

### WHEN TO EAT MEALS

MEAL 1-When you wake up

MEAL 2-10am

MEAL 3 -lunchtime

MEAL 4 -2-3PM (don't skip this one! This is the meal that prevents "grazing & snacking later on)

MEAL 5 dinnertime-then CLOSE-UP your kitchen for the night. Lights off. Go to a different room. Read, spend time with family, take a bath, drink water or caffeine-free tea. Go to sleep!

Eat every 2-4 hours. What are your hungrier times of day?

Make your meals closer together during those times.

Try not to wait too long in between meals.

This is when we become too hungry & are more likely to eat anything we can find.

Pack your food and take it with you when you leave the house- Don't leave your health to chance.

You may interchange meals to work for your preferences.

Please do not skip meals.

You may sub lean protein or vegetables for your favorites.

Ask within the group if you need help with substitutions.

If you are still hungry between meals, I recommend eating a few raw almonds.

If you feel too stuffed at mealtime, you DO NOT need to eat everything.

Stop when you are full.

You may also save your portions to eat at a later time, in addition to your next meal.

The most important part is to not to skip meal!

# Prepping ahead is your KEY to success!

There's a quote by Benjamin Franklin "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail" and he knows!

For the vast majority of us, we aren't able to keep things running smoothly for an extended period of time if we aren't planning things out.

This doesn't mean we have to track calories or macros for life (although you of course can!), it just means thinking ahead. Meal prepping can be daunting and seem complicated at first, but once you make it a routine you will find yourself on the road to success, and much more quickly!

# **Meal Prep-**

Meal prep is exactly what it sounds like—prepping meals in advance! It can be entire meals, or parts of meals.

#### WHEN?

Once or twice a week. Most people choose one day over the weekend when they have a bit more time.

### WHY?

Meal prep will ultimately make your life easier/more efficient. Portion control is covered, time and money are saved, and we don't have to decide what to eat later on because a healthy choice is readily available for you. If you had the choice between a processed food option and a healthy and delicious meal that was already prepared for you- many of us would probably go for the healthier prepared option. So many people WANT to make healthy choices but we want it to be EASY. Make it easy on yourself by prepping ahead so that healthy and delicious meal is waiting for you... tempting you!

#### HOW?

Many of us think we don't even have time for meal prep, but chances are, if we added up all of the time we spend creating healthy meals every single day, we would end up spending MORE time doing that than prepping beforehand! Set yourself up for success by prioritizing your meal prep. Set time aside 1-2 days a week where you can do as little or as much meal prep as you need to make it effective. Some of us will need more prepping than others. Some people prefer to prep EVERY MEAL in advance, and for that reason they'll eat the same thing every day. Some people prefer to eat different things and therefore find ways to prep a little bit at a time and make creating the final meal go a little more smoothly.

Keep in mind that these types of meal prep are the "extremes" on the spectrum, and it is common to fall somewhere in between the two.

There is no "right" or "wrong" way to meal prep, but there will likely be a way that works better for you. Here are the facts to consider when determining what works for you, but remember— pros and cons are not necessarily weighed equally. It is likely that trial and error will play a role, and you'll learn how you best meal-prep as you go!

### MINIMUM MEAL PREP

#### PROS:

- Less time is spent initially
- Less pre-prep planning is necessary
- More flexibility & versatility among meals CONS:
- More time is spent throughout the week YOU MAY WANT TO START HERE IF:
- You are good at managing time, and would rather spend a little extra time throughout the week to be able to eat different things each day.

#### **MAXIMUM MEAL PREP**

#### PROS:

- Less time is spent throughout the week CONS:
- More time is spent initially.
- More pre-prep planning is necessary
- Less flexibility & versatility among meals
   YOU MAY WANT TO START HERE IF:
- You struggle with managing time, or are extremely busy during the week. A great option if you're okay with eating the same foods for multiple days.

