



## MODULE SEVEN

# Menu Planning, Shopping, and Cooking



### What can I do to make healthy eating my lifestyle?

Getting a better grasp on menu planning, shopping, and cooking will help make healthy eating a habit. It is recommended that you eat small, balanced meals with portioned, healthy snacks in between. Eating consistently will help you be mindful of the types of foods you select. To manage your weight, it's important to learn how to plan meals, shop for healthy foods, read food labels, and practice healthy cooking methods that bring out the best flavor. Healthy eating doesn't have to be a chore. There are lots of ways to save time and money when you buy and prepare healthy foods!

**“I haven't stopped eating anything, I just eat intelligently!”**

– Lee, lost 32 pounds

Your food logs have helped you find patterns in your eating (skipping meals, eating after meals). Now we'll talk about some specific ways to create healthy, regular eating patterns:

- Aim for 2-3 healthy, low-calorie meals and 1-2 healthy, low-calorie snacks. Space your eating times 3-4 hours apart.
- Losing weight will be easier if you can eat your meals on a regular schedule, but it doesn't have to be an exact schedule.
- It is important to eat first thing in the morning—it helps raise your metabolism and prevents hunger pains later in the day.
- Eating late at night is generally not good for you. Eat more food earlier in the day so you aren't overly hungry after dinner.

### In This Module You Will:

1. Practice menu planning.
2. Learn how to shop for healthy food.
3. Learn how to make sense of food labels.
4. Identify ways to prepare healthy meals.

# Progress Check-In



I met my previous healthy eating goal

I met my previous physical activity goal

*My weight today is \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.*

Reflect on how well you met your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

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What challenges did you encounter?

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What helped you address those challenges?

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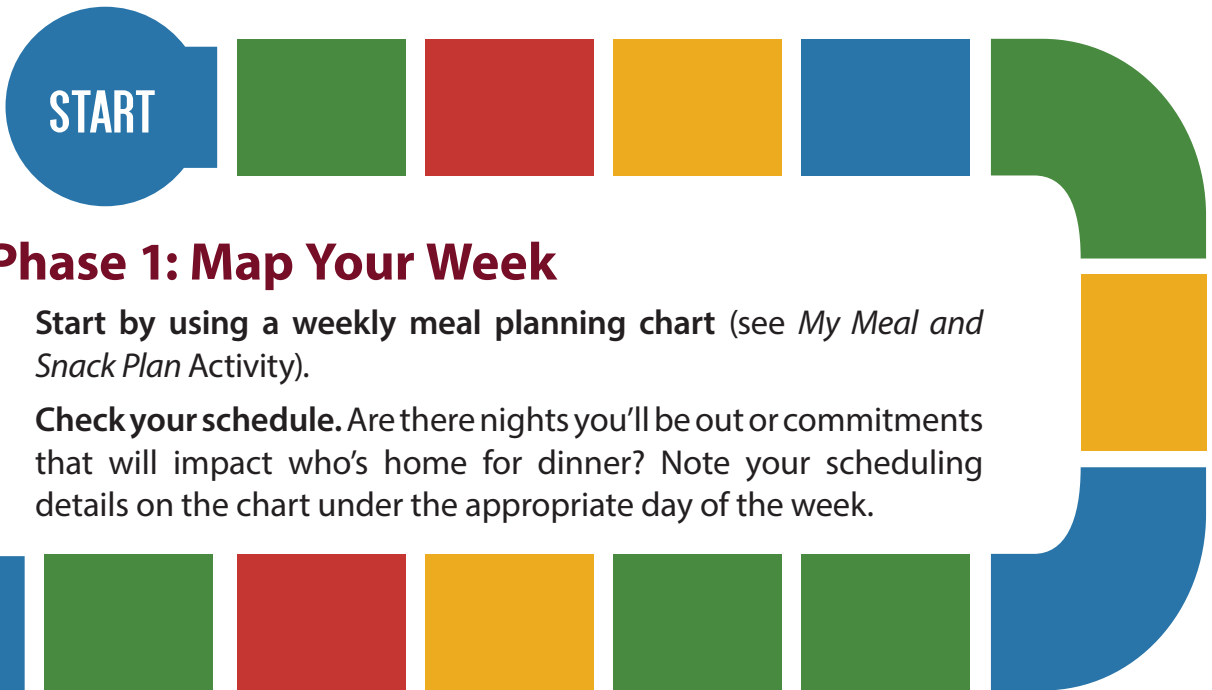
## Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your weight-loss efforts this past week?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sleep       | <input type="checkbox"/> More energy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer prescription medications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better check-up    | <input type="checkbox"/> Less joint pain    | <input type="checkbox"/> Better blood pressure control  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved memory    | <input type="checkbox"/> Better mood        | <input type="checkbox"/> Better blood sugar control     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes fit better | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved cooking   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stress relief      | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater confidence | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More endurance     | <input type="checkbox"/> More organized     | _____   |

