

Live HealthSmart Alabama



Health involves many factors that affect the community and its residents. At Live HealthSmart Alabama, we’re working to reduce obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol by making good health simple. Every other week, we’ll share tips on physical activity, good nutrition, and prevention and wellness. This week, we’re focusing on good nutrition.

Tips for Meal Planning

Grocery shopping without a plan can be overwhelming and lead to buying the same items all the time. Adding variety to meals and trying new recipes is one way to break up the monotony. Not having a plan can lead to eating out too much. Moneyunder30 reported that Americans on average dine out at least four meals each week. Eating out half that much could save almost one thousand dollars a year.

Planning meals offers many benefits including reducing your risk of many health issues, as well as saving money. By planning your meals, you control what goes into your meals.

- 1 Start small and plan just 1 or 2 meals this week. Each week add 1 or 2 more meals, then add a new recipe. Find more ideas on Pinterest or other websites.**
- 2 Ask friends and neighbors for ideas, or plan a monthly supper club.**
- 3 Review grocery ads to plan meals based on what’s on sale, what’s in season, etc.**
- 4 Remember to plan for leftovers, or lunches.**
- 5 Freeze half of the meal for another week’s dinner. If you tend to impulse buy, then order your groceries for delivery or pick-up in store. The cost of this may pay for itself due to less impulse buying.**
- 6 Plan meals based on your available time. If your child’s football practice is every Tuesday, plan for a faster meal that day—such as sandwiches and fresh fruit. Or, consider buying pre-cut vegetables or pre-made salad. The time you save may be worth the extra cost.**
- 7 If the week is always busy, prep meals for the week ahead on off days. For example, spaghetti on Monday, then add beans for chili for Tuesday, and finally baked potatoes on Wednesday. Add a salad and fruit for desserts.**
- 8 Ask for meal ideas from each household member to gain buy-in and support.**
- 9 Get creative! Try adding new colors to your plate at each meal.**

Sources: 1. Meal prep guide. The Nutrition Source. (2024, November 15). <https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/meal-prep/>
2. Bergen, A. (n.d.). The true cost of eating out (and how you can save). Money Under 30. <https://www.moneyunder30.com/the-true-cost-of-eating-in-restaurants-and-how-to-save/>
3. Wolfson JA, Bleich SN. Is cooking at home associated with better diet quality or weight-loss intention? Public Health Nutrition. 2015;18(8):1397-1406. doi:10.1017/S1368980014001943

HEART HEALTHY

LOW CARB

Black Bean & Chicken Fajitas

By: Ashley Chandler

INGREDIENTS

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 2 bell peppers
- 1 white onion
- 1 ripe tomato
- 2 chicken breast
- 1 can, no salt added black beans
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/2 avocado
- 1 tsp each of chili powder, onion powder, cayenne pepper
- Optional: 1/4 cup low-fat cheddar cheese shredded, 2 whole grain tortillas

- INSTRUCTIONS
1. Cut the bell pepper and onion into slices.
 2. Cut chicken breast into cubes.
 3. In a skillet heat olive oil up on medium heat.
 4. Add chicken and cook til finished - flip occasionally.
 5. Remove the chicken.
 6. Add veggies and sauté for 8-10 minutes.
 7. Open, and stir in black beans for about 2 minutes.
 8. Add salt, pepper and southwest seasoning.
 9. Add the chicken back.
 10. Stir for 1 minute.
 11. Divide on plate (or tortilla) and serve.



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