### **Produce:**

- Add your produce to a bowl or clean sink, and rub the fruits and vegetables briskly under running water. Try to use water that is close to the temperature of the produce you'll be cleaning.
- You do not need any detergent to clean your produce. If you wish to soak your produce for 5 or so minutes you may add white vinegar, but keep in mind a ratio of at least 1 part vinegar to 3 parts water is necessary to make it effective.
- Firm produce such as apples or cucumbers can have a waxy preservative so be sure to wash

extra well.

- For leafy greens, separate and rinse leaves separately, discarding outer leaves if they're bruised or torn. They can be tough to clean, so I prefer to soak them in a bowl of cold water for just a few minutes and briefly rinse after. Blot them dry with paper towels.
- Do not need to rewash any products that are labeled "ready-to-eat" or "washed."
- Refrigerate your produce as soon as you can after preparing it.

#### **FOOD PREP VEGGIE RECIPE:**

Oven-Roasted Vegetables
Preheat oven to 450°F. Chop up your
vegetables as desired. The larger the pieces,
the longer they will take to cook, so try to
make the ones in the batch you're cooking
of similar size. Place vegetables in a single
layer on a baking sheet/dish lined with
foil. Drizzle with olive oil (you don't need
much!) and sprinkle with sea salt, pepper
and desired seasonings. Toss, coating the
vegetables completely.
Roast for 30 minutes or until tender,
stirring occasionally.

## **Protein Prep**

Protein will be another staple of your daily diet. Whether you eat meat or not, it's important to have enough protein prepared beforehand because it's one of the most time-consuming things

to cook.

#### **TIPS**

- Even if you buy boneless skinless chicken breast, trim the fat before cooking.
- If you don't want to dedicate the time to cooking chicken, a great time-saver is to buy a rotisserie chicken from the deli at the supermarket. Simply remove the skin and pull the meat off the bone– easy!
- Using seasonings to flavor food instead of fat like (butter or oil) will help cut back on calories and fat without sacrificing taste!

### **Food Prep Easy Baked Chicken**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cover a baking dish or pan with foil and spray with cooking spray. Pat your chicken dry and rub with a little olive oil. Transfer to your baking sheet, leaving a little space in between. Sprinkle with sea salt, pepper and other desired seasonings. Bake for 30–40 minutes, until completely cooked through Serve immediately or refrigerate for later. Allow to cool and refrigerate for up to a week, or freeze for up to 3 months.

### Simple Baked Fish

Preheat oven to 450°F. Spray a baking sheet or baking dish with cooking spray. Place fish on baking sheet in a single layer. Sprinkle with sea salt, pepper and other desired seasonings. Bake uncovered, 10 minutes per inch of thickness or until fish is done.

### **GROUND MEAT**

It's important to note that "lean" and "extra lean" are not the same. Lean ground turkey, for example, is generally noted to be 93/7, meaning it contains 7% fat, while extra lean is generally 99/1, meaning it contains only 1% fat. That being said, many people are misguided in thinking ground chicken is leaner than turkey, but the truth is most chicken that is ground is not of the lean breast, and therefore contains more fat. It's important to read the package for numbers such as "95/5" and "90/10" directing you on fat content, as well as the nutrition label when deciding which ground meat will suit your lifestyle and diet.

### **EASY-PEEL HARD BOILED EGGS**

The crazy tip to hard boiling eggs so the shell is easily removable? Thumbtacks! I know it can be terrifying at first, but use a thumbtack to poke a hole in the bottom of your egg—if you're careful the egg will not crack and you'll see a small puncture with none of the egg coming through. Bring a saucepan of water to a boil Carefully add your eggs (with the tiny punctured holes) to the boiling water so they're in a single layer.

(completely cover the eggs with water).

Allow to boil for about 11 minutes
and then transfer to an ice bath (water with ice).

Allow to cool to the touch. Peel immediately or
store for very easy peeling later.

