

Health & Wellness

August
2025

Issue 11

Healthy Meal Planning/Prep

This month's Health & Wellness topic is **Healthy Meal Planning/Prep**. In this issue, we're going to give you some guidelines on how to plan out your meals and give tips on how to make meal prep quick and easy!



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Welcome to DuPage Senior Citizens Council/Kane Senior Council's August Health & Wellness Newsletter!

We're here to bring you a new topic relating to wellness as well as new brain teasers, seasonal recipes, book recommendations, and more!

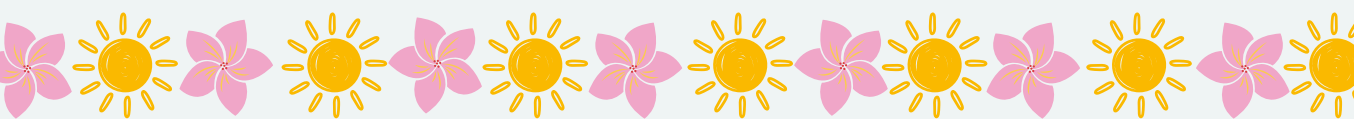
Providing Meals and More...



DuPage Senior
Citizens Council



Kane Senior
Council



Health & Wellness Education

Healthy Meal Planning/Prep

Introduction

What's for dinner?

Whether you live alone, with a spouse, or with extended family, the question of what to have for dinner is an ongoing occurrence.

Figuring out what to eat day after day can be stressful. Often, people end up pulling together last-minute meals or ordering food delivery when they do not have a meal planned.



Making a meal plan and prepping meals can help **ease the stress** of busy nights while also helping to **stick to a budget** and **avoid ordering take-out**.

Intro to Meal Planning

Meal planning is the process of building a ***weekly menu*** to **best suit your needs** based on your **ability** and **budget**.



A meal plan can be used to help stick with a **particular diet**, to help **stay in budget**, or to simply **have more time** during the week.



A meal plan is beneficial in a lot of ways but it is important to note that when **plans change**, **meals can also change**.



Meal Planning Tips

► **Try and stick with similar meals for breakfast and lunch and then get more creative with dinner.**

► **Pick a few meals that you enjoy the most and put those on your weekly repeat list.**

Use the other meals to experiment and have fun with new recipes

► **Prepping for one day often takes the same amount of time as prepping for multiple.**

For Example:

If you enjoy *overnight oats, prep for 3 days at the same time.

Making a batch of muffins for the week? Make a double batch and freeze half for the next week.

*Oats soaked in milk overnight that you eat with berries or other fruit in the morning

► **Make a full recipe and portion it out for the week.**

Examples may include lasagna, casseroles or soups/stews

► Make sure that you have plenty of reusable boxes, containers or foil containers on hand.

- Making **larger batches** of food and meal planning often requires **extra food storage**.
- It is also important to make sure that you have **adequate space** in the **fridge** or **freezer** to store items that you make.



► Always date and label food that you prepare.

- Making a large batch of soup may sound good on Sunday but if you're tired of it by Wednesday, you can freeze it.
- Labeling it will ensure that weeks down the road, you will know exactly **what it is** and **when you made it** without having to guess.



► Make a whole chicken one day and have meals for days!

- Chicken, mashed potatoes, and broccoli for dinner
- Chicken salad for lunch
- Leftover chicken added to canned soup
- Broth made from chicken bones to use later





Meal Planning Tips (cont.)

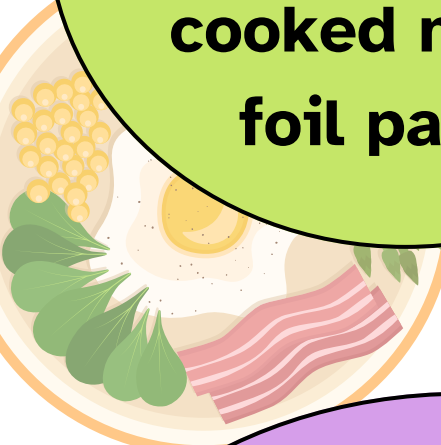
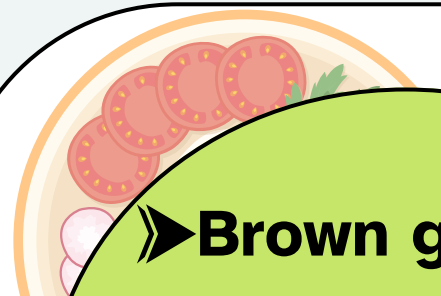
► Sometimes meal prep can be as simple as prepping ingredients instead of whole dishes.

Coming home from the store and dicing onions, chopping carrots, and cutting celery to use later in the week will save time later on.