# Meal Planning Made Easy

Planning healthy meals ahead of time can help you stick to a healthy eating style. Here are some tips to get started with meal planning for one or for the whole family!



## Phase 1: Map Your Week

- **Start by using a weekly meal planning chart** (see *My Meal and Snack Plan* Activity).
- **Check your schedule.** Are there nights you'll be out or commitments that will impact who's home for dinner? Note your scheduling details on the chart under the appropriate day of the week.

## Phase 2: Plan Your Meals

- **Write down your evening meals first.** When selecting entrée recipes and side dishes, remember to create a healthy plate (see *Module 4 – Building a Healthy Plate Based on Your Caloric Target & Meal Plans*).
  - **Look at what you have.** Look in your cupboards, fridge, and freezer, to see what ingredients you need to use up.
  - **Vary your protein.** If you have chicken one day, try seafood, beans, lean meats, or eggs other days.
  - **Choose easy meals.** Do include quick and easy meals as well as ready-to-reheat freezer meals (see *Make It Quick* later in the module).
- **Write down your breakfast, lunch, and snacks.** Most of us stick to the same thing for breakfast and lunch so it is okay to put these on autopilot until you get used to meal planning. Write in two or three options for breakfast and lunch (cereal, leftovers, sandwich). Keep your options simple and to a minimum.
- **Find balance.** If you have veggies, grains, and protein at one meal, include fruit and dairy in your next meal.



## Teresa's Tips

"If you use balance and moderation with your meal planning, all foods will fit.

**Balance** – to manage your weight, balance what you eat and drink with your activity level.

**Moderation** – eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed.

**Variety** – choose a wide variety of foods, like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, meats, poultry, seafood, eggs, beans, nuts, seeds, and dairy, to help you get all the nutrients that you need."

## Phase 3: Make mealtime a success

- **Write down your thaw, prep, and cook times.** Adding this information to your meal planning chart is a huge time saver. It prevents you from starting to make dinner at 5 pm only to realize that it will take 3 hours to cook the recipe you chose. This planning will make it more likely that you will stick with your menu plan. It will also help you to know when to start meal preparation.
- **Plan for leftovers.** Prepare enough of a dish to eat it multiple times during the week to save time and money.
- **Make mealtime a priority.** Make time for family meals each week. Try to cook, eat, and clean up together. Even if you eat alone, mealtime is important. Remember to be mindful when you eat and enjoy every bite.
- **Work your meal plan.** Don't expect to get it right the first time. As you discover what works and what doesn't, update your plan and incorporate what you learn into the next week's plan.

# Jackson's Story

Jackson's family has a history of high cholesterol and high blood pressure. While serving in the Army for 8 years, Jackson was able to manage his weight effectively. However, since his discharge 4 years ago he has gained 30 pounds and he is worried about high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Jackson starts the MOVE! Program at his local VA and learns the importance of healthy eating habits. He uses the MOVE! Healthy Plate as a guide to plan a weekly menu, remembering to include plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins. As Jackson considers what recipes he wants to use, he checks his refrigerator and pantry for items he needs to use up.



