



Family Wellness First: Nutrition

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Meal Planning & Making Healthy Foods Available

If you want to be successful at Eating for Health as a *lifestyle habit*, you'll want to think ahead and create routines as much as possible. Establishing a general plan for each day of the week makes food shopping and menu planning quick and easy. For example, a general weekly plan for dinner might look something like this: *Monday* – wild salmon, *Tuesday* – pastured chicken...

With a general notion of what's for dinner for a particular night of the week, you can easily plug in different dishes each week to create variety. Having halibut one week and wild salmon the next on Monday night, fish night, for instance. Set up your plan to suit your schedule and your lifestyle. Also take into consideration when you intend to go food shopping so you can plan to eat the most perishable items such as fresh fish, as soon as possible before spoiling.

If you've long-wished that someone else could plan everything out for you, including a categorized shopping list, there are now a variety of menu-planning services online to accommodate virtually every type of diet, from vegan to Paleo and everything in between. Just be sure to check the sample menu plans to be sure any brand-name food products are *natural brand products* that don't contain harmful additives.



Making Healthy Foods Available

It's the times when you're the most hurried, stressed or hungry that lead you to resort to what are sometimes the worst possible food choices you can make. And you don't have to look too far to find them. To counter this situation, always have quick and easy-to-prepare foods of a healthier variety on hand that can be made up when there is no time to make something, or take along with you whenever you head out the door such as additive-free natural brand frozen and canned foods.

Although I don't generally recommend these kinds of food products because they're devoid of the vital life force and enzymes that give food its magical quality, if it comes down to a choice between a natural-brand frozen dinner or can of additive-free soup and a stop at the fast-food drive-through, there's no doubt that the first two choices would be better.

Knowing that you have a quick can of soup or frozen entrée you can heat up in a matter of minutes can save you from having many a bad-food day. Make up a fresh salad or side of fresh steamed vegetables, and you've got a quick and delicious meal that isn't half bad.

There are a variety of both canned and bottled all-natural soups to choose from, as well as a variety of additive-free frozen dinners. Check labels carefully. Unfortunately, there are a few brands that have made their way into the health food stores that contain autolyzed yeast extract, which is a source of MSG (see previous article).

Also be sure to take advantage of the many pre-washed bagged salads, herbs, baby carrots and other chopped raw, veggies now available at grocery stores. Once again, check labels to be sure nothing has been added as a preservative, which is sometimes the case. Similarly, you'll want to keep plenty of raw

Establishing and Advancing the Chiropractic Family Wellness Lifestyle

fruit around for sweet and easy snacks. These ready-to-eat raw foods are the healthiest fast foods out there.

Pack It In!

When you head out the door, be sure to pack it in! It's a junk-food jungle out there and you can never be sure if whole, fresh, natural foods will be available when going to work, school or social outings unless you bring it yourself. Because vending machines, convenience food stores and eating out can be very costly, you'll save money too!

One of the smartest things you can do is to bring a bag of the aforementioned grab-n-go foods with you at the beginning of the week and keep it in the refrigerator at work or school, if possible, for quick snacks and lunches all week. Because you don't want to be eating processed foods every day however, you can pack up leftovers from dinner the night before to take along too. Which leads us to the absolute number one guideline when it comes to making healthier foods available on a regular basis: *whenever you're cooking or otherwise preparing food, always make enough to put leftovers in serving-sized, sealable containers for the following day!*

Yes of course, the optimum way to go would be to make foods fresh just before you eat them, and if you can, by all means do so. But for most of us, it just isn't possible, and healthy leftovers are much better than many other choices you could make.

Fast-Food Health Food

In addition, preparing fresh vegetables in advance for use in a variety of meals and recipes will turn health food into fast food and further increase the likelihood that you will make healthier food choices regularly. It becomes a matter of just pulling things out of the fridge and heating them up or tossing them in a salad or quick recipe. Next month's article will show you how.



Kelly Hayford, C.N.C. is the award-winning author of *If It's Not Food Don't Eat It!* As a former chiropractic assistant and junk-food junkie turned nutrition and health coach, Kelly has helped thousands restore their health, energy and natural weight.

For more information on *Eating for Health* including a **FREE REPORT** *Secrets to Overcoming Unhealthy Food Cravings*, visit: kellyhayford.com/report

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