

Nutrition Notes from the Neuromuscular Center

Healthy and Easy Recipes

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We are all so busy these days with so much to do. Eating healthy can take a back seat. Most people do not realize how quick and easy it can be to put together a healthy and appetizing meal with the tips below:

Plan Meals Ahead of time

Don't wait until the last minute when you are starving to decide what to have for dinner. Make a weekly menu and have the items on hand so you can make a good decision at meal times. This will make it easier for you to make a shopping list and it can help with impulse buying at the store.

Have the Whole Family Help

Sit down as a family and plan meals. Make meal choices where everyone can help prepare, cook or clean up after the meal. Sit together as a family and talk. This can make eating much more enjoyable. This will help engage the whole family and meals will not feel like a chore.

Recipes

Below are some recipes that are quick, easy and healthy. These can be made when you get home from work without taking too much time.

Southwestern Pizza

Prep time: 8 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Makes: 3 servings

Ingredients

Nonstick cooking spray

1 12-inch 100% whole wheat pizza crust

1 cup prepared tomato salsa

1 1/4 cups shredded reduced-fat 2 percent mozzarella

1 1/3 cups canned black beans, drained and rinsed

1 small sweet red pepper, seeded and thinly sliced (about 2/3 cup)

2 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced

1/4 cup cilantro leaves for garnish (optional)

Directions

1. Heat the oven to 450 degrees. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Place crust on sheet and top with salsa, 1 cup mozzarella, beans, sliced red pepper, and scallions. Top with remaining 1/4 cup cheese.
2. Place pizza in oven and bake 8 to 10 minutes or until mozzarella is melted. Remove from oven and garnish with cilantro if desired. Cut into six slices and serve.

Nutrition facts per serving (2 slices): 488 calories, 28g protein, 72g carbohydrate, 12g fat (5.4g saturated), 16g fiber

Lemony Fusilli with Chicken, Zucchini, and Pine Nuts

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients

3 teaspoons salt

8 ounces whole wheat fusilli

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 slender zucchini, halved lengthwise, sliced into 1/4-inch thick pieces

5 scallions, chopped

1/4 cup pine nuts

1 lemon, rind peeled in strips

Small pinch red pepper flakes

12 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-size pieces

5 large basil leaves, sliced

1/4 cup grated Parmesan (optional)

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of water with 2 teaspoons of the salt to a boil; add the fusilli. Cook until al dente.
2. Warm 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the zucchini, scallions, pine nuts, lemon peel, red pepper flakes, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt; cook, tossing frequently, until zucchini is well browned and tender, about 5 minutes.
3. Use a slotted spoon to transfer zucchini to a serving bowl. Remove lemon peel from pan. Mince 1/2 teaspoon of the peel and discard the rest. Squeeze half the lemon over the zucchini.
4. Turn heat to medium-high and swirl in remaining olive oil. Add the chicken, minced lemon peel, and remaining salt; cook, stirring, until golden, about 7 minutes.
5. Drain fusilli, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking water. Add fusilli, zucchini, and reserved cooking water to skillet. Cook 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and top with the basil and, if using, Parmesan.

Nutrition facts per serving: 426 calories, 32g protein, 49g carbohydrate, 14g fat (2.2g saturated), 6g fiber

Chicken BLT Salad with Buttermilk Dressing

Recipe developed by Laraine Perri

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients

4 slices lean turkey bacon
4 1-inch-thick slices ciabatta bread
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 garlic clove, halved
1/3 cup low-fat buttermilk, well shaken
2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
2 teaspoons cider vinegar
1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon minced garlic
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon sugar
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
4 cups tightly packed chopped romaine lettuce
1 pint grape tomatoes, halved
2 cups roughly torn rotisserie chicken, skin removed

Directions

1. Cook the bacon in a skillet over medium-low heat, turning occasionally, until lightly browned and beginning to crisp, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Crumble into large pieces.
2. Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Lightly brush the ciabatta slices with the olive oil and grill until just toasted, about 2 minutes per side. Lightly rub the cut garlic clove halves over the surface of each slice. Let the bread cool, then cut into 1-inch cubes.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, minced garlic, salt, sugar, and black pepper. Add the lettuce, tomatoes, chicken, croutons, and half the bacon. Toss well. Transfer to plates and top each serving with some of the remaining bacon.

Nutrition facts per serving: 295 calories, 28g protein, 20g carbohydrate, 11g fat (2.8g saturated), 3g fiber

Beef Stir-Fry with Avocado Salad

Recipe developed by Anna Berman

Makes: 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

12 ounces beef tenderloin, cut into thin strips
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
1 tablespoon plus 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 medium sweet onion, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 poblano, thinly sliced
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 avocado, diced
1/4 cup Cojita cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup cilantro plus more for garnish, chopped
Corn tortillas (optional)

Directions:

1. In a bowl, combine beef, 2 tablespoons lime juice, and 1 tablespoon chili powder; set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onion, bell pepper, and poblano and sauté 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add beef and marinade to vegetables and cook 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and black pepper.
4. In another bowl, combine beans, avocado, cheese, 1/4 cup cilantro, and remaining lime juice and chili powder.
5. Garnish beef and vegetables with remaining cilantro. Serve with avocado salad and warmed tortillas if desired.

Nutrition facts per serving: 436 calories, 28g protein, 30g carbohydrate, 26g fat (7g saturated), 10g fiber



Websites

There are lots of different websites that can help you plan meals. Most websites can help you plan a week's worth of meals and make your grocery list for you. You can search for healthy recipes and use the websites that suit you best. Try one of the following: Cooking Light, the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association.

Make Ahead

Make meals ahead of time to make serving week night meals easier. When making a casserole or one of your family's favorite recipes, make 2. Serve one now and keep the other in the freezer for a dinner that is ready to reheat and serve easily at a later date.

Helpful Tips

Adjust recipes to meet your family needs. You can switch out items that may not appeal to your family or fit into your diet needs.

Plan one night when you can try a new recipe and expand your taste buds. Trying new foods can add different taste experiences and give you a wider range of foods to have in your diet.

Try to make your favorite restaurant meals at home. You will be able to control the fat and salt content of your food items. It will save you money and calories.

Have theme nights with your meals. This can make meals more enjoyable and it can also be a way of trying new foods.

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