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HEALTHY CHOICES

FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service



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Spring cleaning 101

Spring is just around the corner, which means flowers, warmer weather and of course, spring cleaning. This is a great time to give your kitchen a good cleaning and food safety check. Here are some steps to help cut down germs in the kitchen.

Kitchen surfaces

Germs that can make you sick can be lurking in many places in your kitchen. Do not spread germs to food by mistake. Be sure to wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water.

- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.
- After cleaning, you can sanitize surfaces as an extra precaution to kill germs. Use a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented liquid chlorine bleach and 1 gallon of water. Apply to surfaces and allow to stand for several minutes. Air dry or pat dry with fresh paper towels.



Refrigerator

Do not forget to check the refrigerator and freezer. Clean the shelves and drawers where germs can hide. You cannot always see germs that can make a person sick. Be sure to clean well all surfaces and small cracks.

- Check that the refrigerator is set to below 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Always keep the refrigerator clean. This is a good time to look for hidden spills and remove lasting odors. Wipe up spills with hot, soapy water, and rinse well. Be sure to clean under drawers and around the edges of glass shelves.
- To keep the refrigerator smelling fresh and help remove odors, place an opened box of baking soda on a shelf. Do not use cleaners that may give an “off” taste to food or ice cubes. These cleaners could also harm the inside of your refrigerator.

Shelf life

Make sure foods have not spoiled in the pantry or in the refrigerator.

- Check the labels on foods in the pantry for expiration dates.
- Check the refrigerator often to be sure you eat foods before they spoil. Once a week, make it a habit to throw out foods that should no longer be eaten. Refer to [Planeatmove.com](https://www.eatright.org/homefoodsafety/four-steps/wash/spring-cleaning-101) for more information on storing leftovers.

Source: Adapted from <https://www.eatright.org/homefoodsafety/four-steps/wash/spring-cleaning-101>

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PARENT'S POW-WOW

Get the kids cooking

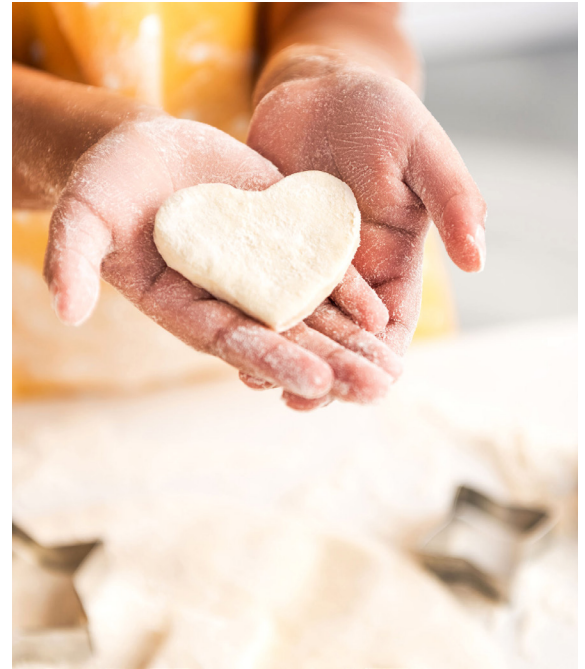
When you make family meals, get the kids involved! Below are some kitchen tasks that kids can do based on their age.

- **3 to 5 years old:** Mix easy ingredients, snap green beans, tear lettuce for a salad, and press cookie cutters.
- **6 to 7 years old:** Use a vegetable peeler to peel raw fruits and vegetables, shuck corn, crack eggs, and measure ingredients.
- **8 to 9 years old:** Use a can opener, juice citrus fruits, check the temperature of foods with a thermometer, beat eggs, and pound chicken on a cutting board.
- **Children ages 10 and older:** Slice or chop foods, boil potatoes, microwave foods, bake foods in the oven, and simmer ingredients on the stove.

Start slow and give your child time to master each task.

Make family meals even more fun by letting your child choose themes and menus. Or switch things up by taking it from the table to the floor — put a blanket on the floor to have an indoor picnic!

Source: Adapted from <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/make-the-most-of-your-time-at-home>



FOOD FACTS

Vitamin B

There are eight well known B vitamins that play a role in the body. They keep your body going. They add to the body's ability to make energy. Many of the B vitamins have other roles as well.

Vitamin B6

Vitamin B6 helps to produce insulin and fight infection. It also creates the building blocks of protein. Beans, chicken, banana, baked potato, pork, fish, nuts, and fortified breakfast cereals all have vitamin B6.

Folate

Also known as folic acid, folate is vital when pregnant. Eating plenty of folate helps to lower the risk of

neural tube defects. Folate can be found in many fruits and vegetables such as beans, oranges, avocado, and spinach – as well as fortified grains.

Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 plays a key role in making new red blood cells. Lack of vitamin B12 can result in anemia. It is found in animal products such as milk, yogurt, and cheese, meat, fish, poultry, and eggs. Many grains and cereals are fortified with vitamin B12 which helps provide this vitamin for vegetarians and vegans.

As a rule, the following B vitamins are known by their names rather than their numbers. All are easy to get in many kinds of foods.

- **Thiamin (B1):** Pork, peas, whole-grain and enriched-grain products such as bread, rice, pasta, tortillas, and fortified cereals
- **Riboflavin (B2):** Cheese, yogurt, enriched grains, lean meats, eggs, almonds, and leafy green vegetables
- **Niacin (B3):** High-protein foods such as peanut butter, beef, poultry, and fish, as well as enriched and fortified grain products
- **Pantothenic Acid (B5):** Yogurt, sweet potato, milk, avocado, corn, eggs, and beans
- **Biotin:** Eggs, peanuts, fish, sweet potato, and almonds

Source: Adapted from <https://www.eatright.org/food/vitamins-and-supplements/types-of-vitamins-and-nutrients/what-are-b-vitamins-and-folate>

BASIC BUDGET BITES

Plan your weekly meals

Before making a grocery list, write down meals you want to make this week. When you get to the store, buy only the items on your list.

Here are some basic tips for starting your menu and grocery list:

- **See what you have.** Look in your freezer, cabinets, and refrigerator. Make a note of what you have on hand right now. You can save money by using these items in next week's meals.
- **Use a worksheet to plan your meals.** Use a blank, seven-day worksheet to line up your meals for the week and think about what items you may need to buy.
- **Make a list of recipes to try.** Find new ideas for healthy and low-cost meals based on what you have on hand, foods your family enjoys, and foods that are good buys. Check PlanEatMove.com for tasty, budget-friendly recipes.
- **Visit MyPlate Kitchen for more ideas.** Search recipes by ingredient using MyPlate Kitchen (MyPlate.gov/MyPlate-kitchen). This tool will give you tips on healthy meals, cooking, and grocery shopping.
- **Think about your time.** Choose meals you can fix when you do not have a lot of time. Save recipes that take longer for days off. You can fix meals ahead to heat and serve on your busy days.
- **Plan to use leftovers.** Think about larger recipes with enough servings for more than one meal. This can cut down the number of items to buy and save you time fixing another meal.

Source: Adapted from <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/budget/budget-weekly-meals>

COOKING WITH KIDS

Apple Dough-less Donuts

- 8 oz. vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 2/3 teaspoons honey, divided
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- 2 apples, any variety
- Granola
- Mini chocolate chips

Divide the Greek yogurt into two bowls. In one bowl, add half the honey and stir to combine. In the other bowl, add cocoa powder and the remaining honey and mix to combine. If needed, add a little water to help stir in the cocoa powder; set aside. Wash, core, and slice the apples into 1/8- to 1/4-inch slices. Spread 1 tablespoon of the yogurt mixture on the apple slices and decorate as desired.

Number of servings: 8
Serving size: 2 slices

Nutrition facts per serving:
70 calories; 1 g total fat;
10 mg sodium; 14 g carbohydrates;
1 g fiber; 3 g protein

Source: North Dakota State University Extension



RECIPE

Southwestern Pepper Cups

- 5 medium green bell peppers, halved and seeded, or use red or yellow peppers
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 10.5-ounce can diced tomatoes with chilies, undrained
- 1/2 can (8.5 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 1/3 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Wash hands. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cook onion and garlic in oil in medium skillet over medium high heat for 3 minutes. Combine rice, tomatoes with chilies,

corn, and onion mixture. Mix well. Spoon mixture into pepper halves, place on baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until hot. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake again for 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese melts.

Number of servings: 10
Serving size: 1/2 prepared pepper

Nutrition facts per serving:
110 calories; 2 g total fat;
1 g saturated fat; 4 mg cholesterol;
169 mg sodium; 20 g carbohydrates;
3 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 4 g protein

Source: Arizona Nutrition Network, Don't Play With Your Food: Spring and Summer Cookbook



SMART TIPS

Growing vegetables from scraps: potatoes and sweet potatoes

Next time you have extra potatoes, try this. Cut the potato in half. Stick toothpicks into the sides of the potato. Place it in a clear cup and let the toothpicks rest on the rim of the cup. Put the potato, cut side down, in shallow water. Within a few days, roots will start to grow from the bottom while purple and green stems will appear from the top. Then cut the potato in two-inch pieces and let them dry out for a couple of days. Plant them in the ground in early spring and enjoy homegrown potatoes by summer.

You might have potatoes that have been left in the back of your pantry for too long. If they have purple and green sprouts, you can cut the potatoes, keeping at least one sprout per section. Let them dry out and then plant them.

Source: Adapted from <https://onieproject.org/growing-vegetables-from-scraps>

LOCAL EVENTS

If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.

VISIT US ONLINE AT
EXTENSION.CA.UKY.EDU/COUNTY