown Rice \$1.77/32oz	Greek vanilla yogurt \$3.54/32oz
Peanut Butter \$0.174/oz	Broccoli Florets \$2.47/12oz	Banana 50.0c/lb	Rolled oats \$3.98/120oz	Whole milk \$2.42/128 fl oz
Eggs 41.4c/ea	Cauliflower Florets \$2.47/12oz	Clementines \$1.32/lb	Crackers 20.1c/oz	String cheese \$3.98/12 pack
Ground pork \$3.56/lb	Shredded collard greens \$3.98/32oz	Grapes \$1.97/lb	Spaghetti 6.1c/oz	Cottage cheese \$2.50/16oz tub
Can Salmon 27.8c/oz	Yellow squash \$1.10/ea	Frozen blueberries \$2.86/16oz	Sliced bread \$4.00/ea	Eggs 41.4c/ea
Chicken drumsticks 98.4c/lb	Packaged salad 18.2c/oz	Strawberries 18.5c/oz	Corn tortillas \$1.78/30 count	Butter \$4.00/lb
Ground beef \$5.31/lb	Tomato sauce \$2.24/ea	Grapefruit \$1.20/ea	Whole Grain Cereal \$2.50-3.00/box	Shelf-Stable Milk \$1.50/box
Dry lentils \$1.29/lb	Potatoes 1.18/lb	Pears \$1.52/lb	Quinoa \$2.99/lb	Shredded cheese \$2.22/8oz

All prices shown are approximate and reflect current averages at the time of printing. Actual prices may vary by store, region, and season.

Creating Lasting Habits



1 Start with “why”

Connect your nutrition goals to something that you care about (i.e. increased energy for sports, clearer skin, improved focus).

2 Focus on simple, daily habits

Sustainable nutrition isn't about strict diets. Instead, aim for small wins like: eat one fruit or veggies with every meal or eat healthy snacks for the week.

3 Track progress, not perfection

Use a journal or an app to track habits. Reflect weekly: what's going well? What's hard? Celebrate progress, not perfection.

4 Re-evaluate & adjust

If something's not working, tweak the goal instead of quitting. For example, instead of having a full salad for lunch, I'll have some carrots and celery with ranch.

Breakfast

MONDAY

OATMEAL & BLUEBERRIES

\$7 for 7 servings



- 1 CUP ROLLED OATS
- 2 CUPS WATER OR MILK
- ½ CUP BLUEBERRIES (FRESH OR FROZEN)
- 1 TSP HONEY (OPTIONAL)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. In a pot, bring the water or milk to a boil.
2. Stir in the oats and reduce heat to low.
3. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring often.

TUESDAY

GRANOLA & APPLES

\$6.50 for 7 servings

- 1 SMALL APPLE (ANY KIND)
- ½ CUP GRANOLA
- ½ CUP YOGURT
- 1 TSP HONEY OR CINNAMON SUGAR (OPTIONAL)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Wash and cut apple into small pieces
2. Add yogurt and apples to a bowl.
3. Add the granola with a sprinkle of cinnamon!



WEDNESDAY

YOGURT WITH FRUIT AND CEREAL

\$11 for 7 servings



- 1 CUP PLAIN OR VANILLA YOGURT
- ½ CUP FRUIT (LIKE BERRIES OR CHOPPED APPLE)
- ¼ CUP WHOLE GRAIN CEREAL OR GRANOLA

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Spoon yogurt into a bowl.
2. Add fruit and cereal on top.

THURSDAY

BANANA PANCAKES

\$11 for 7 servings

- 1 BANANA
- 1 EGG
- BUTTER OR OIL

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mash the banana in a bowl.
2. Crack the egg in and mix it up.
3. Heat a pan with oil or butter.
4. Pour small scoops of the mix to make pancakes.
5. Cook for about 2 minutes per side.



Breakfast

FRIDAY

MINI VEGGIE OMELET

\$13 for 7 servings



- 1 EGG
- A FEW SMALL VEGGIE PIECES (LEFTOVERS IN THE KITCHEN)
- A LITTLE OIL OR BUTTER
- SALT & PEPPER (JUST A PINCH)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Crack the egg in a bowl and mix it.
2. Heat a small pan with a little oil or butter.
3. Pour in the egg. Add the veggies.
4. Let it cook, then fold it like a taco.

