



Ask the Expert: Importance of Family Meals

Written by Christina Wilder, 1st Year Professional
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The hustle and bustle to and from school events, meetings, and other activities can make sitting down for a family meal every night seem challenging. However, recent research shows that eating family meals improves kids diets later in life. Eating family meals more often is linked with a better overall diet that includes eating more fruits and vegetables. This means that the more sit-down family meals that happen, the more likely children will choose fruits and veggies, and eating more fruits and veggies leads to a happier and healthier life!

Heart disease and diabetes are becoming more common. Eating a healthy diet that includes fruits and vegetables is an important way to lower the chances of getting these diseases. Research shows that not only do we benefit from making healthier decisions now, but that our future selves will also benefit! Here are some tips for family meal planning:

1. Make a master list of 10 to 20 go-to meals.
2. Plan meals ahead of time to make preparing them easier.
3. Write down your meal plan on paper.
4. Keep it simple. Family meals don't need to be fancy to be healthy.
5. Turn off cell phones, TV's, and all technology and tune into each other.

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Sources: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2715616>

<https://d16ldwb6hzlty.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/09020329/How-deos-your-grocery-cart->

Food Safety: Cooking Protein

Written by Emma Rich, Junior in Dietetics & Nutrition, Fitness, and Health

Food safety can lead to very serious illnesses if not practiced. One of the biggest risks comes from eating undercooked proteins, such as meat, eggs, and fish. There are many disease-carrying pathogens in uncooked meat that can be extremely dangerous. The only foolproof way to determine if proteins are fully cooked is to check the temperature of the center of the food with a cooking thermometer. One may wonder if a simple way to check for fully cooked proteins is to check the “brownness”. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. For example, raw beef that is exposed to light can actually appear brown before it is fully cooked. Follow the guidelines below to reduce your chances of foodborne illnesses and still enjoy delicious protein foods.



For example, raw beef that is exposed to light can actually appear brown before it is fully cooked. Follow the guidelines below to reduce your chances of foodborne illnesses and still enjoy delicious protein foods.

- Steaks, chops, and roasts should be cooked to 145 degrees fahrenheit
- Eggs and all ground meats should be cooked to 160 degrees fahrenheit
- Poultry should be cooked to 165 degrees fahrenheit

Sources: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety/cook/cooktemp.html>
https://www.jennio.com/docs/check_temp_square.jpg

Budget & Family Friendly Chicken Stir-Fry

Ingredients (6 servings)

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup carrots peeled and sliced
- 1/2 celery sliced thin
- 1/4 up onion cut into strips
- 1 green pepper cut into strips
- 1 tablespoon garlic finely chopped
- 1 pound chicken cooked and cut into strips
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 3 cups cooked white or brown rice

1. Heat a large pan with vegetable oil over high heat.
2. Add vegetables and garlic to the hot pan. Stir until garlic is light brown.
3. Add chicken and sugar to the pan.
4. Stir the food for about 1 minute in the pan.



Nutrition Facts (1.5 cups)

Calories: 247
 Protein: 19g
 Carbs: 25g
 Fat: 5g

Underling denotes TEFAP commodity ingredients

Sources: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tefap/tefap-foods-available.pdf>
<https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/food-distribution-fdd/chicken-stir-fry>

Eating Right: Recommended Protein Intake

Written by Ashlyn Burns, Master of Public Health Student, Purdue University

In order to make sure that you are getting enough nutrients in your diet, it is important to eat a variety of protein-rich foods. While many people think of meats and poultry as main sources of protein, there are many other foods that can provide dietary protein. Seafood and eggs are rich protein sources that include many other essential nutrients. Vegetarian sources of protein include beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds. Most Americans eat enough protein to meet their needs; however, current recommendations suggest choosing leaner protein options and making sure to vary protein choices in order to get the most health benefits. Try mixing up your diet to include at least 3-4 different foods from the protein group every week, and focus on low-fat options like lean beef, chicken, seafood, beans, and peas.

The amount of protein needed in the diet varies based on age, gender, and other factors. In general, children need about 2-4 ounce equivalents of protein per day and adults need 5-7 ounce equivalents of protein per day. Here are some examples of healthy protein options that count as 1 ounce equivalent:

- 1 small steak
- One can of tuna
- One egg
- 1 tablespoon of peanut butter or almond butter
- 1/4 cup cooked beans, peas, or tofu

Try grilling, broiling, and baking proteins rather than frying to avoid adding extra fat to your dish. Add protein to a salad, or on whole-grain bread to create a healthy sandwich. Check nutrition labels and compare products to try to find items with low-sodium. For more information, visit: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/protein-foods-tips>



Sources: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/protein-foods-nutrients-health>

<https://www.girlsgonestrong.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/foods-high-in-protein-640x379.png>



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This newsletter is edited by Caroline Parker and Heather A. Eicher-Miller, PhD and is created by the Eicher-Miller Lab in the Department of Nutrition Science at Purdue University. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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In The News: February is Canned Food Month

IN THE NEWS

Written by Caroline Parker, sophomore in Dietetics & Nutrition, Fitness, and Health

February was officially declared "Canned Food Month" in 1987 by the Canned Food Information Council. The goal is to clear up myths about canned food and help distribute cans to those in need.

So why is Canned Food Month so Important?

1. Cans make cooking so much easier!
2. They can help save money due to their longevity, and they are easy to buy in bulk.
3. Cans are very easy to organize and they don't take up too much space in the pantry.

Myths about Canned Foods

1. Canned foods are poor in nutrients.
- Canned foods do have the same amount of fiber and protein content as their fresh counterparts, and provide vitamins as well.
2. Canned foods have too many preservatives.
- This is not true! The heat and pressure used in the process of canning keep the bacteria out and freshness in, so not all canned products have preservatives.
3. Canned foods have too much sodium.
- Although this is true for some canned food options, there are plenty of canned goods that are low-sodium or sodium-free!

Sources: <https://nationaltoday.com/canned-food-month/>