Integrative Health Center
Optimal Health Class Series

MEETING #4 –EATING ON A BUDGET & MINIMAL COOKING

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Strategies for affordable & easy meals

- Shop in bulk
- Plan meals ahead
- Buy in season & frozen produce
- Eat plant based
- Drink water
- Shop on sale/ stock up

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Preparing meals ahead (Lunch & Dinner)

- Make full meals and store in separate containers
- Make “staple items” to mix & match
  - ✓Base: brown rice, quinoa, pasta, beans, lettuce
  - ✓Frozen, cooked or raw vegetables (cut in bulk)
  - ✓Protein: tofu, chicken, ground turkey, salmon, egg
  - ✓Sides: grain crackers, grab and go fruit (apple, orange, banana), nuts, dark chocolate

- Store nightly leftovers in ready-to-go container
  - ✓ Make an extra portion of every dinner

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Preparing meals ahead (Breakfast/ Snacks)

- Make a batch of items to store
  - ✓Egg muffin
  - ✓Healthy muffins or breads
  - ✓Homemade trail mix
- Choose meals with very few ingredients, get all ingredients ready
  - ✓Smoothie
  - ✓Overnight Oatmeal
  - ✓Buckwheat Pancakes

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On-the-go Goodness…

Breakfast:

✓Nuts/ nut butter, fruit, boiled egg, whole grain crackers or cereal, RX bar, premade “ cookies”

Lunch & Dinner:

✓Edamame, cut up vegetables, hummus/ bean dips, nuts, whole grain crackers, LF cheese, tuna (packet), chicken breast

Shelf-stable staples: LS vegetable soup, tuna, WG crackers, nuts/ nut butter, fruit, tortillas/ WG bread…

No Bake Breakfast Cookies–Ingredients (8 servings)

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup nut butter
  - peanut, almond, cashew, sunflower
- 1tsp cinnamon
- 1 TBS chia and/or flax seeds
- 3/4 cup old fashioned oats (dry)
- ¼ cup fruit
  - Mashed banana, applesauce, blueberries, raisins, etc.

Optional Variations:

- Grated vegetables
  - carrot, zucchini
- Protein powder/ hemp protein
- 1 tsp Agave or other sweetener
- Dark chocolate chips
- ½ oats, ½ quinoa flour

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Adapted from: iheartnaptime.net/breakfast-cookies/

No Bake Breakfast Cookies - Instructions

1. **Place the nut butter, cinnamon and vanilla in a microwavable bowl, microwave the ingredients for 20 seconds.**
2. **Stir the mixture until well combined then add in the remaining ingredients (and any extra mix-in's).**
3. **Roll the mixture into 8 balls and place the balls on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Press the balls flat slightly and place them in the fridge for at least an hour to set.**
4. **Store breakfast cookies in an airtight container in the fridge for up to two weeks.**

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Healthy on a budget

- SNAP and farmers markets
  - Shop in season
  - Double your SNAP bucks

- Food pantries
  - Look up recipes to use with a variety of produce
- CSA boxes
  - Discounts available?
  - Imperfect produce

Partners for a HUNGER-FREE OREGON

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Healthy on a budget

Breakfast Sandwich (Frozen)
=$1.21/ serving

- 350 calories
- 20g fat, 8g saturated
- 30g cho, 1 g fiber
- 14 g protein

Banana Oatmeal:
= $0.80 /serving

- 400 calories
- 17g fat, ↑ omega 3
- 49g cho, 10 g fiber
- 18 g protein

Sausage McMuffin
=$3.90

- 480 calories
- 31 g fat, 12g saturated
- 30g cho, 2 g fiber
- 20g pro

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Healthy food… minimal cooking

- Batch cooking (grains, vegetables)
- Purchase pre-cut fruit/ vegetables
- Use pre-made beans or grains
- Use a crock pot, air fryer or microwave

roguecommunityhealth.org/nutrition/

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Best Ways to Cook Vegetables to Get More Plant Nutrients

https://nutritionfacts.org/video/best-way-to-cook-vegetables

- Sweet peppers- raw, microwaved, stir-fried or even boiled
- Cauliflower– all good except for boiling
- Broccoli—steaming is the best; microwave the worst
- Spinach—lower heat and puree
- Mushrooms—microwave, grilling

