

K-State Research and Extension News for October 7, 2020

Fall Back into Good Nutrition

Submitted by Franny Eastwood, Extension Agent

Planning ahead is the best way to start. Devote time each week to go through your calendar and look at the events scheduled and how they may affect the time you have to prepare meals for your family. Then take time to plan out a menu for the week. Keep in mind the foods you already have on hand so you can use them in your upcoming menu plans. Keeping basic foods on hand simplifies planning and shopping.

Prepare the night before. For example, if Tuesdays are game nights and you only have 60 minutes between picking up your kids and getting them to a game, plan to have a meal ready that is easy to grab from home and go. Realize that sometimes eating a meal in the car is the only way you can make it there on time. At least you are all in one place at one time and this too can count toward family time. Pre-make sandwiches or wraps the night before and include such items as: easy to transport fruit, vegetables, drinks, and snacks. Try making wraps that include a variety of food groups.

Make ahead and freeze meals. Take time on the weekend to prepare some meals for the week. Some of great meals to pre-make and freeze are lasagna, enchiladas, and soups.

Simplify meals. Meals don't have to be fancy to be healthy. In kids often prefer simple meals that don't contain a lot of mixed ingredients. One example of an easy kid friendly mix and match meal: pre-made hard boiled eggs, cheese sticks, watermelon, carrot sticks, and whole-grain crackers. It is simple, fast, and includes each of the 5 food groups.

Include your children in meal and snack planning. Ask children to help brainstorm ideas for meals and snacks to make during the week. You might be surprised what they want on the list and what they want removed from the list. When you are at the grocery store ask younger children to help put food in the cart. For older children have them help pick out the fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, and whole grain foods you buy. These roles, big or small, will positively impact how likely they are to try nutritious foods.

Source: <https://food.unl.edu/> UNL Extension in Lancaster County. "Fall Back Into Good Nutrition." For more information on nutrition, food safety, health, or family and child development contact the Marais des Cygnes Extension District, or write to fmeastwo@ksu.edu or check out our website: www.maraisdescyignes.k-state.edu