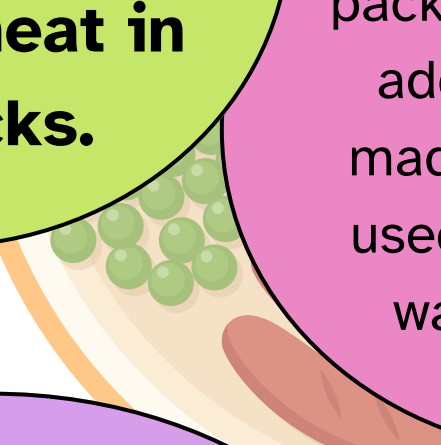
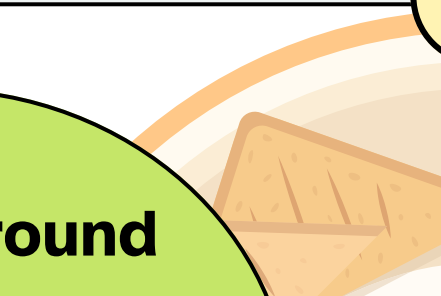
► Trying to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables for snacks? Having them ready to eat makes your goal much easier!

Cutting melons, peeling carrots, and trimming strawberries when you have a few extra minutes makes for an easy snack on the go.

► When prepping grains, make a full box or bag and portion the items out over the next few meals.



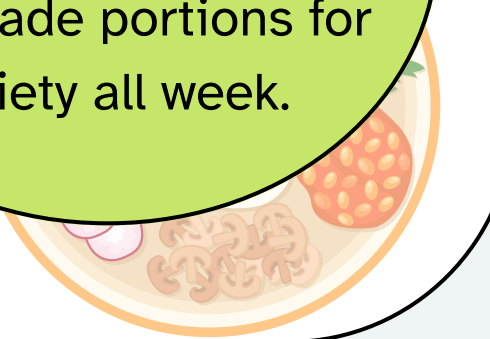
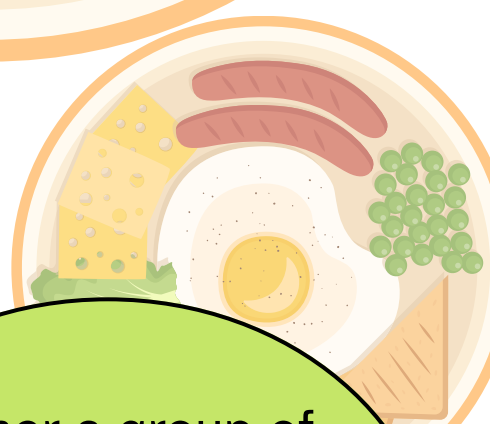
► **Brown ground beef in batches and freeze cooked meat in foil packs.**



These cooked meat packs can quickly be added to sauces, made into tacos, or used in many other ways as a quick meal.



► **Love the idea of meal prepping but only know how to make a few things? Chances are you might have friends who feel the same way!**



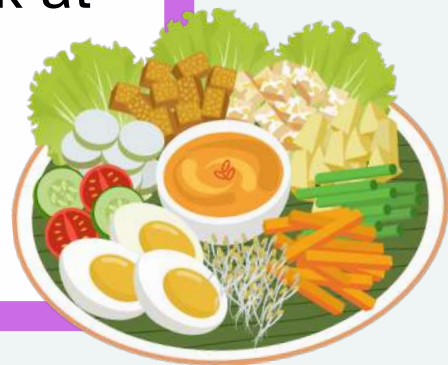
Gather a group of friends to each make their signature dish and then trade portions for variety all week.

► **When meal planning always consider the season.** Wanting to add asparagus pasta to a meal in January? Think again if you cannot substitute frozen or canned asparagus unless you are able to afford the fresh out of season prices.



► **Make a list of favorites for each meal to choose from when you aren't sure what to make and are scanning the pantry and fridge for items.**

► **Be prepared to make on the spot changes as needed if an item is not available when you are shopping.** Planning for a Taco Tuesday meal but the \$2.99 ground beef is out of stock at the store? Be prepared to switch protein, perhaps chicken tacos, or choose a different dish all together.



Meal Planning Tips (cont.)

➤ **Keep basics on hand at all times.** A loaf of bread, some sliced cheese, dry pasta, fresh fruits and vegetables, canned tuna, frozen vegetables, etc. Sometimes with a little creativity, a quick meal is only a few ingredients away.

➤ **Find a meal that you really enjoy? Plan to make it again!** It's understandable to want to try new things and avoid being overly repetitive but, in some cases, there is no harm in making your favorites over and over again.

➤ **When meal planning, always scan your fridge, freezer, and pantry.** Chances are (especially in your fridge) that you have some ingredients that need to be used up. Bonus points to you if you are able to incorporate those ingredients into something for the coming meals before it goes bad and has to be tossed!