### Quinoa: How-To

Quinoa is delicious and nutritious, but it can end up tasting bitter if not prepared properly. Quinoa is covered in a soapy substance called saponin that will result in this bitter taste if not removed. Rinse your quinoa in a fine sieve until the water runs clear. Drain, and transfer to saucepan. Heat on medium-low and toast the guinoa for about 5 minutes, stirring it around in the pan. Once it's hot and the water is absorbed, you can add your water or liquid. Add a pinch of salt, turn the heat up and allow the water to come to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 15–20 minutes until the liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and allow to sit, covered, for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork before serving.

Ratio: 1 cup quinoa, 2 cups water

### **Meal-Prep Baked Sweet Potatoes**

Preheat oven to 375°F. For basic baked potatoes or sweet potatoes, pierce each potato with a fork several times, and wrap in foil. Place on a baking sheet and transfer to the oven for about 45 minutes. (Check for doneness at 30 minutes, they can take up to 1 hour or longer— simply unwrap one of the potatoes with foil and

pierce with a fork or knife. If it's tender and soft, it's done!) Eat or store for later. Reheat in the microwave or oven.

### **TIPS**

- If you want to pre-portion your entire meal, get a set of large plastic storage containers (possibly the ones with different compartments) and place your protein, carb and veggies in the dish if it is appropriate to heat them up together. However, if part of your meal is supposed to be eaten cold, it should be packaged separately.
- Use BPA-free plastic storage containers so they can safely be heated in the microwave for on-the-go eating.
- If you need exact portions for calorie or macronutrient tracking, it's recommended that you use a digital scale for most accurate results. Otherwise, estimates work fine!
- Use plastic sandwich and snack bags or even mason jars to portion out snack sizes of fruits & vegetables, such as carrots, peppers, snap peas, cucumbers, grapes, and berries.
- Meal prep can lead to an excess in plastic storage containers. Purchasing a package of storage containers that fit inside of each other will help with storing and saving space when they aren't being used.
- Because plastic storage containers can take up more space, sometimes it's useful to package

food in smaller plastic bags, and store all of your portioned foods in a larger plastic bag.

 Determine if all of your food can be refrigerated, or if some of it needs to be frozen in order to stay fresh.

### **FREEZING FOOD:**

#### FREEZING TIPS

- Store oven meals in aluminum or glass pans with foil or plastic wrap on top
- Store slow cooker meals in gallon-sized plastic bags (freezer bags). Remove as much air as possible and store them flat in the freezer.
- Generally, plastic bags/wrap are adequate if freezing for only a short time.
   Use aluminum foil or special freezer bags if freezing for longer periods.
- Place newer food packages in the back and move older frozen packages to the front so they are next in line for use.
- Always write the date that the food was made, the food type and reheating instructions on the frozen food package.
- Cool foods slightly before putting them in the freezer.
- If you can, freeze smaller portions. This will help your food freeze and defrost more quickly, and you can also choose to just defrost what you need rather than the entire recipe (i.e. a serving of meat or stew).

### THAWING TIPS

 If you can, thaw slow cooker meals overnight in the fridge before cooking.
 Your block of frozen food may not fit in the slow cooker and thawing will help the meat to cook evenly.

- Thaw oven meals overnight if you can, but thawing can be skipped if you can monitor your meal while it cooks.
- Do not thaw your food at room temperature to avoid the risk of contamination.

### Foods that freeze very well:

- meats, soups/stews, casseroles, slow cooker meals
- bread
- rice
- fruits/veggies best frozen whole: bananas, berries, beans, asparagus, tomatoes, corn
- fruits/veggies best frozen sliced/diced:
   bell peppers, avocado, mango, pineapple,
   peas, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower,
   peaches, plums, cherries, apples, squash
   herbs

### Food that does not freeze well:

- dairy (separates when frozen)
- fruits/veggies with high water content (celery, lettuce, cucumber, onions)
- rice
- whole eggs
- cooked potatoes that aren't shredded
- fried foods
- pasta (unless slightly undercooked)
- jam