## Jackson's Meal and Snack Plan

	Morning	Snack	Afternoon	Snack	Evening
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oatmeal</li> <li>Strawberries</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Rice cake with hummus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chicken breast</li> <li>Spinach and tomato salad</li> <li>Tea/lemon</li> </ul>	Apple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black bean burrito with tomato, low-fat cheddar, and salsa</li> <li>Sparkling water with lemon</li> </ul>
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nonfat plain yogurt</li> <li>Strawberries</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Apple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato</li> <li>Pickle</li> <li>Tea/lemon</li> </ul>	Baked tortilla chips and salsa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peppers stuffed with brown rice</li> <li>Salad</li> <li>Sparkling water with lemon</li> </ul>
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrambled eggs with veggies</li> <li>Whole wheat toast</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Fruit and nut bar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chicken salad</li> <li>Pita chips</li> <li>Tea/lemon</li> </ul>	Broccoli with non-fat yogurt dip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chicken and veggie stir-fry</li> <li>Sparkling water with lemon</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oatmeal</li> <li>Strawberries</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Whole wheat crackers with peanut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chicken breast</li> <li>Spinach and tomato salad</li> <li>Tea/lemon</li> </ul>	Air-popped popcorn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baked pork loin</li> <li>Steamed broccoli</li> <li>Whole wheat pasta</li> <li>Sparkling water with lemon</li> </ul>
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% whole wheat bread with peanut butter</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Celery with low-fat cream cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato</li> <li>Pickle</li> <li>Tea/lemon</li> </ul>	Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leftover chicken and veggie stir-fry</li> <li>Sparkling water/lemon</li> </ul>
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrambled eggs with veggies</li> <li>Whole wheat toast</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Fruit and nut bar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leftover baked pork loin</li> <li>Steamed broccoli</li> <li>Fruit</li> <li>Sparkling water/lemon</li> </ul>	Carrots with hummus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garden salad with chicken</li> <li>Baked potato/low-fat sour cream</li> <li>Fruit</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>
Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nonfat plain yogurt</li> <li>Strawberries</li> <li>Coffee/skim milk</li> </ul>	Apple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baked potato</li> <li>Side salad</li> <li>Fruit</li> <li>Sparkling water/lemon</li> </ul>	Rice cake with peanut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grilled turkey burger</li> <li>100% whole wheat roll</li> <li>Salad</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>

### My Meal and Snack Plan

Plan your meals and snacks for one week. See also the example meal plans in Module 4 – Eat Wisely.

	Morning	Snack	Afternoon	Snack	Evening
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

## Being a Smart Shopper

Eating wisely doesn't have to be expensive. Here are a few tips on ways to eat well while keeping your calories and budget in balance.



### Plan Ahead

#### ***Stick to your list***

Bring your shopping list with the foods and quantities you need to buy so you can avoid aisles that you don't need. You'll save money and time by only buying what you need.

#### ***Search for coupons***

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Join your store's loyalty program, if available. Find out if your store will match competitor's coupons.

#### ***Have a healthy snack***

Eat a healthy snack before you shop so you won't be hungry. This will help you make healthy choices.



### At the Store

#### ***Compare brands***

Store brands can be less expensive than name brand foods. Compare items to find better prices.

#### ***Try canned or frozen***

Compare the price and number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.

#### ***Buy nonperishables in bulk***

Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale because they last much longer than fresh ones.



## At the Store

### ***Buy small amounts of perishables***

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

### ***Celebrate the season***

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to get and usually cheaper. Try a local farmers' market for in-season produce.

### ***Good sources of protein***

Shop for beans, peas, eggs, canned tuna (in water), and peanut butter—all are good sources of protein and good buys.

### ***Get wholegrains***

Purchase whole-grain foods (pasta, bread, rice)—they are good sources of fiber and make inexpensive side dishes.