- Avoid deep frying or high heat methods
- Sauté at low temperature
- Steaming works well for most
- Chopping or blending raw vegetables works well
- If boiling, try to use the cooking water

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Avoiding Food Waste

Eliminating food waste is good for your budget & planet

- **Use apps like ”food keeper” for food storage info**
- **Freeze half of bulk items like meats & breads**
- **Keep food that is expiring in the same area**
- **Use “best by” dates as a guideline**

Too much of a good thing…

Eliminating food waste is good for your budget & planet

- Make a list and stick to it to prevent over buying
- Choose foods that can be used in multiple meals
- Use old produce to make a smoothie, soup or stock
- Order small potions or to go boxes
- Try composting!

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Tunisian Vegetable Stew –Ingredients (serves 4)

- 1-1/2 cups thinly sliced onions
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 cups thin sliced cabbage
- 1 large green pepper, sliced into thin strips
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1/8th tsp cayenne (optional)
- 1 28-ounce can drained tomatoes
- 1-1/2 cup chickpeas drained
- 1/3 cup currants or raisins (optional)
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- Crumbled feta or toasted slivered almonds (garnish)

Moosewood Restaurant
Cooks at Home

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Tunisian Vegetable Stew - Instructions

- **Sauté onions for 5 minutes in a large skillet, until soft**
- **Add cabbage, sprinkle with salt, and sauté for at least 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.**
- **Add bell peppers and spices and sauté for another minute or so.**
- **Stir in tomatoes, chickpeas, and optional currants or raisins.**
- **Simmer, covered for about 15 minutes, until vegetables are just tender.**
- **Add lemon juice and salt to taste.**
- **Garnish with feta crumbles and/or toasted almonds.**

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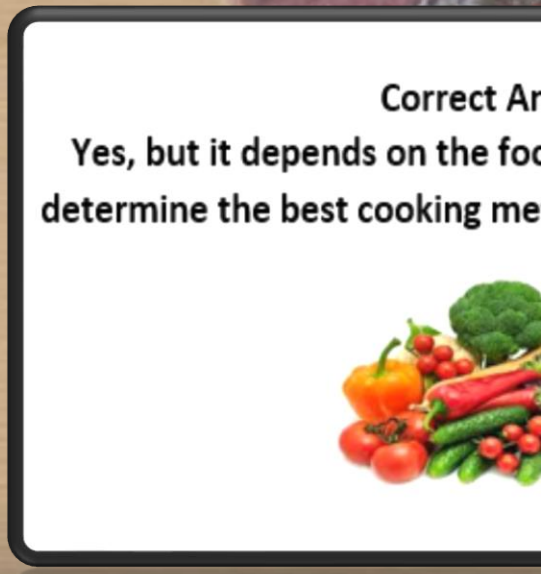
Pop Quiz!!

Is the microwave an effective and healthy way to cook vegetables?

a. No, microwaves should not be used to cook, only for reheating
b. No, microwaves are very unhealthy, and you should toss yours immediately
c. Yes, microwaving food is ALWAYS a healthy option
d. Yes, but it depends on the food and time. Use resources to determine the best cooking methods as each vegetable varies.



Navigating the label

Original Label

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container 8

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 230	Calories from Fat 72
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	**12%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 37g	**12%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**16%**
Sugars 12g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

