

# Quick, healthy meals and snacks



Short on time? Try these tips for making good foods . . . fast!

### Tip:

Make a quick, nutritious meal with whole-wheat pasta, lean meats, and frozen or leftover vegetables.

### Tip:

Keep canned fish on hand for quick meals using healthy fats.

### Tip:

Save time by using a big slow cooker. Get two or three healthy suppers without spending lots of time in the kitchen.

## Speedy suppers

### Pasta plus . . .

**Greg:** One thing you'll always find in my pantry is a couple of boxes of whole-wheat pasta and cans of no-salt crushed tomatoes. I don't like all the added sugars and salt in some of the store's pasta sauces, so I make up my own sauce. I add dried oregano, basil, chopped onion, and lots of garlic to the tomatoes. I'll even toss in a bag of cooked chicken breast and frozen veggies or leftover vegetables from the night before. My sauce is nutritious and low in fat, salt, and added sugars.

Add a salad, and we have a good meal in less time than it takes to get the kids ready to go to a drive-through. And . . . my sons love this meal.

### Fish in a flash . . .

**Aponi:** Here's my motto about food—"Make it simple, make it right, and make it quick." I keep cans of salmon and tuna in my cupboard because they have healthy fats. It takes less than 15 minutes to make up salmon or tuna cakes. Just add chopped onion, some whole-wheat bread crumbs, one beaten egg, and some celery seed. Form the patties, and cook in a pan with cooking spray. Cook until the patties are brown and crispy on both sides.

### Slow cooker to the rescue . . .

**Anh:** Once a week I make big batches of food in my slow cooker. I chop up lots of vegetables—carrots, onions, squash, sweet peppers—anything we have on hand. I put the veggies on the bottom, then place my skinless chicken breasts or lean beef on top.

Then, I add a can of no-salt-added tomatoes, some oregano, and two cloves of garlic. I do other fun things instead of cooking for hours. And, we can get three tasty, healthy suppers in less time than it used to take me to cook one meal!

## So what are you doing for dinner tonight?

Why not try what works for Greg, Aponi, and Anh?



For more information, visit [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

# Small changes can make a large difference

## Hearty, healthy lunches in a snap

- Sandwich lover?** Choose lean protein fillings, such as grilled chicken or tuna. Make nonmeat sandwiches with peanut butter, low-fat cheese, sliced hard-boiled eggs, or fat-free refried beans.
- Load your sandwich with veggies.** Along with the standard greens and tomatoes . . . try sliced cucumbers, green peppers, or zucchini strips for added crunch.
- Pick whole grains!** Try whole-grain or 100% whole-wheat breads, tortilla wraps, English muffins, and pita pockets instead of white breads or buns.
- Green salads, anyone?** Add lean meats along with fruits, beans, and nuts to your green salads. Try dried cranberries, cut-up fruit, kidney beans, walnuts, and almonds.

## On the run? Healthier fast food or drive-through choices

### Skip the meal deals and size upgrades

Calories can really add up when you get the larger size sandwiches, fried foods, and soft drinks.

### Check off what you will try to cut the calories when eating out:

- Get the regular or child-sized hamburger and load it with lettuce, tomato, and onions.
- Cut a larger burger or sandwich in half. Eat half now, and refrigerate half for tomorrow's lunch.
- Get the small size turkey or grilled chicken sub instead of the large one. Load it with veggies—spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, and onions.
- Drink water, or low-fat or fat-free milk, instead of whole milk, fruit drinks, or a soft drink.

### Go healthier

- Order a side salad with low-fat or fat-free dressing instead of fries. Or share an order of small fries with a friend.
- Use mustard, or low-fat or fat-free mayo, instead of regular mayo.
- Choose the green beans or raw carrots instead of coleslaw. Order a small baked potato with salsa instead of mashed potatoes and gravy.
- Order a thin-crust vegetable pizza with a side salad instead of a deep-dish meat or double cheese pizza.
- Save foods like cakes, pies, and brownies as an occasional treat. Order fruit instead. Or share one dessert.

