

# NUTRITION

KNOW  
HOW

A free resource provided for area food bank visitors by the Leon County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



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## Meal Planning Tips

Taking time to plan healthy meals can help you stick to a healthy eating style. If you're new to planning meals, start with one of the tips below and then work up to more.

### Map out your meals

Outline meals you plan to eat for the week and use it as a guide. Be sure to list beverages and snacks, too!

### Find balance

If you have veggies, dairy and protein at one meal, include fruit and grains in the next to cover all 5 food groups over the course of a day.

Source: <https://www.eatgathergo.org>

### Vary protein foods

Choose different protein foods throughout the week. If you have chicken one day, try seafood, beans, lean meat or eggs on other days.

### Make a grocery list

Start by writing down all of the ingredients for the meals you plan to make. Just be sure to cross off items you already have on hand.

### Love your leftovers

Prepare enough of a dish to eat multiple times during the week. Making leftovers part of your plan can save money and time.

<http://leon.agrilife.org>  
<http://fch.tamu.edu>

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AGRILIFE  
EXTENSION



Laura Petty  
County Extension Agent-Family & Community Health  
Leon County  
113 West Main, 3rd floor  
PO Box 188, Centerville, TX 75833  
903-536-2531, 536-3804 (fax), [lpetty@tamu.edu](mailto:lpetty@tamu.edu)

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# Shift to Healthier Food & Beverage Choices

Here's some good news: Eating healthier doesn't mean you have to give up all the foods you love. It doesn't have to be confusing or complicated either. **The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines has a better approach—make small shifts in the foods you eat. Here's how to do it.**

## What Are Healthy *Shifts*?

It's simple. When you can, **swap out a food or ingredient for a healthier option**. For example, you could:



**Shift from whole milk to low-fat milk in your breakfast cereal**



**Shift from soda with added sugars to water during lunch**



**Shift from a cream-based pasta dish to one with a lighter sauce and more vegetables for dinner**

## How Will Making *Shifts* Help?

- Healthy eating patterns can help prevent chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and Type 2 diabetes.
- Shifting to healthier choices doesn't mean you have to change your whole eating pattern. Shifts can be easier to stick with over time—you're just making small changes to the way you're already eating.

About half of all American adults have one or more chronic diseases—and they're often related to eating a poor quality diet.

## Make *Shifts* Throughout the Day

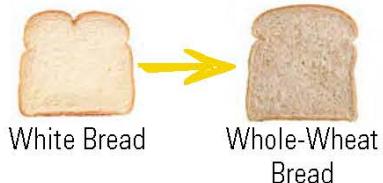
You have a chance to make a healthier choice whenever you:

- Open your fridge for a snack
- Shop in the grocery store
- Stand at a vending machine
- Pack a lunch
- Look at a menu in a restaurant
- Cook a favorite recipe

Take advantage of these everyday opportunities to make a shift. Everything you eat and drink matters. Over time, little changes in the foods and drinks you choose can have big health benefits.

## Try Out These *Shifts*

The *Dietary Guidelines* has key recommendations for how we can all improve our eating patterns. The shifts below will help you stay on track.



### How to Eat More Whole Grains:

- Choose whole-wheat bread instead of white
- Have popcorn for a snack instead of potato chips (just leave out the butter)



### How to Cut Down on Saturated Fats:

- Twice a week, have seafood instead of fatty cuts of meat for dinner
- When you're making chili or stew, reduce the amount of meat and add more beans and vegetables



### How to Cut Down on Added Sugars:

- Give your kids 100% juice or water instead of fruit punch
- Have a homemade fruit smoothie instead of ice cream



### How to Cut Down on Sodium (Salt):

- Switch to unsalted nuts
- Shift from regular canned soups to low-sodium



### How to Use Oils Instead of Solid Fats:

- Dip your whole-wheat bread in olive oil instead of spreading on butter
- Choose an oil-based salad dressing instead of cream-based

## What *Shift* Will You Make Today?

Want to learn more about shifts and how to find a healthy eating pattern that works for your family? Check out [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov), which has more information from the *Dietary Guidelines*, online tools, recipes, and more.

Looking for ideas on how to use certain ingredients? Please let me know what ingredients you are needing help with, and I'll share recipes in upcoming issues.



# Recipes

## Quick Chicken & Vegetable Soup

A great way to use properly stored and handled leftover chicken. Using frozen veggies helps cut down prep time.

- 1 onion (chopped)
- 1 can chicken broth, low-sodium (14.5 ounce)
- 1 package mixed vegetables (10 ounce frozen)
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Use only cooked chicken for this recipe. Peel and chop the onion, to make 1 tablespoon of chopped onion. Use a fork to pierce the tomatoes and break them up into pieces. Put the tomatoes and broth in the pan. Cook on medium heat until they boil. Add the onion. Turn the heat to low, and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients. Cover the pan. Cook for 10 minutes over low heat until vegetables are tender.

- 1 can tomatoes (14.5 ounce, broken up)
- 1/2 cup chicken, cooked and chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

Source: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>



## Hot & Spicy Corn Dip

Enjoy this with Vitamin C rich foods like broccoli and red bell pepper. Or try baked whole wheat tortilla chips or crackers or on top of a grilled chicken breast.

- 1 small chopped tomato
- pickled jalapeno peppers
- ½ package (4 ounces) fat free cream cheese
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Wash hands and cooking area. Wash tomato under cool running water with a vegetable brush or hand. Chop tomato and jalapeno peppers. Combine all ingredients in blender and blend well.

- ½ tablespoon finely chopped
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed, well drained
- ¼ cup reduced fat shredded cheese

Source: Better Living for Texans

## Do It Yourself Spice Mixes

### Ranch Blend

Use in stuffed bell peppers or pasta, or on toasted garlic bread.

- 2 Tbsp. onion powder
- 2 Tbsp. onion flakes
- 2 Tbsp. parsley, dried
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. dill weed, dried
- ¼ tsp. thyme, dried
- 2 tsp. pepper



Source: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu>

Making your own spice blends is a win-win idea that gives your food a pop of flavor while reducing sodium.

### Italian Spice Blend

Use in yogurt as a dip with celery and carrots, or on baked chicken or popcorn.

- 2 Tbsp. basil, dried
- 2 Tbsp. oregano, dried
- 1 Tbsp. thyme, dried
- 1 Tbsp. rosemary, dried
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. onion powder