



Healthy Meal Prep for Employed Older Adults

A Step by Step Guide

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The Problem

- As individuals age, consumption of nutritious and whole foods becomes more and more important due to natural health decline
 - Older adults are more prone to many health problems that are directly related to poor diet, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and obesity.
 - Employed older often resort to eating foods that are less healthy due to time and organization constraints
 - There are ample resources available for creating healthy packed lunches for elementary aged children but minimal resources for employed older adults
 - Consumption of low nutrient foods can lead to lack of energy
 - Consumption of low nutrient foods can negatively affect mental health
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Addressing the Problem

- This resource addresses the problem of unhealthy food consumption by creating a simple guide to create healthy packed lunches for a variety of lifestyles
- Healthy food consumption drastically decreases older adults' risk of a variety of age related health conditions
- Other health professionals that can be involved include physicians, nutritionists, physical therapists, social workers and pharmacists. All these practitioners, along with Occupational Therapists, must work together to create a healthier diet for employed older adults.

Commonly Used Treatment Approaches

Treatment approaches for detrimental consumption of low quality of foods in aging adults

- Grocery list creation
 - Cooking Classes
 - Pantry Organization
 - Grocery Budget Tracking
 - Recommend Dietary Supplements
 - Fresh Food Storage Techniques
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Two Guide Options for Every Lifestyle

Hot Lunch Options

- Cook bulk options at the beginning of each week
- Separate each meal into daily containers
- Warm meals up at work
- Many different main course options
- Customizable Portions

Cold Lunch Options

- No cooking required for these lunch options
- Spend minimal time separating each meal out at the beginning of the week
- Great for individuals who do not have a microwave at work
- Meals can be mix and matched

Hot Lunch Options



How to Get Started

When you first start meal prepping, you may have some initial ingredients that you have to buy and some things that you have to consider:

1. Buy a good extra virgin olive oil, you will use it with all types of veggies and meats
 2. Pick out your favorite spices and keep them on hand. (I use italian seasoning, Lawrys' seasoning Salt, garlic cloves, chives, ginger and ground turmeric)
 3. Invest in a saucepan, a frying pan, and saute pan. You can make almost everything with those three pans.
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Step 1: Pick a Vegetable

Look at seasonal vegetables from where you live, these will be cheaper and fresher. I generally buy onions to add to nearly all my meals, too!

- Asparagus
 - Broccoli
 - Corn
 - Zucchini
 - Squash
 - Green Beans
 - Sweet Peppers
 - Cabbage
 - Carrots
 - Eggplant
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Step 2: Pick a Grain / Carb

This can be changed each week in order to avoid getting sick of a certain one

- Wild Rice
 - Pasta (try to vegetable based pastas or the whole grain!)
 - Quinoa
 - Couscous
 - Barley
 - Lentils
 - Buckwheat
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Step 3: Pick a Protein

This can be meat, but meat can also be substituted for vegetarians or to make the meal more cost effective

- Chicken Breast
 - Pork Chops
 - Turkey Tenderloins
 - Ground Beef, Turkey, or Chicken
 - Black Beans
 - Kidney Beans
 - Tofu
 - Lima Beans
 - Steak
 - Sausage (check sodium levels and caloric content)
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Step 4: Pick a Fruit

Fruits are a good side to add to any lunch. Cut up a few different ones at the beginning of the week and throw a serving in each lunch

- Apples
 - Oranges
 - Pears
 - Kiwis
 - Blueberries
 - Blackberries
 - Raspberries
 - Strawberries
 - Watermelon
 - Mangos
 - Nectarines
 - Peaches
 - Pineapple
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Step 5: Cooking the Food

Two pots is all you will need to create nearly everything that you have picked, the less mess the better

- Cook Grains According to Package instructions (typically in a saucepan)
 - Place oil and cut meat into skillet or frying pan (be sure meat is cooked all the way through)
 - Place vegetables and seasonings into skillet or frying pan with meat
 - Combine all ingredients into glass, microwave safe container for reheating
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Youtube Resources



Here are some great links to some videos that will give you any additional cooking instructions that you may need!

Cold Lunch Options



Step 1: Main Course

Cold meat sandwiches are not the only option, getting creative with the main course of a lunch can make it something to look forward to throughout the work day

- Chicken Caesar Wrap
 - Hummus and Veggies on Pita Bread
 - Bagged Salads
 - Peanut Butter and Banana Sandwich
 - Chickpeas with Veggies (Buddha Bowl)
 - Chicken Salad
 - Avocado Burrito Salad Bowl
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Step 2: Raw Veggies

Raw veggies can deter many people, but trying different sauces and varieties can make them a yummy part of any lunch

- Celery
 - Carrots
 - Sugar / Snow Peas
 - Tri Color Peppers
 - Cucumbers
 - Radishes
 - Broccoli
 - Cauliflower
 - Cherry Tomatoes
 - Green Beans
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Step 3: Fruit

Seasonal fruits are always better, both fiscally and for optimal freshness

- Apples
 - Oranges
 - Pears
 - Kiwis
 - Blueberries
 - Blackberries
 - Raspberries
 - Strawberries
 - Watermelon
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Step 4: Protein Snacks

There are many healthy snack options that allow the steady burn of energy and they often taste great too!

- Almonds
 - Peanuts
 - Protein Bars
 - Hard Boiled Eggs
 - Jerky
 - Trail Mix
 - No Bake Energy Bites
 - Cottage Cheese
 - Chia Pudding
 - Pumpkin Seeds
 - Rice Cakes
 - Overnight Oats
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Additional References

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