

Plan for Success with Weekly Meal Prep

BENEFITS

- Reduces stress by forcing you to plan in advance
- Free time! – Focus on exercise goals, completing projects, spending time with friends and family
- Improves diet quality – No more tired take out or lazy packaged foods
- Reduces food waste and saves you money

HOW

Start Small

- Wash, chop, and store vegetables for salads
- Portion out snacks for week
 - Yogurt with fruit
 - Veggie sticks with hummus
 - Homemade popcorn

Mix and Match

- Plan meals based on what can go together
 - Plan your grocery list based on a few different recipes with similar ingredients to keep things simple and easy.
 - Examples:
 - Roasted veggies – Mix with whole grain pasta and olive oil; throw into an omelet; toss with salad greens, beans, and dressing
 - Protein (i.e. chicken) – Mix with grain and veggies; make tacos with veggies, salsa
 - Quinoa/Rice/Pasta – Make enough for the week in order to incorporate into stir fries, “one bowl wonders,” into soups/casseroles

Use Tools That Promote Efficiency

- Crock-Pot – Use for soups, oatmeals, roasts, etc. Hands off so that you can do the rest of your meal prep!
- Rice Cooker – Make all your grains for the week by just adding water. You can mix it up each week by adding different herbs and spices while it cooks.

Ok...What Do I Do?

- This will depend on what you like to eat! Trial and error is your friend. Just keep experimenting and recognize that it will take some time to figure out the most efficient process, how much food you actually need to make, etc.
- The following suggestions may or may not work for you. Here are some ideas to try:
 - Soup/Casserole/Quiche (Pick 1) – Soup will go in the crock-pot, quiche or casserole are easy to prep and throw in the oven. These are all hands off options that allow you to focus efforts elsewhere. This is also a great time to experiment with new recipes.
 - Grains (Pick 1) – Either quinoa/rice/cous-cous in the rice cooker or whole grain pasta on the stovetop.
 - Protein (Pick 1-2) – hard boiled eggs (snacks, put on salad); sautéed chicken; stir fried tofu; canned beans (rinsed, add herbs/spices); grilled kabobs
 - Veggies – Make lots! Roasting is easy and hands-off (plan accordingly so your oven is free) or you can stir-fry, sauté, or steam.

Anything Else?

- Be sure to have the herbs and spices you need for each recipe. Food should be simple, not boring!
- Garnishes – Salsa, avocado, and the makings for salad dressings
- Greens and Beans – Keep greens for salads and cans of beans for inexpensive, easy protein

“The key to success is to intentionally design your environment to make it easy to do the right thing and create health.”

–Mark Hyman, MD