



Family Meals At Home



Children's Mercy

WHAT IS A FAMILY MEAL?

A TIME WHEN FAMILY MEMBERS:

- Sit together at a table
- Eat a meal without the TV
- Eat the same foods

Benefits of Family Meals:

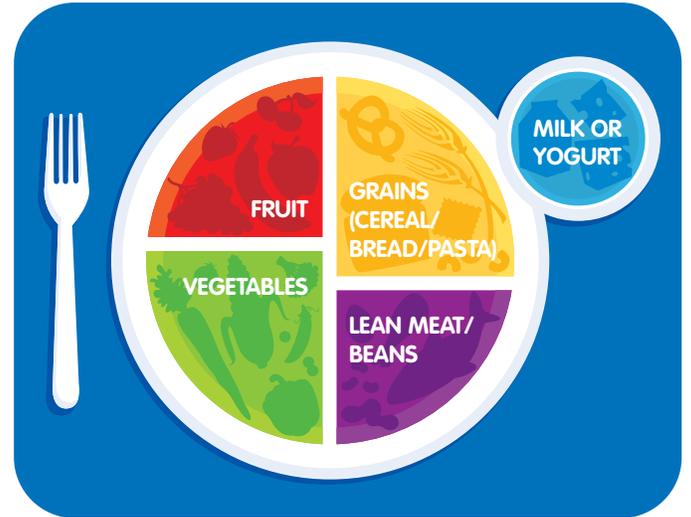
- Love, support, connection and conversation
- Saves money
- An opportunity to have healthier meals - less fried foods and sweet drinks
- Time to give thanks for your blessings
- Time to teach children how to help - meal prep, cooking, cleaning up
- Meals are as essential for nurturing as for nutrition
- Kids who eat family meals are more likely to have better grades and less likely to participate in risky behaviors

FAMILY TALK

FOOD IS NOT THE FOCUS; SHARED TIME IS.

Conversations Starters:

- What was the best thing that happened to you today? The worst thing? The funniest?
- If you could invite a famous person over for dinner, who would it be? What would you talk about?
- What is your favorite TV show? Why?
- If you could spend all day with a friend, who would it be and what would you do?
- What's the most delicious food on the table and why?
- If you opened a restaurant, what kind would it be?
- Ask everyone to bring a new word to the table. Practice using these new words in sentences.



HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

PARENTS CONTROL WHAT FOOD COMES INTO THE HOUSE. CHOOSE WISELY!

Ideas to Increase Family Meals at Home:

- Plan menus and shopping lists ahead - encourage children to help.
- Set standard shopping times to always have healthy food choices available.
- Post meal ideas on the refrigerator; take turns choosing the menu.
- Use THE PLATE MODEL for healthy choices and portions.
- Establish regular meal and snack times.
- Try new recipes; cookbooks from the library and newspaper food sections can help.

MY GOAL: _____



TO IMPROVE HEALTH TRY THESE CHANGES

INSTEAD OF:	CHOOSE:
Whole milk, 2%, chocolate or strawberry milk	1% or fat-free milk
Fruit drinks, soda pop, juice, Kool-Aid™, Gatorade™	Water, (sugar-free Kool-Aid™, Crystal Light™—limit 1 per day)
Lard, shortening	Oils (small amounts)
White tortillas	6-inch whole wheat flour tortillas or corn tortillas
Regular ground beef	Lean ground beef, chicken, turkey or lean pork
Whole chicken	Chicken (remove skin or use breasts)

QUICK HEALTHY MEALS

1. Crock pot meals with meat, potato and carrots; salad, peach	6. Sandwich with lean meat on whole wheat bread, tomato soup, celery sticks, grapes
2. Frozen stir-fry vegetables with leftover meat, brown rice, sliced tomatoes, pineapple	7. Soft-shell taco with lean meat or beans, lettuce, tomato, steamed broccoli, cantaloupe
3. Vegetable omelet with salsa, tortilla, steamed zucchini, sliced orange	8. Frozen pizza, tossed salad, baby carrots, yogurt with frozen berries
4. Frozen fish or chicken, frozen vegetables, microwaved potato, bagged salad, frozen strawberries	9. Rotisserie chicken, whole wheat roll, green beans, salad bar salad, salad bar fruit
5. Spaghetti, sauce, mixed vegetables, green pepper sticks, pear	10. Small fast food burger, side salad, carrot chips, apple slices

FAST FOOD TIPS

- Eat out rarely.
- Choose small burger or grilled chicken sandwich without cheese or mayo.
- Choose low-fat milk or water.
- Choose salad with light dressing instead of fries.
- Avoid value meals.
- Choose fruit as a side.

DON'T SUPERSIZE!

TEEN TIPS:

- Eat out less - SAVES MONEY and SAVES CALORIES (typical value meal = 1600 calories).
- Eat your calories, don't drink them - avoid sweet drinks and soda pop.
- Take along a fruit and a light yogurt to have with a small burger or chicken sandwich (no mayo, no cheese).
- Choose quick foods at home: apples, oranges, grapes, baby carrots, 1% or skim milk, whole wheat bread, lean deli meats.
- Breakfast at home helps control hunger later in the day (try cereal, fruit, string cheese).
- Learn to cook healthy meals; volunteer to fix family dinners and shop occasionally.