

HEALTH IN OUR HANDS!

The Arkansas State University Wellness Program Newsletter
www.astate.edu/conhp



Meal Prepping 101

Introduction

Do you live a busy lifestyle? Are you trying to eat healthy? Well, meal prepping may be something that can help you if you have a busy schedule or are trying to eat nutritious meals. Not only will meal prepping save you time throughout the week, but it will also save you money. That sounds like a win to me. In this newsletter I will address what meal prepping is, how to successfully meal prep, and add in a few tips and tricks to help start the process of meal prepping.



What is Meal Prepping?

Meal prepping is simply the act of preparing a meal or

recipe, then portioning it out to create grab-and-go meals for later. Meal prepping refers to preparing 3-7 days' worth of food at a time. Think of it as packing your lunch for the next day, but this would be for all week. You can prep breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.



Steps to a Successful Meal Prep

1. **Stick to a schedule:** Pick one day each week to do your meal planning, shop for groceries, and cook.
2. **Pick the number of meals:** Keep in mind your calendar and the restaurant meals you've planned for the week.
3. **Select the right recipes:** Keep an eye out for variety and preparation methods. When starting out, stick to recipes you already know.
4. **Reduce the time you spend on grocery shopping:** Make a grocery list organized by supermarket departments or shop for groceries online.
5. **Spend less time in the kitchen:** Choose which meals to cook first based on cook times.
6. **Store your meals:** Use safe cooling methods and appropriate containers. Refrigerate meals you're planning to eat within 3-4 days, then label and freeze the rest.

Tips and Tricks

Meal prepping can seem daunting at first but the trick is to start small. Start by only prepping for 2-3 meals per week, then you can increase the meals per week or add in snacks once you become accustomed to it. You also want to remember to keep your meals balanced. You want to consider each food group. You want to consume foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, high-quality protein, and healthy fats, while limiting sources of refined grains, added sugars, and excess salt. Another tip to succeed at meal prepping is to invest in quality storage containers for your food. No one likes to open up their cabinet to find mismatched containers. You will need a container that is microwave safe and freezer safe. It is also a good idea to have different sizes for the different variety of meals you may make. Glass containers work well for meal prepping.



Final Thoughts

Meal prepping can be valuable in many ways, but meal prepping may not be for everyone. It is good for people that value convenience and efficiency. You may not be in favor of it if you don't like to eat the same foods for a few days in a row or if you don't like to cook. It takes time to cook the meals but in the long run it will save you time and energy. It all depends on your goals and what you are trying to gain from it. There are plenty of apps and websites that can help you start the process, along with recipes that are good for meal prepping. I hope that with this newsletter you gained beneficial information, that you can use for yourself or share with a friend or family member.



References

- <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/a28377603/how-to-meal-prep/>

- <https://www.budgetbytes.com/meal-prep-101-a-beginners-guide/>
- <https://www.bulletproof.com/diet/healthy-eating/how-to-meal-prep-beginners-guide/>
- <https://tasty.co/article/jesseszewczyk/tips-for-meal-prepping>
- <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-to-meal-prep>
- <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/meal-prep-tips>

Other News:

**If you have any suggestions for newsletter topics, please contact Dean Susan Hanrahan at hanrahan@astate.edu.

The Arkansas State University Employee Wellness Newsletter is published monthly during the academic year by the College of Nursing and Health Professions. Health questions can be addressed to Dean Susan Hanrahan, Ph.D., ext. 3112 or hanrahan@astate.edu. Produced by Katie Axsom, Physical Therapy student in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, Physical Therapy Program.