(Can be premade and frozen)

SATURDAY

APPLESAUCE MUFFINS

\$12 for 7 servings

- 1 CUP FLOUR
- ½ CUP APPLESAUCE
- 1 EGG
- 1 TSP BAKING POWDER
- 1 TSP CINNAMON
- 1 TBSP OIL OR MELTED BUTTER

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mix everything in a bowl.
2. Spoon into muffin cups.
3. Bake at 350°F (175°C) for 15-20 minutes.



SUNDAY

(Can be premade and frozen)

EGG AND CHEESE WRAP

\$8.50 for 7 servings



- 1 EGG
- 1 SMALL TORTILLA
- 2 TBSP SHREDDED CHEESE OR MEAT
- A LITTLE OIL OR BUTTER FOR THE PAN

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Crack the egg in a bowl. Whisk it with a fork.
2. Heat a pan with a little oil or butter.
3. Pour in the egg and cook, stirring.
4. Fold the egg and cheese in a tortilla.

Lunch

MONDAY



MEDITERRANEAN SALAD

\$14 for 7 servings

- 1 CUP LETTUCE
- ½ CUP CUCUMBER, CHERRY TOMATOES, CHICKPEAS
- 1 TBSP FETA CHEESE
- 1 TSP OLIVE OIL, LEMON JUICE

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Put the lettuce in a big bowl.
2. Add cucumbers, tomatoes, and chickpeas.
3. Sprinkle on the cheese.
4. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice.

TUESDAY

GRILLED CHICKEN AND ROASTED POTATOES

\$12 for 7 servings

- 1 CHICKEN BREAST OR THIGH
- 1 POTATO (CUT INTO CUBES)
- OLIVE OIL, SALT, PEPPER

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Toss potatoes in oil, salt, roast at 425°F for 25–30 min.
2. Grill or pan-cook chicken for 5–6 min per side until done.



WEDNESDAY

EGG FRIED RICE

\$9 for 7 servings

- 2 CUPS COOKED RICE
- 2 EGGS
- 1-2 TBSP CUP SOY SAUCE
- 1 CUP OF FROZEN PEAS, CARROTS, AND GREEN ONION
- OPTIONAL: ADD CHICKEN OR BEEF

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Scramble eggs in oil and set aside.
2. Stir-fry rice in oil, add soy sauce and veggies.
3. Mix eggs back in and serve.



THURSDAY

SALAD WITH BAKED CHICKEN

\$13 for 7 servings

- 1 CHICKEN BREAST OR THIGH
- LETTUCE OR MIXED GREENS
- OLIVE OIL, SALT, PEPPER
- OPTIONAL: TOMATO, CUCUMBER, DRESSING

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Bake chicken at 400°F for 25 min with oil, salt, pepper.
2. Chop and toss greens with veggies and chicken.



Lunch

FRIDAY



CHICKEN CAESAR PASTA SALAD

\$16.50 for 7 servings

- 2 CUPS COOKED PASTA (LIKE ROTINI OR PENNE)
- 1 CUP COOKED CHICKEN (GRILLED, BAKED, OR CANNED)
- 1 CUP CHOPPED ROMAINE LETTUCE
- ¼ CUP SHREDDED PARMESAN CHEESE
- 2-4 TBSP CAESAR DRESSING (STORE-BOUGHT OR HOMEMADE)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Cook pasta and let it cool.
2. Cut the chicken into small pieces.
3. In a big bowl, mix the pasta, chicken, lettuce, and cheese.
4. Add Caesar dressing and stir it all up.

SATURDAY

GRILLED CHEESE AND TOMATO SOUP

\$8 for 7 servings

- 2 SLICES OF BREAD
- 1-2 SLICES OF CHEESE (CHEDDAR WORKS GREAT!)
- 1 TSP BUTTER OR OIL
- 1 CAN OF TOMATO SOUP (CHECK THE SOUP CAN FOR INSTRUCTIONS)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Put cheese between the bread, buttered sides facing out.
2. Heat a pan on the stove & Cook sandwich
3. Pour the soup into a pot, Cook according to label



SUNDAY



TURKEY AND CHEESE WRAP

\$9.75 for 7 servings

- WHOLE WHEAT TORTILLA
- SLICED TURKEY
- SLICE OF CHEESE
- LETTUCE OR SPINACH
- OPTIONAL: MUSTARD OR HUMMUS

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Lay the tortilla flat.
2. Add turkey, cheese, and greens.
3. Roll it up tight like a burrito.