New Label

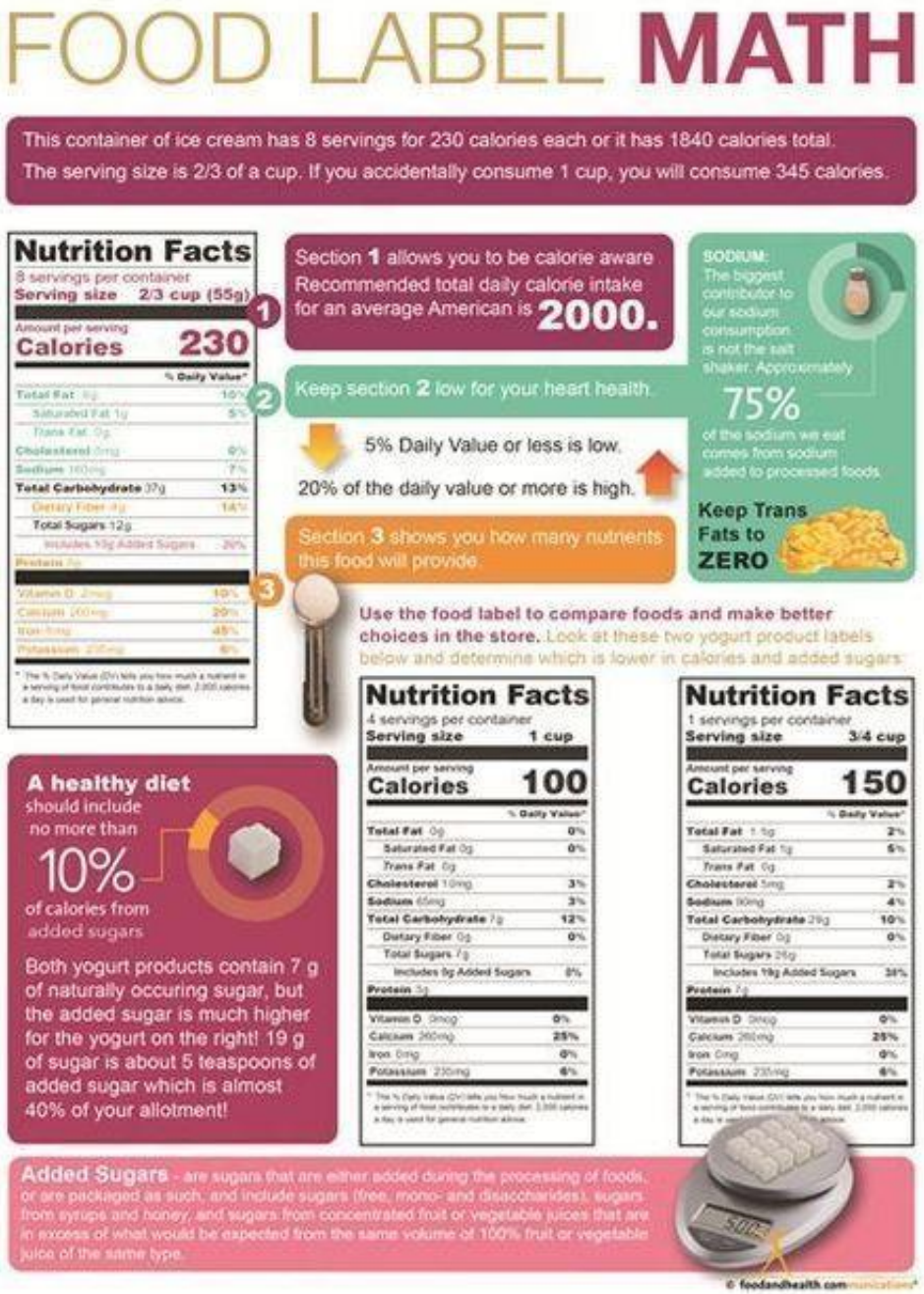
Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container
Serving size **2/3 cup (55g)**

Amount per serving	
Calories	**230**
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	**10%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 37g	**13%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**14%**
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	**20%**
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1. The serving size now appears in larger, bold font and some serving sizes have been updated.
2. Calories are now displayed in larger, bolder font.
3. Daily Values have been updated.
4. Added sugars, vitamin D, and potassium are now listed. Manufacturers must declare the amount in addition to percent Daily Value for vitamins and minerals.



Increase:

1. **Fiber**
2. **Unsaturated fats**
3. **Vitamins & Minerals**

Reduce:

1. **Added sugars**
2. **Saturated/ trans fat**
3. **Sodium**

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In summary…

- There are many strategies to make meals easier
- Eating healthy can be affordable
- Microwaving may be a quick and healthy way to cook vegetables
- Avoid food waste by making soups, smoothies and sauces when possible
- There are changes to the new food label; aim to increase fiber, limit saturated fats/ added sugar

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Activity Time!

1. Grab a food label that you have handy (or find one online)
2. As a group review…
    a. total fat, saturated fat, sodium, fiber, added sugar
    b. calories, vitamins and minerals
3. Determine whose item is the healthiest
4. Present that food item to the whole group

(NO NOT SHARE WHAT THE ITEM IS TO THE WHOLE CLASS)

5. The other group will try to guess the item based off the nutritional label

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