



Planning meals ahead of time is key in preparing and presenting nutritious meals to your family. The stress of deciding what to prepare after a busy day can lead to poor meal choices, and disorganization. Planning meals can be as simple as deciding what to prepare before you leave home or it can be as complex as planning meals for the full week and coordinating menus with weekly grocery specials.

PLANNING A SEVEN DAY CYCLE

1. Establish a seven day cycle menu by selecting meats or vegetarian substitutes for each day. Selecting the type of protein food for the main course is the starting point for planning meals. This may include:

“MASTER LIST”

Sunday -	Lamb
Monday -	Beans
Tuesday -	Beef or Sunday leftovers
Wednesday -	Vegetarian substitute
Thursday -	Chicken
Friday -	Fish/Shellfish
Saturday -	Turkey

2. Consider family members favorite dishes in your selections. Choose low-fat ingredients and cooking methods.

3. Select other side dishes that include foods from the five food groups to complement and balance meals. Keep in mind that color, variety and texture are appealing to the eyes. The side dishes need to round out the meal-potatoes, rice, vegetables, salad, etc. Jot down several quick ideas for each of these categories as well.

4. Combine all of your ideas into one “master list”. Your “master list” will be worth its weight in gold on those days when you are short of inspiration. Refer to your “master list” as you write your tentative menu plans. Look at the finished plan with a critical eye. Have you included enough choices from all of the food groups? Are there too many salty, fried or high calorie items? Before going to the grocery store make changes to your written menu plan.

5. Select the most convenient method and quick cooking ideas which can include a low fat cooking system such as bake, broiling, boiling for each food category. For example lean beef recipes might include a stir fry, simple toppings for broiled steak; meatballs; taco salad; meatloaf; or a crock-pot stew, etc.

6. Make a grocery list and start with staples such as eggs, bread, rice, flour, potatoes.

7. Be flexible for those items that are not available. Always substitute a different food from the basic food group with an equal food choice of the same nutritional value. Example brown rice and/or wild rice for white rice.

Planning ahead and keeping dishes as simple as possible lets you spend less time in the grocery store; helps you save money on expensive precooked convenience foods and eating out.

A. PLANNING BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME.

Put meat in refrigerator in a drip free pan on the bottom shelf.

Put starch out on counter with seasonings

Ensure you have vegetables or make a list to buy during the day.

Menu Planner

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL **NUTRITION SERVICES AT 278-6467/68/69**
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The Busy Person's Hassle-Free Planner

Breakfast

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Fruit or juice, Cereal & or
Toast or roll, Milk
Hot Beverage



Lunch

Meat or substitute,
Vegetables/Salad,
Bread & Spread, Fruit, Milk



Dinner

Meat or substitute,
Potato, rice, pasta,
Vegetables/Salad
Milk, Fruit, Hot Beverage