DINNER

MONDAY



SPAGHETTI WITH BEEF MEATBALLS

\$11 for 7 servings

½ LB GROUND BEEF
SPAGHETTI
TOMATO SAUCE (JARRED)
OPTIONAL: BREADCRUMBS AND EGG (FOR BINDING)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mix beef (optionally with egg/breadcrumbs), roll into balls, and bake at 400°F for 15 min.
2. Boil pasta, heat sauce, & combine with meatballs.

TUESDAY

SALMON CAKE WITH BROWN RICE

\$7.25 for 7 servings

1 CAN OF SALMON
1 EGG
¼ CUP OF BREADCRUMBS
2 SLICED SQUASH (ZUCCHINI OR YELLOW)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mix Salmon, egg and breadcrumbs. Form into patties and pan fry 3-4 minutes per side.
2. Roast sliced squash at 400°F for 15-20 min with olive oil.
3. Serve with cooked brown rice.



WEDNESDAY

BURGER WITH A SALAD

\$15 for 7 servings

GROUND BEEF PATTY
BURGER BUN
LETTUCE OR SALAD MIX
OPTIONAL: CHEESE, TOMATO, KETCHUP

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Form and cook burger patty on a pan or grill (4-5 min per side).
2. Assemble burger and serve with side salad.



THURSDAY

TACOS WITH FRUIT SALAD

\$19 for 7 servings

1 POUND GROUND MEAT
TACO SEASONING
TORTILLAS OR TACO SHELLS
SHREDDED LETTUCE, CHEESE, TOMATO

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Add Ground meat to a pan and add taco seasoning pack (follow instructions on the packet)
2. Heat Tortillas or taco shells up
3. Assemble a taco bar with toppings!



DINNER

FRIDAY



PAN SEARED CHICKEN, ROASTED CABBAGE, & BROWN RICE *\$21 for 7 servings*

1 CHICKEN BREAST (PER PERSON)
½ CABBAGE HEAD
1 CUP COOKED BROWN RICE HONEY (PER PERSON)
SALT, PEPPER, OLIVE OIL

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Season Chicken with Salt, Pepper, garlic powder. Pan sear each side for 6 minutes. Cook for additional 5 minutes.
2. Cut Cabbage, drizzle with oil, and roast at 425 for 20-25 minutes.
3. Serve with brown rice.

SATURDAY

CHEESY BROCCOLI & RICE CASSEROLE

\$12 for 7 servings

1 POUND GROUND MEAT
TACO SEASONING
TORTILLAS OR TACO SHELLS
SHREDDED LETTUCE, CHEESE, TOMATO

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mix rice, broccoli, cheese, and soup in a baking dish.
2. Bake at 375°F for 20 min until bubbly.



SUNDAY

LOADED POTATO BOATS

\$14 for 7 servings

SWEET POTATOES
BLACK BEANS OR SHREDDED CHICKEN
CHEESE
SOUR CREAM
BACON
CHIVES

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Bake potatoes on 400 degrees for an hour or until soft.
2. Cut open and fill with beans or chicken, bacon, sprinkle cheese and chives.
3. Return to oven to melt, top with sour cream.



SNACKS

MONDAY

BANANA YOGURT

\$6 for 4 servings

- ¾ CUP PLAIN GREEK YOGURT
- ½ BANANA, SLICED
- ½ TSP HONEY (OPTIONAL)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Spoon yogurt into a bowl,
2. Top with banana slices
3. Drizzle honey if desired.



TUESDAY

TUNA CRACKERS

\$7 for 4 servings

- 4 WHOLE-GRAIN CRACKERS
- 2 TBSP TUNA SALMON
- 1 TSP MAYO
- SPOONFUL OF SWEET RELISH
- DASH OF PEPPER OR SALT

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mix ingredients and spread tuna over crackers.
2. Eat with peeled clementine on the side.



WEDNESDAY

APPLES & PEANUT BUTTER

\$5 for 4 servings

- 1 SMALL APPLE, SLICED
- 1 TBSP NATURAL PEANUT BUTTER

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Core and slice apple.
2. Serve with peanut butter for dipping.



THURSDAY

CHEESE & WHOLE WHEAT CRACKERS

\$6 for 4 servings

- CHOICE OF CHEESE
- RITZ CRACKERS
- OPTIONAL: HAM OR TURKEY SLICES

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Put cheese on top of each cracker
2. Add meat if desired
3. Stack 'em, eat 'em, enjoy!



