

EVERYDAY EATS FOR HEALTHY FAMILY MEAL PLANNING

CREATING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY PANTRY

Serving and preparing healthy meals and snacks for your family begins with the items you stock in your kitchen. Keeping a supply of wholesome staples in your pantry and fridge will cut down on the need for takeout food and visits to local restaurants and fast food establishments. Additionally, preparing more meals and snacks at home can foster good lifelong eating habits.

PANTRY

Cereals

Most packaged breakfast cereals are made from refined grains and are loaded with added sugars. Choose cereals that contain 6 or fewer grams of sugar and at least 5 grams of fiber per serving.

- Barbara's Cinnamon Puffins, Barbara's Original Puffins, Fiber One, Kashi 7 Whole Grain Flakes, Kashi 7 Whole Grain Nuggets, Wheat Chex, Uncle Sam. Hot cereals: Oatmeal, Wheatena, Qi'a Superfoods Hot Oatmeal Creamy Coconut, instant oatmeal (look for unsweetened or low sugar varieties)

Chips and Crackers

Healthful snacks can include chips and crackers if the products you choose are made from whole grains and are not made with a lot of extra oil or sugar. Pair them with healthful dips (see below) or low-fat string cheese for a healthful snack.

- Kashi Seven Grain Crackers, Kashi Teff Thins, Wasa Crispbread Fiber, Trader Joe's Woven Wheats, Guiltless Gourmet Yellow Corn Tortilla Chips, Tostitos Oven Baked Scoops tortilla chips, Herr's Whole Grain Pretzel Sticks

Cookies and Bars

Soft and chewy, crispy, or filled, everyone loves cookies. Try to stick with "healthy cookie criteria": 140 calories or less and 12 grams of sugar or less per serving, based on Nutrition Facts Panel. Limit serving size to one, two or three depending on size or brand. As for bars, look for ones that have fewer than 7 grams of sugar per serving, and have some fiber and protein to help keep you satisfied.

- Back to Nature Chocolate Chunk, Kashi Cookies Oatmeal Dark Chocolate, Kashi Cookies Chocolate Almond Butter, Kashi Cookies Oatmeal Raisin Flax, Trader Joe's Triple Ginger Snaps, Honey Maid Chocolate Grahams, Honey Maid Honey Grahams, Animal Crackers
- Health Warrior chia bar, KIND bar nuts & spices

Nuts and Seeds

- Peanuts, almonds, walnuts or sunflower seeds. Combine these with raisins, dried cranberries and a low sugar dry cereal for a healthful and satisfying snack that helps keep hunger at bay. Scoop about ½ cup into individual snack bags for a healthy grab-and-go trail mix.
- Peanut and other nut butters like almond and cashew. These are rich in protein, minerals and heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and make a great spread for bananas and whole grain bread or crackers

Pantry Protein Sources

- Canned light tuna, canned salmon, canned white meat chicken, variety of canned beans: garbanzo, red, white, black, pink

Whole Grains

- Quinoa, whole-grain pasta, brown rice, millet, polenta, rolled oats

Pantry Produce

- Marinara sauce olives, artichoke hearts, hearts of palm

REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER

Dips

Adults and kids alike love to dip! Try store-bought hummus or make your own; serve with baby carrots or whole-wheat pita bread wedges. Create dips out of low-fat Greek yogurt. Blend plain Greek yogurt with low fat ranch dressing or a teaspoon of salt-free seasoning mix as a dip for veggies or whole grain crackers. For sliced apples, pears or other cubes of fruit, blend fat free Greek yogurt with vanilla extract and a dash of cinnamon.

- Tribe Hummus, Athenos Hummus, Sabra Hummus
- Low fat Greek Yogurt (any brand)
- Salsa (any brand), Guacamole, Refried beans (vegetarian)

Dairy

In recent years, nutrition professionals have been moving away from recommending nonfat or skim milk dairy products. The reason? Fat helps you feel satisfied. In addition, removing the fat from dairy products increases the amount of carbohydrates per serving. We suggest sticking with low-fat dairy, so you get fewer calories than regular, but still have some fat so they digest more slowly.

- Part-skim mozzarella sticks, also known as string cheese; Mini Babybel Light cheese
- Unsweetened low-fat yogurt. Make sure you stock individual grab and go containers as well as the large 32 oz. size.
- Low fat milk (1% or 2%); fortified nondairy milk like soy, almond, or coconut

Ready-to-Eat Fruits and Vegetables

- Apples, pears, grapes, bananas, frozen berries for making smoothies
- Baby carrots, sugar snap peas, pre-washed and cut broccoli florets, zucchini for slicing and dipping, bags of prewashed, precut salad

Fish, Poultry, Meat, and Soy

- Boneless chicken tenderloin, Bell & Evans All-Natural Chicken Burger
- Trader Joe's frozen salmon burgers, frozen cleaned ready to eat shrimp
- Organic tempeh, organic tofu