

Top 5 Tips for Meal Planning

1. Start with a notebook, app or worksheet for meal planning - find what works for your family!

- This "Weekly Menu Planner" is a great place to start.
- Consider keeping your meal plans to use again in the future.
- Gather family recipes or explore online resources such as Cooksiration.com and Pulses.org.

2. Think about 3 meals plus snacks each day.

- Consider planning with your family to get input from each member.
- Simplify meals by basing them on 1/2 plate vegetables and fruit, 1/4 plate protein, 1/4 plate whole grains.
- Check the fridge, cupboard and freezer. Note what needs to be used up soon so it does not go to waste.

3. Incorporate leftovers into your plan.

- Use leftovers for lunches or as part of another meal.
- Consider making double of your recipe so you can freeze a second meal for later.
- See "Making Food Last Longer" for leftover meal ideas.

4. Take-out or meal delivery can be part of your plan.

- Including a take-out meal in your plan is normal and can help prevent purchasing more groceries than you need.

5. Create a grocery list.

- Make shopping easier. Copy out ingredients from your meal plan and list foods under headings such as produce, meats, etc. This list can easily be given to a friend or family member who may be doing your grocery shopping during this time.
- If you prefer technology, an app such as "Any List" can be helpful.
- Keep the pantry well stocked with healthy basics such as: whole grains, peanut butter and canned tuna, beans, lentils, and tomatoes.
- Let everyone know to add items to the list as you run out.

Resources for sample meal planning:

- Family Meal Plan: <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Menu-Planning/Family-Friendly-One-Week-Sample-Menu-Plan.aspx>
- Diabetes Prevention/Management: <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Diabetes/Diabetes-Menu-Plan-for-Prevention-and-Management.aspx>