SNACKS

FRIDAY



SWEET OR RUSSET POTATO WEDGES

\$6 for 4 servings

- 1 SWEET POTATO OR RUSSET POTATO
- 1 TSP OLIVE OIL
- A PINCH OF SALT AND CINNAMON

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. PEEL AND SLICE POTATO INTO WEDGES
2. TOSS WITH OIL AND SEASON
3. BAKE AT 400 FOR 23 MINUTES

SATURDAY

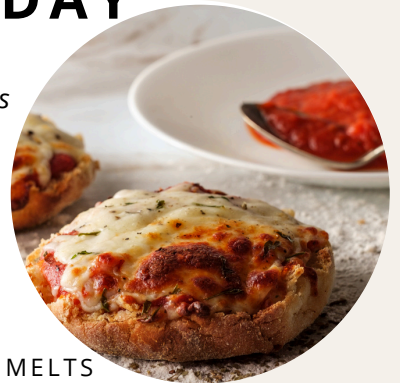
MINI ENGLISH MUFFIN PIZZAS

\$8 for 6 servings

- 1 WHOLE GRAIN ENGLISH MUFFIN
- 2 TBSP TOMATO SAUCE
- 2 TBSP SHREDDED CHEESE
- OPTIONAL: CHOPPED VEGGIES OR PEPPERONI

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. SPLIT THE MUFFIN IN HALF.
2. SPREAD SAUCE ON EACH SIDE.
3. ADD CHEESE AND TOPPINGS.
4. TOAST IN THE OVEN OR TOASTER OVEN UNTIL CHEESE MELTS



SUNDAY

VEGGIE STICKS WITH HUMMUS

\$9 for 6 servings



- BABY CARROTS
- CUCUMBERS
- BELL PEPPERS
- 2 TBSP HUMMUS

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. WASH AND SLICE YOUR VEGGIES
2. DIP INTO THE HUMMUS AND MUNCH AWAY

BONUS SNACK!

HARD-BOILED EGGS WITH FRUIT

\$11 for 6 servings

- 1-2 HARD BOILED EGGS
- PINCH OF SALT AND PEPPER
- SLICED FRUIT (LEFTOVER FRUIT FROM THE WEEK)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

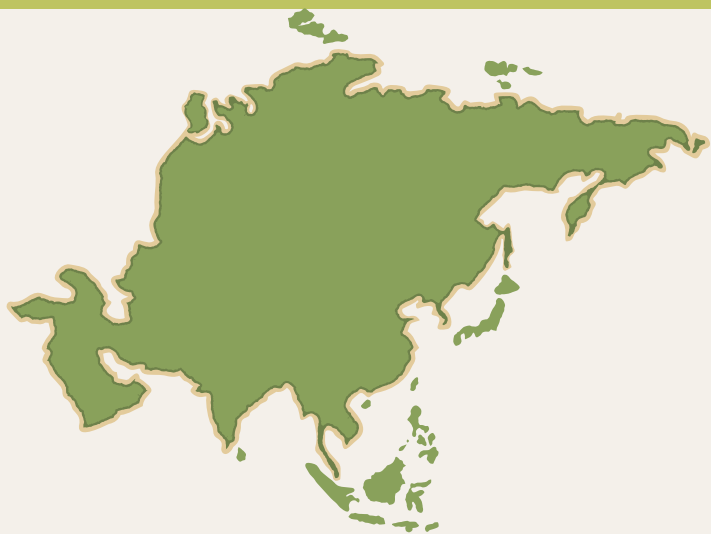
1. BOIL EGGS FOR 15 MINUTES
2. PUT EGGS IN AN ICE BATH.
3. PEEL EGGS.
4. SLICE CHOSEN FRUIT





**Meals
from
Across
the
Globe**

Asia



Breakfast

1. Sweet Rice with Banana and Cinnamon

Inspired by: Southeast Asian sticky rice breakfasts

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked white rice
- ½ banana (sliced)
- Pinch of cinnamon or sugar (optional)

Prep:

Mix rice and banana. Sprinkle cinnamon or sugar if available.

Can be eaten cold or warmed in microwave.

2. Coconut Rice Porridge (if canned coconut milk is available)

Inspired by: Filipino lugaw or Thai sticky rice

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cooked rice
- ¼ cup canned coconut milk
- ½ cup water
- Pinch of salt or sugar

Prep:

Mix all in a bowl. Microwave if available or let soak to soften.