### ***Keep it simple***

Buy products in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.

### ***Use food labels***

Read food labels while you shop to help you choose healthier items.

**“I learned so much about nutrition. I now read food labels for everything I buy.”**

– Lance, lost 40 pounds





## Jackson's Shopping List

Using the meal plan he created with help from his MOVE! team, Jackson took an inventory of items he already had on hand and prepared a list of everything he would need to buy. That weekend, Jackson tried some of the healthy shopping tips he received from his MOVE! team. He also went shopping with a budget in mind to keep him from going over budget. Jackson only brought coupons for items he intended to buy from his shopping list to avoid being tempted into buying unhealthy food items. He was impressed by how much healthy food he was able to get for his money by planning ahead and shopping smart.



## Jackson's Shopping List

### Non-Starchy Veggies

- Lettuce \_\_\_\_\_
- Tomatoes \_\_\_\_\_
- Carrots \_\_\_\_\_
- Spinach \_\_\_\_\_
- Broccoli \_\_\_\_\_
- Peppers \_\_\_\_\_

### Dairy

- Low-fat \_\_\_\_\_
- cheddar \_\_\_\_\_
- Skim milk \_\_\_\_\_
- Plain nonfat \_\_\_\_\_
- yogurt \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Protein Foods

- Chicken breasts \_\_\_\_\_
- Eggs \_\_\_\_\_
- Sliced turkey \_\_\_\_\_
- Pork loin \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Fruit

- Oranges \_\_\_\_\_
- Apples \_\_\_\_\_
- Strawberries \_\_\_\_\_
- Lemons \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Grains/Starchy Foods

- Black beans \_\_\_\_\_
- 100% whole \_\_\_\_\_
- wheat bread \_\_\_\_\_
- 100% cornmeal \_\_\_\_\_
- tortillas \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Drinks

- Tea \_\_\_\_\_
- Sparkling water \_\_\_\_\_

### Other

- Salsa \_\_\_\_\_
- Garlic \_\_\_\_\_
- Hummus \_\_\_\_\_

**My Shopping List**

After you plan your meals and snacks for the week, make a list of the items you need to buy and the quantity of each item.

<i>My Shopping List</i>		
<b>Non-Starchy Veggies</b>	<b>Protein Foods</b>	<b>Grains/Starchy Foods</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____
<b>Dairy</b>	<b>Fruit</b>	<b>Drinks</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ 
		<b>Other</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____

# Making Sense of Food Labels

Reading and understanding the Nutrition Facts Label can help you make smart food choices when shopping.

## 1 KNOW the Serving Size

While we usually say “portion” or “helping” when we talk about how much we eat, “serving size” is the official term used on food labels. Information listed on the Nutrition Facts label is based on a typical serving in common measurements like cups, ounces, or pieces. Be sure to look at the number of servings in the container. Even small containers may have more than one serving. If you eat more or less than the serving listed, you must multiply or divide the nutritional values by the number of servings you eat.

## 2 CHECK the Calories Per Serving

The calories listed are for one serving of the food. For example, if you eat 2 servings of this item you must double the calories per serving (250 calories x 2 servings = 500 total calories).

## 3 BE AWARE of % Daily Values

This section tells you how the nutrients in one serving of the food contribute to your total daily diet. Use it to choose foods that are high in the nutrients you should get more of and low in those you should get less of. Tip: 5% daily value or less is low, 20% or more is high. Percent Daily Values on the Nutrition Facts label are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your % Daily Value may be higher or lower depending on your daily calorie needs.

## 4 LIMIT these Nutrients

Eating too much **total fat** (especially **saturated fat** and **trans fat**), **cholesterol**, **sodium**, or **added sugars** may increase your risk of developing chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.

Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared. This does not include naturally occurring sugars such as those in milk and fruits. Added sugars should be limited to 10% of your daily calories.

## 5 GET MORE of these Nutrients

Americans often don’t get enough dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium in their diets. Look for foods with 10% or more of these nutrients in the % Daily Value column.

