

FAMILY MEALS: **Healthy & Simple**

Try these time-saving tips to make eating healthier simpler for you and your family, says Penny Kris-Etherton, PhD, RD, professor of nutrition at Penn State University.

Plan out 2 to 4 weeks of healthy meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Sit down and map out meals that include your family's heart-healthy favorites. Update your list as you come across new recipe ideas.

Use the weekend to make menus. Start by using the list from the first tip and make sure you grab the ingredients you need when you go grocery shopping. Keep an eye out for fresh, seasonal items that are on sale.

If you work during the week, cook over the weekend and store leftovers in the fridge or freezer. Meals can be hassle-free when you're just thawing and reheating for quick lunches and dinners.

Cut up vegetables and keep them handy in the fridge. You'll have ready-made nutritious snacks and ingredients.

Shop sales, clip coupons, and buy fruits and vegetables in season. Look for less-expensive items. For example, blueberries cost less in spring and summer, when they're in season. You'll pay more in the fall and winter when they're shipped from warmer continents.

Skip the ready-made foods. They can be higher in sodium and often cost more than homemade foods.

Replace high-calorie or high-fat favorites with nutrition-rich foods one at a time. Your family won't feel shocked or deprived of their favorites if the changes to their diets are gradual. Try one change per week as a starting point.