Lunch

1. Cold Sesame Noodles (No-Cook)

Inspired by: Chinese liang mian (cold noodles)

Ingredients:

- 1 pack instant ramen noodles
- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- Cucumber or carrot (optional, from garden)

Prep:

Soak or cook noodles with hot water. Drain, mix with peanut butter + soy. Add veggies if available.

2. Mung Bean or Lentil Salad Wraps

Inspired by: South Asian street foods

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cooked lentils (precooked or soaked/canned)
- ¼ cup chopped tomato or greens
- 1 tortilla or flatbread

Prep:

Mix lentils and vegetables. Wrap in bread or eat as salad.

Dinner

1. Tofu and Cabbage Stir Bowl (Microwave-Friendly)

Inspired by: Buddhist-style homestyle meals

Ingredients:

- ½ block firm tofu (often food bank/frozen)
- ½ cup chopped cabbage
- 1 cup rice
- Soy sauce

Prep:

Microwave tofu and cabbage together, season with soy. Serve over rice.

2. Miso Soup with Rice

Inspired by: Japanese breakfast/dinner combo

Ingredients:

- 1 cup hot water
- 1 tsp miso paste or 1 tbsp soy sauce
- ½ cup canned greens or chopped scallions
- ½ cup rice

Prep:

Stir miso or soy into hot water, add greens. Eat with rice.

Middle East



Breakfast

1. Flatbread with Olive Oil and Za'atar (or salt)

Inspired by: Palestinian and Lebanese breakfasts

Ingredients:

- 1 pita or flatbread
- 1 tsp olive oil (or vegetable oil)
- Pinch of za'atar (if available) or salt

Prep:

Drizzle oil over bread. Sprinkle za'atar or salt. Eat as-is or warm in microwave.

2. Lentil and Rice Mash (Warm or Cold)

Inspired by: Mujaddara (simplified)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cooked lentils
- ½ cup cooked rice
- Salt, oil, or onion (optional)

Prep:

Mix lentils and rice. Add salt or oil if available. Eat warm or room temperature.

Lunch

1. Chickpea and Tomato Salad Wrap

Ingredients:

- ½ cup canned chickpeas (rinsed)
- ¼ cup chopped tomato
- Tortilla or flatbread
- Salt, lemon juice (optional)

Prep:

Mash chickpeas slightly, mix with tomato. Wrap in flatbread.

2. Lentil Soup (Microwave or Hot Water Method)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup pre-cooked lentils or canned lentils
- 1 cup water
- ¼ cup canned tomato
- Cumin or salt (optional)

Prep:

Mix and microwave until warm. If no microwave, soak lentils in hot water 10 mins.

Dinner

1. Lentils and Bulgur (or Rice) Bowl

Inspired by: Turkish and Syrian kisir

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cooked lentils
- ½ cup cooked bulgur or rice
- Tomato paste or canned tomato (1 tbsp)
- Salt, lemon (optional)

Prep:

Mix together and warm or eat cold.

2. Spiced Chickpeas with Flatbread

Ingredients:

- ½ can chickpeas
- ½ tsp cumin or paprika (optional)
- Flatbread

Prep:

Mash or leave whole. Microwave if desired. Scoop with bread.

South America

Breakfast

1. Arepa with Cheese or Peanut Butter

Ingredients:

- 1 pre-cooked arepa or 1 thick corn tortilla (store-bought or handmade with instant cornmeal)
- 1-2 tbsp shredded cheese or peanut butter

Prep:

- Warm arepa in microwave or pan. Slice open and fill with cheese or spread peanut butter on top.

2. Plantain and Rice Hash

Ingredients:

- ½ ripe plantain or banana
- ½ cup cooked rice
- Pinch of salt or cinnamon (optional)

Prep:

- Slice and mash plantain. Mix with rice and season. Heat if possible, or serve at room temp.



Lunch

1. Rice and Black Beans with Salsa

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked rice
- ½ cup canned black beans (rinsed)
- 2 tbsp salsa or diced tomato

Prep:

- Mix all together and warm if possible. Can also eat cold as a salad.

2. Lentil Stew Bowl

Ingredients:

- ½ cup canned or cooked lentils
- ¼ cup canned tomato or salsa
- ½ cup chopped potato or carrots (canned or fresh)
- Prep:

- Combine all in a bowl, microwave or soak with hot water. Serve with rice if desired.