➤ **Made it to the end of your week and still have a few portions of something here and there? Freeze them!** Many prepared items can be frozen in individual portions and reheated nicely in the microwave when you need a quick meal.

Looking for a simple meal plan guide?

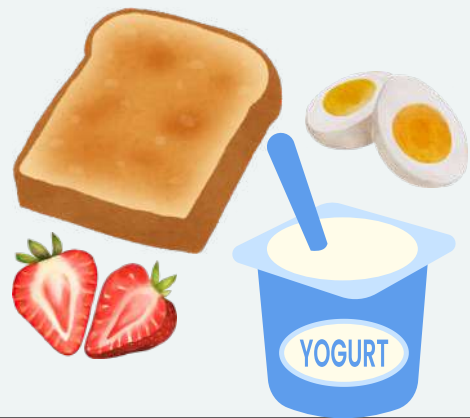
Try this and adjust up or down based on your needs:

Breakfast

1oz grain, ½ cup fruit, 8oz dairy, 2oz protein

Example:

1 slice toast
½ cup strawberries
8 oz yogurt
2 eggs



Example:

1/2 cup oatmeal
½ cup sliced bananas
8 oz milk
2 oz turkey bacon



Lunch

2oz grain, ½ cup fruit, 1 cup vegetables, 2oz protein

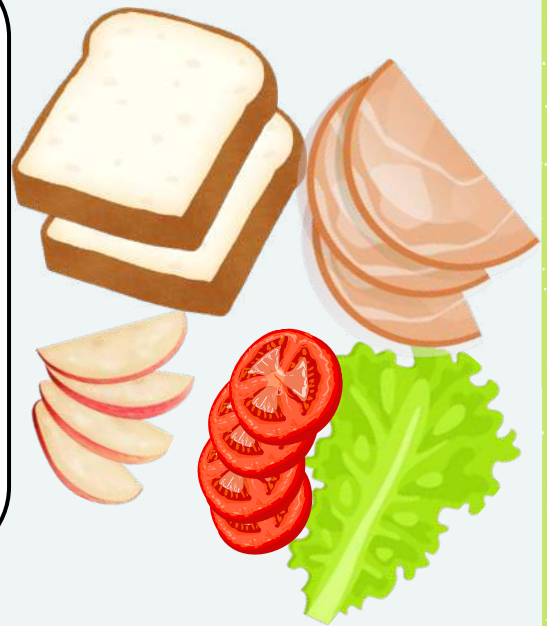
Example:

2 slices of bread

2 oz turkey

1 cup lettuce/tomato

½ cup sliced apples



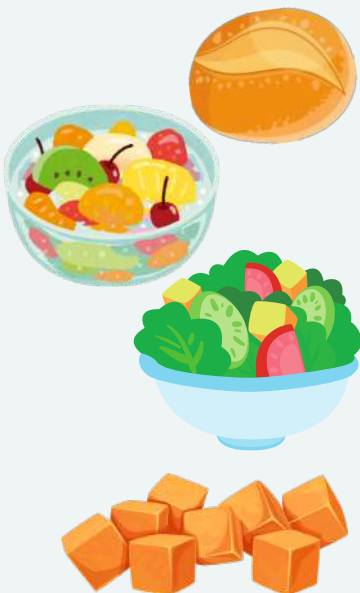
Example:

2 oz bread roll

½ cup mixed fruit

1+ cup mixed salad greens

2 oz cubed chicken/ham



Dinner

***2oz grains, 1 cup vegetables,
8oz dairy, 3oz protein***

Example: 1 cup pasta



½ cup pasta sauce

3 oz ground beef

½ cup steamed broccoli

8 oz milk

Example: 1 corn tortilla



1 cup lettuce/tomatoes

1 oz shredded cheese

2 oz chicken

8 oz milk

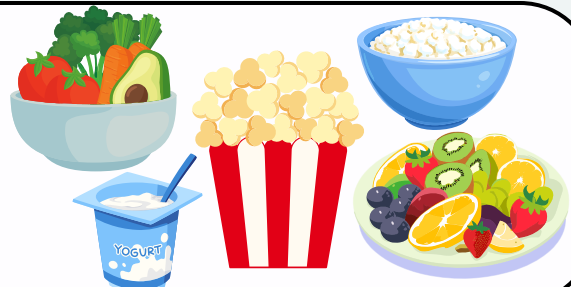
Snacks

Example:

½ cup fruit, 1 cup popcorn,

½ cup veggies, 8oz yogurt,

8oz cottage cheese



WRAP UP

With a little bit of planning and preparation, your weekly meals can almost make themselves!

Meal plans don't have to be perfect or include all meals.