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1 cup (82g)</b>
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>250</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

## Food Label Quiz

Refer to the Nutrition Facts label and circle the correct or best response.

- 1) *The Nutrition Facts given on a food label are based on the serving size.*
  - a) True
  - b) false
- 2) *How many servings are in this container?*
  - a) 1
  - b) 4
  - c) 8
- 3) *How many calories are there in one serving?*
  - a) 120
  - b) 250
  - c) 660
- 4) *What percent of your recommended daily value of calcium will you get from one serving?*
  - a) 6%
  - b) 10%
  - c) 20%
- 5) *How many grams of total sugars are in one serving?*
  - a) 4 grams
  - b) 10 grams
  - c) 12 grams
- 6) *How many grams of protein are in one serving?*
  - a) 0 grams
  - b) 3 grams
  - c) 4 grams
- 7) *This product contains a high amount of added sugars (based on the % daily value).*
  - a) True
  - b) False
- 8) *If you ate the whole container, how many calories would you consume?*
  - a) 250
  - b) 500
  - c) 1000
- 9) *If you ate the whole container, how many grams of saturated fat would you consume?*
  - a) 4 grams
  - b) 8 grams
  - c) 37 grams
- 10) *If you ate  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup, what percent of your recommended daily value of total fat would you consume?*
  - a) 5%
  - b) 10%
  - c) 20%

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## Answer Key

- 1) A – True    2) B – Four    3) B – 250    4) C – 20%    5) C – 12 grams    6) B – 3 grams  
 7) A – True    8) C – 1000    9) A – 4 grams    10) A – 5%



### Teresa's Tips

“The claims on food labels can be confusing. Knowing what these claims mean can help you choose healthier products. Use this table guide when interpreting label claims.”

Nutrient	“Free” Ex: Fat free	“Low or Lite” Ex: Low in fat	“Reduced” Ex: Reduced fat
Fat	Less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving	Less than 3 grams of fat per serving	At least 25% less fat per serving than the original food product. <b>Caution:</b> Original product may not be “low fat,” so this may still be a high-fat food.
Saturated Fat	Less than 0.5 grams of saturated fat and less than 0.5 grams of trans fatty acids per serving	1 gram of saturated fat or less per serving and 15% or fewer calories from saturated fat	At least 25% less saturated fat per serving than the original item. <b>Caution:</b> Original product may not be “low saturated fat,” so this may still be a food high in saturated fat.
Calories	Less than 5 calories per serving	Less than 40 calories per serving	25% or fewer calories per serving than the original product. <b>Caution:</b> Original product may not be “low calorie,” so this may still be a high-calorie food.
Cholesterol	Less than 2 milligrams of cholesterol per serving	20 milligrams of cholesterol or less per serving	At least 25% less cholesterol per serving than the original item. <b>Caution:</b> Original product may not be “low cholesterol,” so this may still be a food that is high in cholesterol.
Sodium	Less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving	140 milligrams of sodium or less per serving	At least 25% less sodium per serving than the original item. <b>Caution:</b> Original product may not be “low sodium,” so this may still be a food that is high in sodium.
Sugar	Less than 0.5 grams of sugar per serving		

# How Can I Cook Healthier Foods?



Eating wisely at home not only saves you money, it can also help you cook healthier food options that save on calories. Here are some tips to keep in mind when preparing food at home.

