

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Meal Planning Makes Healthy Options Easier

Making healthy food choices when time is tight can be very challenging. Although it takes time, planning meals can save you money and time during meal preparation. Use MyPlate to think about your meals:

- Half your plate should be fruits and vegetables
- Grain choices should include whole grains over half of the time
- Protein should be varied and about 1/4 of our plate and can include sources such as dairy, eggs, dried beans, and legumes
- Dairy foods should be low in fat

Each meal should have a variety of foods being eaten. Breakfast should include three food groups while all five food groups should be included in lunch and dinner. Snacks can be from any food group that is short for the day.

Select recipes that use ingredients you and your family enjoy eating. Don't be afraid to try a new ingredient. Write a menu for each day of the week. After your menu is made, make a list for shopping. Look in your pantry for items you may already have and think how one ingredient could be used in several dishes. For example, half a bell pepper as a pizza topping can also be used in tacos or be frozen to eliminate food waste by being used in the future.

Start slow and work more detail into your meals as you gain experience. Doing a weekly menu using a sale flyer or advertisement will allow for savings on sale items. Weekly menus will lessen impulse buying and multiple trips to the store.

The publication *Cooking Basics: Getting Started* has many resources listed such as publications and videos to help in understanding cooking terms, making a meal, using pantry items on hand,

reducing recipes and measuring ingredients and tools. The publication can be found at this link:
https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/cooking-basics-getting-started_MF3543.

Making healthy meals does take some planning but creating healthy habits will last a lifetime. A lifetime that may be longer when you eat healthy!

If you have questions about menu planning or meal preparation or need more information about Nutrition, Food Safety or Health contact Holly Miner at haminer@ksu.edu or call (620) 331-2690.

Information in this press release came from: [MF3543 Cooking Basics: Getting Started \(ksu.edu\)](#), credit Lisa Martin, KSRE FCS EFNEP Agent, Shawnee County.

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