

Tips for Quick and Healthy Meals

Do you ever feel like the day has just passed you by? You're not alone. As our days seem to become busier and busier, it's crucial to make sure our brains and bodies are getting enough nutrition to stay strong, sharp and healthy.

Fortunately, healthy home-cooked food doesn't always require hours in the kitchen. Follow these tips to keep up your busy schedule without sacrificing nutrition.

- Use a pressure cooker to reduce cooking times of beans and other foods.
- Use a crock-pot (slow cooker) to reduce time spent in the kitchen. It cooks food at a low steady heat allowing for unattended cooking.
- Freeze leftovers in single-size portions. Take a portion out of the freezer and place in the fridge the night before for a quick lunch or dinner the following day.
- Buy prepared deli foods as side dishes to add to salads.
- Keep the following on hand to add to salads, soups and other meals:
 - Protein Sources:
 - Pre-cooked whole grains like quinoa, barley or brown rice.
 - Pre-cooked beans stored in the refrigerator or freezer or canned beans. Be sure to rinse the beans to reduce excess sodium.
 - Marinated and baked tofu or tempeh.
 - Hard-boil eggs chilled in the fridge (will keep for 5-7 days in the refrigerator).
 - Vegetables & fruits:
 - Shredded cabbage, kale, chard or any other green leafy vegetable
 - Frozen vegetables as a backup, if fresh vegetables are not available.
 - Frozen fruit such as raspberries, blueberries, or pineapple to quickly add a serving of fruit to dinner or to the breakfast cereal or smoothie. Thaw only amount of fruit needed in the refrigerator, under running water or in the microwave.
 - Herbs, spices, sauces & dressings:
 - At least one or homemade dressings and sauces.
 - Dried herbs and spice mixtures.
 - Prepared curries and simmer sauces for quick flavor.

With simple planning having options available for those busy days can be a time and stress saver.

Source: Bastyr Center for Natural Health