Cooking	Eating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lightly steam veggies like green beans and broccoli so they stay crisp and colorful.</li> <li>• Grill or roast veggies and meat to bring out the flavor.</li> <li>• Dress up food with herbs, spices, low-fat salad dressing, lemon juice, vinegar, hot sauce, plain nonfat yogurt, and salsa.</li> <li>• Add a mixed green salad and a side of fruit to a meal.</li> <li>• Stretch costly meals (like meat dishes) by substituting beans and adding more vegetables.</li> <li>• Learn new healthy cooking methods or take a healthy cooking class. Healthy Teaching Kitchens are available at many VA Medical Centers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a plate or bowl and never eat out of boxes, bags, or cartons unless they are single servings.</li> <li>• Fix your plate in the kitchen. Serve your meal in a buffet style, leaving the serving bowls in the kitchen so you are not tempted to eat more.</li> <li>• Eat at the table for every meal. Eating in front of the TV, computer, or at your desk can cause you to overeat.</li> </ul>

**“I take time to learn to make foods that I like. I try to learn every day. I now have more food and recipes than I can eat.”**

– John, lost 64 pounds





## Hannah's How-To

“Here are some quick and nutritious food preparation techniques.”

<b>Stir-fry or Sauté</b>	If you don't have a wok, use a cast-iron or non-stick skillet. Most dishes can be cooked using 1 tsp of olive or canola oil, or reduced-sodium broth.
<b>Microwave</b>	Because microwaves cook foods quickly, few nutrients are lost during the cooking process. Read the cooking directions carefully; it is easy to overcook foods.
<b>Crock Pot</b>	This handy kitchen appliance cooks food slowly at low temperatures. Set it up in the morning and dinner will be ready and waiting when you get home. Soups, stews, and pot roasts all make great crock-pot meals. Extra-lean, less marbled cuts of meat become tender and juicy when cooked in a crock pot.
<b>Bake, Broil, and Grill</b>	Bake, broil, or grill foods on a rack to drain fats away during cooking. Not only is this a healthier way to eat, it's delicious, too!
<b>Steam</b>	Steam using a microwave, stove, or steamer. Steaming helps keep nutrients and flavor in foods without adding fat.
<b>Pressure Cook</b>	Using steam, pressure cookers can cook a pound of potatoes in just 4 minutes or a chicken stew in less than 30 minutes. A pressure cooker can also turn the toughest cut of meat into a tender main course. Don't over-season foods—pressure cooking uses very little liquid, so flavors are more concentrated.
<b>Poach</b>	In poaching, the food is covered with liquid (such as water, broth, milk, or wine) and gently simmered until done. Poaching uses less liquid than boiling, so delicate flavors are less diluted. Poaching works well for fish or eggs.



## Teresa's Tips

“Here are some ways to cook with less fat.”

- Bake, grill, or stir-fry in a small amount of healthy oil
- Coat pans with cooking spray, like olive or canola oil
- Use nonstick cookware.
- Simmer in water or stock
- Steam or microwave
- Take the skin off chicken before you cook it
- Trim the fat off meat before you cook it.”

# Cook it Safe, Keep it Safe

A critical part of healthy eating is keeping foods safe. You can reduce contaminants and keep food safe to eat by following safe food handling practices. Four basic safety principles work together to reduce the risk of foodborne illness—Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.



<p><b>Clean</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash hands with soap and water</li> <li>• Sanitize surfaces</li> <li>• Throw away perishable food after 7 days</li> <li>• Keep appliances clean</li> <li>• Rinse fresh vegetables and fruits</li> </ul>
<p><b>Separate</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate foods when shopping                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Place raw seafood, meat and poultry in separate plastic bags. Store them under ready-to-eat foods in your refrigerator.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Separate foods when preparing and serving                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Always use a clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw seafood, meat, and poultry. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Cook</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a food thermometer when cooking</li> <li>• Cook food to safe internal temperatures                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb, veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145°F. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least 3 minutes before carving or eating. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160°F. Cook all poultry, including ground turkey and chicken, to an internal temperature of 165°F.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Chill</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep foods at safe temperatures                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Store cold foods at 40°F or below. Keep hot foods at 140°F or above. Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# Busting Barriers