Sometimes just a little bit of preparation when you have extra time can make all the difference on a busy week.

For more health and wellness tips, information and resources, visit our website.



BRAIN BOOSTERS

SUDOKU

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Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

50 YEAR TRIVIA

*What was the **top-rated TV Show** in 1975?*

WORD SEARCH

P N G V V P A T T E R N J V R Q J I N J
 R H K O Y K W Y A F L P P W F S T H W V
 E O B W U T M E T Z I Z V L P E U O M L
 P T L G Q W X U G K H E P T I T E M P T
 A Q N A Q F X S R N H R P K X T W V H G
 R W V H T I G D A H P A N T R Y X G L Z
 A V F J W O R W I F L O X V V Z Q G P D
 T E W R Q G W U N V A B N P C T Z Z L O
 I G X S I W L V S C B E V O O F A E A A
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 N T K H I N G P F K L P A K I B O G N S
 C A U K P C X E U C B E T H H U H M I E
 V B O E B O M N Y K Y X M I T D U L N B
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 R S Y U K A B A I P B Y O X H T H E F R
 M D Z I V I B B D O N Q K J M W D U U L
 G Z F T B N R H A N N I E K W N N F X F
 R Z X S T E Q Z J I F A I B B K F B N X
 B X U X D R X K M W C P Y C J O A Q K X

WORD BANK

Preparation

Fruits

Fridge

Pattern

Planning

Vegetables

Label

Pantry

Budget

Portion

Container

Grains

August Recipe: Vegetable Stir-Fry

Recipe from: APlaceforMom.com

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 pound of protein, such as cubed chicken breast, sliced steak, or tofu
- 2 cups mixed vegetables such as peppers, zucchini, broccoli, onions, snap peas, and mushrooms
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger or a sprinkling of ginger powder



Directions:

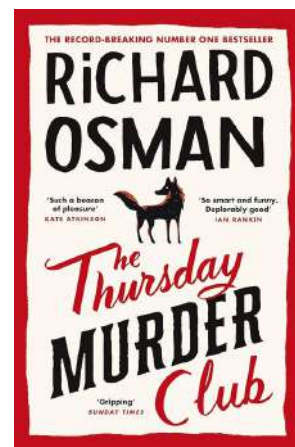
1. Heat oil in a large wok or skillet over medium heat. Cook the protein, stirring regularly, until lightly browned and cooked through. Add vegetables and cook for another 5-10 minutes, until soft. Remove meat and veggies from the pan and set aside.
2. Mix all sauce ingredients in a small bowl. Add the mixture to your pan and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Simmer for about 3 minutes or until slightly thickened.
3. Add vegetables and protein back to the pan and stir to combine
4. Serve over brown rice or noodles for a filling meal.

Our Book Pick of the Month

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman

“In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet up once a week to investigate unsolved murders.”
The first of a series.

Movie adaptation coming soon to Netflix on August 28.



ANSWER KEY

8	4	2	5	9	3	6	7	1
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2	3	7	6	5	9	8	1	4
4	8	1	2	3	7	9	6	5
6	5	9	1	8	4	2	3	7

Trivia Answer:

What was the Top-Rated TV Show in 1975?

Answer :
All in the Family

ANSWER KEY

P	N	G	V	V	P	A	T	T	E	R	N	J	V	R	Q	J	I	N	J
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V	B	O	E	B	O	M	N	Y	K	Y	X	M	I	T	D	U	L	N	B
A	L	B	F	B	N	R	K	J	Q	X	W	V	Q	A	G	K	D	G	N
E	E	S	R	V	T	C	T	U	R	Z	K	F	I	W	E	R	B	A	A
R	S	Y	U	K	A	B	A	I	P	B	Y	O	X	H	T	H	E	F	R
M	D	Z	I	V	I	B	B	D	O	N	Q	K	J	M	W	D	U	U	L
G	Z	F	T	B	N	R	H	A	N	N	I	E	K	W	N	N	F	X	F
R	Z	X	S	T	E	Q	Z	J	I	F	A	I	B	B	K	F	B	N	X
B	X	U	X	D	R	X	K	M	W	C	P	Y	C	J	O	A	Q	K	X



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Citizens Council

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Kane Senior
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From the Council

News & Events

AUGUST

21

Senior Dance Party - Kane County

4pm - 8pm

Lincoln Inn Banquets

1345 S Batavia Ave

Batavia, IL 60510

**RSVP: Call 630-812-6750 by
August 15th**

SEPT.

18

Senior Dance Party - DuPage County

4pm - 8pm

Abbington Distinctive Banquets

3s002 Route 53

Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Print Monthly Meal Menus at:

www.DuPageSeniorCouncil.org/Home-Delivered-Meals-Menus

www.KaneSeniorCouncil.org/Meals-On-Wheels



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