MEAL PREPPING
Saves Time and Frustration

Deciding what to have for dinner each night can be a daily conundrum for many of us. Barriers often include deciding what to prepare and needing more time to prepare a full meal. By preparing at least portions of our meals in advance, we can regularly have home-cooked, nutritious meals.

Meal prepping allows us to live our hectic lives while still providing our families and ourselves with nutritious foods. Meal prepping also takes some of the stress and frustration out of deciding what to eat each night. The process may include simply prepping ingredients you will use later and completely preparing dishes to store for later use.

If you have never tried meal prepping, start small and don't invest much money. First, aim to prepare two to three meals per week in advance. Find nutritious recipes your family will enjoy and make a grocery list of the needed ingredients. Allow your family to chime in on the process or ask them if there is a new food or recipe they would like to try.

It is easier to set aside one day for grocery shopping and meal prepping as it cuts down on the number of times you must handle the food and gives you a set time to work meal prepping into your busy schedule.

While most people associate meal prepping with dinnertime, you can prepare quick breakfasts or use leftovers for lunches. When cooking dinner, make the most of your time in the kitchen. Clean the kitchen as you prepare food, chop veggies for a salad the next day, or slice some fruit for a quick grab-and-go snack for the family.

After preparing the food, store it in an airtight container and place it in the refrigerator or freezer, depending on how soon you plan to eat it. Consume refrigerated meals within five days. Freezing will allow you to store meals for a longer time.

As you become a meal-prepping pro, you can watch for sales to stock up on food staples and increase the number of meals you prepare at home.