Now let's review some common barriers to menu planning, shopping, and cooking, and some potential solutions. Which of these challenges do you think you might encounter? How might you solve them? People who can anticipate challenges and are ready to respond with a solution are more successful at maintaining change.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
<p><b>I need to eat foods my family doesn't like.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep your own stash of healthy foods, but encourage your family to try them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make a separate small portion for yourself without added fat and salt.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use spices and herbs to add some pizzazz!</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modify your family's favorite dishes to make them healthier.</li> </ul>
<p><b>My spouse/partner doesn't cook healthy foods.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have a family meeting, ask for suggestions about how you can eat healthier as a family. Be flexible, creative, and try new things.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared to eat a separate meal, if necessary. Eat together even if the food is different!</li> </ul>
<p><b>It's unpleasant/boring/hard to shop, cook, and eat this way.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shop, cook, and eat healthy with friends and family.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Learn new cooking methods and recipes from books, articles, and videos. Or take a healthy cooking class.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Try new ingredients.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Healthy cooking takes too much time.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose recipes with few ingredients and a short cooking time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cook soups, stews, or meat in a slow cooker when you are busy.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do meal preparation on the weekends (e.g., pack lunches or cut up veggies for stir fry).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make enough for several meals. Divide meals into single servings in freezer bags or containers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Measure out single servings of snacks, like air-popped popcorn, in bags or containers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use leftovers (meats and veggies) in an omelet, pasta or rice dish, stew, soup, salad, or burrito.</li> </ul>

Barrier	Barrier Buster
<p><i>Write Your Own.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <hr/>

## Goal-Setting Check-Out

### Goals for Next Week

Set one new healthy eating and physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make it SMART (see Module 1).

#### Healthy Eating:

I will \_\_\_\_\_

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#### Physical Activity:

I will \_\_\_\_\_

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If you had trouble meeting your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

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## Module Summary

### **Menu Planning**

Planning healthy meals ahead of time can help you stick to a healthy eating style. Plan a weekly menu to avoid stress during the week. Find balance in the items and meals you plan—if you have veggies, grains and protein at one meal, include fruit and dairy in the next meal. Plan for having leftovers for a quick and easy meal—store the extra portions in single serving size containers or freeze them to last longer.

“**You must control the food, don’t let the food control you!**”

– Lenny, lost 35 pounds

### **Shopping for Healthy Foods**

Make a list of items you need for your weekly menu—it helps to stick to your list. Use coupons, store sales, loyalty programs, and generic products to reduce costs. You can make your food stretch farther and last longer by purchasing canned or frozen fruits and veggies in addition to small portions of fresh produce. Search for healthy and cost-effective protein options besides meat, like beans, lentils, peas, eggs, and canned tuna. Whole grains are a major source of fiber and can be inexpensive, filling side dishes. Importantly, read food labels and food label claims to find the healthiest option.

### **Healthy Cooking Methods**

Learn various cooking methods to bring out your food’s flavor and retain its nutrients—like grilling or roasting. There are many alternatives to seasoning or flavoring your food besides high-calorie, high-fat options like butter and sauces. Dress up your food with herbs, spices, low-fat salad dressing and gravy, lemon juice, vinegar, hot sauce, plain nonfat yogurt, and salsa. Adding a mixed green salad and/or a side of fruit to each meal can help you feel full without adding excessive calories. Use a plate or bowl for each meal and snacks to help control portion sizes.

### **Cook it Safe, Keep it Safe**

When shopping for, preparing, and storing healthy foods, remember the four basic safety principles:

- Clean
- Separate
- Cook
- Chill

## Module To-Do:

1. Set two new weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.
2. Record in your *Food and Activity Log* every day. This week you will start tracking your calorie intake. Use the MOVE! Coach mobile app or the USDA website to count your calories.
3. Consider ways you can plan, shop, and cook healthy meals that will save time and money and fit with your schedule.
4. Review Module 8 in preparation for your next meeting.
5. Review additional resources:
  - a. <https://www.nutrition.va.gov/> for cookbooks and nutrition education
  - b. <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/> for calorie charts, MyPlate Plan, and links to cookbooks and recipes
  - c. <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/cookbook> to save recipes and build your own cookbook