Dinner

1. Yucca or Potato Mash with Beans

Ingredients:

- 1 cup mashed potatoes or boiled yucca (or instant mashed potatoes)
- ½ cup black or pinto beans
- Salt or garlic powder (optional)

Prep:

- Warm and mash together. Season to taste.

2. Vegetable Rice Stir (Arroz con Verduras)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked rice
- ½ cup mixed canned veggies or chopped greens
- 1 tsp oil or butter

Prep:

- Stir-fry in pan or microwave with oil. Season with salt or herbs if available.

The Islands

Breakfast

1. Coconut Oats with Banana

Ingredients:

- ½ cup instant oats
- ½ banana (sliced)
- ¼ cup canned coconut milk
- Hot water

Prep:

- Add hot water to oats, stir in coconut milk and banana. Let sit for 3 minutes.

2. Breadfruit or Potato Hash

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cooked diced potato (or canned)
- ¼ cup canned mixed vegetables or corn
- 1 tsp oil or butter

Prep:

- Microwave or pan-fry ingredients together. Season with salt if available.



Lunch

1. Rice and Saltfish (or Tuna) Bowl

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked rice
- ½ can tuna (or canned cod/salmon if available)
- 1 tbsp chopped onion or bell pepper (optional)

Prep:

- Mix all ingredients and warm if possible. Season with pepper or lime if available.

2. Sweet Potato and Black Bean Bowl

Ingredients:

- ½ cup canned sweet potato (or regular)
- ½ cup canned black beans
- Salt or cinnamon (optional)

Prep:

- Mix and microwave until warm. Can also be eaten cold.

Dinner

1. Coconut Rice with Vegetables

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked rice
- ¼ cup canned coconut milk
- ½ cup canned vegetables

Prep:

- Stir all ingredients together and microwave. Season with salt or herbs.

2. Spam and Cabbage Stir-Fry

Ingredients:

- 2-3 slices canned Spam or luncheon meat
- ½ cup chopped cabbage
- 1 tsp oil

Prep:

- Microwave or pan-fry Spam and cabbage together. Serve with rice if available.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

You've looked and made some of the meals from the pages before. Now it's time to get creative!

Think about:

- What foods you like
- What foods are healthy
- What foods don't cost too much.

Your mission: Make Your Own meal

- Use the next few pages to write down meals you want to make in the upcoming weeks.
- This will help you remember that **good food can be affordable, yummy, and fun to make.**



WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

WEEK _____

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
MON				
TUE				
WED				
THU				
FRI				
SAT				
SUN				

WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

WEEK _____

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
MON				
TUE				
WED				
THU				
FRI				
SAT				
SUN				

WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

WEEK _____

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
MON				
TUE				
WED				
THU				
FRI				
SAT				
SUN				



Healthy Facts

- **You can train your taste buds**

Studies show that taste buds can adapt to lower levels of salt and sugar, making it easier to appreciate the natural flavors of healthy foods.

- **Meal prepping saves more than just time**

Meal prepping is one of the most cost effective, dietary refining, methods of cooking.

- **Your gut is a "second brain."**

The Cleveland Clinic explains the "gut-brain axis," a direct communication network between your digestive system and your brain, which influences mood and other mental functions.

- **The power of protein**

Protein is the most satiating macronutrient, helping to suppress appetite and reduce overall calorie intake by affecting gut hormones.



- **Your brain loves healthy fats.**

Your brain is nearly 60% fat, and those fatty acids are crucial for its integrity and function. That's why including healthy fats from sources like avocados, nuts, and seeds is so important.

- **Sleep affects what you eat.**

Getting enough sleep helps regulate the hormones that control hunger and fullness. People who sleep for only 5 hours had a 14.9% increase in the hunger hormone ghrelin and a 15.5% decrease in the fullness hormone leptin compared to those who slept for 8 hours.

- **Stay hydrated to stay focused.**

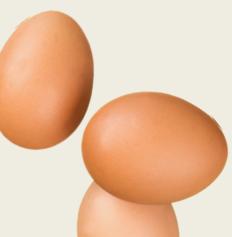
Dehydration can affect how your brain works. Losing just 2% of your body's water can lead to impairments in attention and concentration, making it harder to focus on tasks.



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**Healthy eating is not about dieting, it's about
nourishing your body with the nutrients it
needs to thrive.**

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