

August 2023

8/1/23: Meal Prep for Beginners

With school kicking off for the year, everyone is on-the-go once again. How can you keep your healthy eating habits on track once life starts getting crazy again? Well, meal prepping is a common solution. There's no one-size-fits-all approach to meal planning, it's a strategy that needs to be adapted to fit your life and your schedule. Some people prefer to batch-cook a bunch of meals so they can "grab and go" on busy days. Others may prefer to chop fruits and veggies to use as snacks or in meals throughout the week. Knowing that there's ready-to-eat food in your fridge will make you a lot less likely to swing through and get some fast food while you're on the go. I'm Clarissa Moon here with some steps on meal planning for beginners.

- o Think storage. How will you keep everything fresh and organized? Get a variety of sizes in containers that are dishwasher and microwave safe to keep the process more efficient.
- o Game plan! Figure out a time where you can dedicate a couple of hours to meal prep and planning.
- o Pick your recipes and make a shopping list. Be sure to plan for well-rounded, nutritious meals that offer choices from different food groups.
- o Start simple. Set yourself up for success by choosing options that you're confident you can produce.
- o Reuse ingredients! Cook a bunch of meat or other ingredients at once and then use it in different meals throughout the week such as casseroles and salads.
- o Jump on it and have some fun. Crank up some tunes or a favorite podcast and get to work. Label everything and keep in mind that most meals should be consumed within 3-4 days unless they are frozen. Freeze portions of big batch meals to enjoy at a later date.

For more information, visit health.clevelandclinic.org or panola.agrilife.org. Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/a-beginners-guide-to-healthy-meal-prep/>

8/8/23: Fill up to Slim Down

Losing weight can be frustrating when you're feeling hungry all the time. It doesn't have to be this way! I'm Clarissa Moon here to tell you that in order to slim down, you really need to fill up.

Perhaps I should clarify. When I say fill up, I mean fill up on fiber. Fiber is a very important nutrient for many reasons, one of those being that it creates a feeling of satisfaction or "fullness" after you eat. Thus, you can curb your appetite, and frustration with weight loss hunger, by filling up on fiber.

Let's talk more about what makes you feel full. There are several factors at play including how often and how much you eat, what kinds of foods you eat, and when your brain signals your body that it's full.

Why fiber? Mainly, it makes you feel full on fewer calories. Fiber can take longer to digest, meaning that your body may recognize it's full before you continue to eat more food. Diets rich in whole grains and fiber have been associated with better quality diets and decreased risk of heart disease.

Where to get fiber? Well I mentioned whole grains, but fruits, vegetables, beans and leafy greens are also great sources. Notice that these foods are also full of nutrients but low in calories, making them great tools to control your weight, cholesterol and more.

For more information on fiber and healthy eating patterns visit heart.org or panola.agrilife.org. Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/losing-weight/fiber-up-slim-down>

8/15/23: 11 Ways to Encourage your child to be Physically Active

Did you know that only one in four children get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day? Physical activity has many health benefits for people of all ages, even kids. It sets them up for success down the road in terms of weight management, healthy organs, and a decreased risk for chronic disease later on. It can also boost their mental and behavioral health.

I'm Clarissa Moon here with 11 ways you can encourage your child to be more active.

Talk with your doctor to identify what activities may be best. Emphasize fun. Choose activities that are age-appropriate. Plan ahead to provide a good time and space for exercise. Provide a safe space and safe equipment. Provide active toys like balls and jump ropes. Be a role model. Play with your children. Set limits on screen time. Make time for exercise. And last but not least, don't overdo it.

For more information on children's health and wellness, visit healthychildren.org or panola.agrilife.org. Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/fitness/Pages/Encouraging-Your-Child-to-be-Physically-Active.aspx>

8/22/23: Should I be taking a Multivitamin?

Vitamins and minerals are essential substances our bodies need to function. Close to half of Americans take multivitamins (MVM)/multiminerals as dietary supplements. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans states that most people can and should aim to achieve these levels by eating healthy, nutrient-dense foods. Taking a MVM increases overall nutrient intake and can help people achieve the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of nutrients when they can't or don't get them from food alone. I'm Clarissa Moon here with the scoop.

MVM's cannot replace a healthy diet! Eating whole foods (eating an orange rather than drinking orange juice) is the best way to get your fiber and nutrients. However, taking a multivitamin may be appropriate for some audiences due to health needs and medical conditions. It's important to note that there are some risks involved with dietary supplements. Too much of a good thing is not necessarily a good thing! Make sure to talk to a healthcare provider if you are considering beginning a supplement.

For more information visit nih.gov or panola.agrilife.org.

nccih.nih.gov/health/vitamins-and-minerals

8/29/23:

I've said it before and I'll say it again, "Sitting is the new smoking!" It's important for all adults to realize this, but especially older adults. The older we get, the more likely we are to become sedentary. Actually, about 2/3 of older adults sit for more than 8 hours a day and only 28-34% of them are physically active. I'm Clarissa Moon here to explain it all.

Prolonged sitting can impact your health in ways you may not realize. Prolonged sitting, for example, while binge-watching tv can increase your chance of developing venous thrombosis (potentially fatal blood clots in the legs). Interestingly, people who watched TV had a 70% greater risk of developing these clots than those who did not partake.

Simple ways to move more like walking can build muscle and help manage your weight. Anything that stimulates muscles and moves your limbs counts. Here are a few ideas to get more movement in your day:

- Stand or walk around when on the phone
- Walk around or march in place during tv commercials
- Do heel raises when standing
- Do two pushups against the kitchen counter every time you open the fridge.
- Do some sit-to-stand exercises and try to get out of a chair without using your arms.

I hope you take these tips to heart and make some moments for movement in your days to come. For more information visit health.harvard.edu or panola.agrilife.org. Thanks for listening to the Moon Minute!

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/move-more-every-day-to-combat-a-sedentary-lifestyle-2018052413913>