

ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle

Home Cooked Meals

Healthy meals start with preparation at home!

If you struggle to find the time and motivation to make home-cooked meals, you're not alone. In fact, most Americans devote 30 minutes a day or less to food prep and clean-up. Only half of households cook dinner at home on a regular basis. We all have many options for pre-packaged, take-out, fast food, and restaurant meals. This convenience is nice, but it comes at a cost—we miss out on an activity that makes us healthier, happier and more connected. If you're ready to get serious about eating better, the first place to start is by preparing foods at home.

Health Benefits

Home-prepared meals are generally more nutritious and include more fresh fruits and vegetables than convenience meals. They are also lower in calories, carbohydrates, fat, added sugar, preservatives, and artificial ingredients. You might even live longer—studies find that eating home-cooked meals five or more days a week is linked to a longer life.

Financial Benefits

Eating homemade foods is usually less expensive than eating out or buying processed foods. To maximize your savings:

- Use the sales flyer to help you plan meals for the week. Stock up on

staples and non-perishable foods when you find a deal. Make a grocery list and stick to it. You can realize a savings of 15-25% off your groceries by shopping this way.

- Limit waste by investing in small containers to save leftovers in the refrigerator or freezer.

Time Savings

Lack of time is the most common reason people report for not cooking at home. While this can be a legitimate reason, many people spend more time watching TV than they do preparing meals. Preparing meals at home can actually be a time savings over eating out or even waiting for a take-out order. Many meals can be prepared in 30 minutes or less. To maximize your time savings:

- Batch cook enough for at least 2 meals—grilled chicken breast and vegetable one night and salad with sliced chicken the next.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers for lunches or to keep on hand.
- Plan out your menu and shop once a week. You may want to try an online meal planning service that provides menu plans, recipes and a shopping list.



- Prep ahead as much as possible to make the final prep time shorter.
- Keep it simple—your family has some favorite meals, repeat these once a week. Look for simple recipes with a short ingredient list.
- Keep your kitchen stocked up with the basics.
- Slow cookers produce very tender meats and your meal is ready when you walk in the door.

Where there is no
STRUGGLE, there is
no **STRENGTH**.

Oprah Winfrey

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Higher Quality Food

When you prepare your own food, you can choose to use fresh, unprocessed ingredients. If you or a family member has a food allergy or intolerance, you can reduce the risk of an allergic reaction—you know exactly what you're getting.

Right-Sized Portions

When we're served large portions, we tend to eat more. At home, you can get in the habit of serving right-sized portions on smaller plates to your family and avoid excessive calories.

Family Time

By watching and participating in food prep activities, your children are learning skills and behaviors that will help them with a lifetime of healthy eating. Eating meals as a family regularly is associated with happier and healthier kids, better school performance and teens who are less likely to use alcohol, drugs or cigarettes.

Socializing

Rather than meeting family or friends at a restaurant, plan a meal at home. Keep it simple and prepare foods together or have a potluck—cooking doesn't need to be a solo affair. Everyone saves money, eats better and has a more relaxed environment.

When we eat home-cooked meals with others, we feel happier. The happiness factor extends beyond the mealtime to increase happiness and decrease depression outside of meals.

Mindfulness

Without the distractions of restaurant or car dining, you can set up your home eating environment to be calming and allow you to be mindful of the food you are eating. Turn off the electronics, talk to those who you are sharing your meal, slow down and enjoy your food.

The Greater Good

Cooking at home allows us to choose fresh ingredients and reduce packaging—reducing our carbon footprint. Buy from local farmers or have a garden of your own—even better.

Get Rewarded!

*This month, you could earn a **SPECIAL GIFT** for your "It Worked For Me" tips or recipes! Just submit as many recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips as you like. The most original and creative will be awarded a special gift from our online store. Include your name and contact info with your entry — make sure your recipes follow Barix nutritional guidelines.*

Tips must be submitted by August 31, 2016. Please send comments, ideas, recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at dhart@foresthealth.com.



Recipes

Southwest Breakfast Bowl

2 eggs
 ¼ cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
 ¼ avocado, peeled and sliced
 1 tablespoon salsa
 1 tsp cilantro
 salt and ground black pepper to taste

Spray a nonstick pan with pan spray. Stir and cook egg substitute over medium heat until softly scrambled. Heat black beans in microwave until warm. Place warm beans in small bowl, top with scrambled eggs, avocado and salsa. Season with salt and pepper. Makes 1 serving.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 293 calories, 17 grams protein, 17 grams fat, 16 grams carbohydrate, 439 mg sodium.

Slow Cooker Salsa Chicken

4 chicken breasts, trimmed
 2 cups tomato, diced
 ½ cup red onion, diced
 ¼ cup green onion, diced,
 1 tbsp cilantro diced
 1 tbsp lime juice
 1/2 cup water

Spray slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Place 4 chicken breasts in slow cooker and top with salsa. Cover and cook for 5-6 hours on low. Eat whole or shred chicken and place in tortilla with favorite toppings. Makes 4 Servings

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 103 calories, 18 grams protein, 1 gram fat, 6 grams carbohydrate, 80 mg sodium.

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Submit your story online
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We'd love to hear from you!

QUESTIONS ABOUT FINANCING YOUR SURGERY?

Call a Barix Patient Service Representative
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Recipes



Mini Frittatas

Nonstick vegetable oil cooking spray
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 green onions, thinly sliced
1 lb. spinach
6 eggs
1 cup ricotta, part skim
1/3 cup grated Swiss cheese
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and freshly-ground pepper

Heat oven to 425°F. Coat 12 non-stick muffin tins with cooking spray. Set aside. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Cook green onion and spinach for 3-4 minutes.

Lightly whisk eggs in a bowl. Stir in ricotta, Swiss cheese and Parmesan cheese, spinach mixture, salt and pepper. Spoon into muffin tins and bake about 18-20 minutes or until eggs fluff up and top is lightly browned. Makes 12 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 112 calories, 8 grams protein, 8 grams fat, 3 grams carbohydrate, 133 mg sodium.



Slow Cooker Creamy Chicken Enchiladas

2 boneless skinless chicken breasts
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon cumin
salt + pepper (to taste)
8 ounces Neufchatel cream cheese
1 cup salsa
3/4 cup 2% milk Colby cheese, shredded
12-6 inch flour tortillas
Optional toppings: fresh cilantro, sour cream, salsa, guacamole

Spray inside of slow cooker with non-stick spray. Add chicken, chili powder, garlic powder, cumin, salt and pepper to taste, cream cheese, and water to crock pot. Cover and cook on low 8 hours or on high 4 hours.

Remove chicken from slow cooker, shred with two forks, and return to slow cooker. Stir and cook and additional 15 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400. Place 1/4 cup of the chicken mixture in the center of each tortilla. Roll tightly and place in a single layer on a greased baking sheet. Pour remaining mixture of enchiladas and sprinkle cheese on top. Bake 10-15 minutes, until tortillas are slightly browned. Serve with desired toppings. Makes 12 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING: 203 calories, 8 grams protein, 8 grams fat, 22 grams carbohydrate, 660 mg sodium.

ENDURANCE is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into **GLORY**.

William Barclay