



# WELLNEWS

March 2013

## Delicious Family Dinners for Weeknights

Life can be tough on family dinner time. In addition to work and school schedules, there are sports practices and games, lessons, homework and friends. With all the rushing around, it's easy to slip into the fast food lane or microwave habit, with everyone eating at different times and places.

Bringing balance back into busy evenings is well worth the effort. Your whole family will feel better when they are eating delicious, nutritious meals together. Fortunately, there are several very simple steps that can help families get a tasty dinner on the table easily and quickly. It all starts with a little planning and meal time organization. Then, get everyone involved in preparing and serving the meal. When everybody pitches in, no one feels overwhelmed.

Here are some super easy and effective approaches to the dinnertime dilemma:

### Have a Week's Worth of Menus in Mind

Whether you write them down or keep them in your head, you need five to seven kid-tested, parent-approved main dishes. Pick options that are easy and popular with everyone. Once you have an entrée, such as tacos, spaghetti, oven-baked chicken or slow-cooker stew, all you have to add is a vegetable and/or fruit and perhaps a whole grain roll to complete the meal.

Sourced by: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)

### Keep Your Kitchen Stocked with Quick-to-Fix Foods

When ever you shop, look for specials on staples (rice, pasta, beans, etc.) as well as frozen and canned fruits and vegetables with little or no added salt or sugars. With a wide variety of tasty choices on hand, you'll only have to worry about the main dish when it's time to make dinner. Add fresh produce items when in season.

### Prepare Multiple Batches of Main Ingredients

If you're cooking ground beef, it's just as easy to cook a double or triple batch. Freeze extra servings to reheat for tacos or casseroles. Try slicing, marinating and freezing extra beef, pork, chicken or fish for stir-fry dishes. Drop any one of these protein options into a wok or skillet for quick cooking on a busy night.

### Get the Whole Family Involved from Start to Finish

The evening meal doesn't have to be one person's responsibility. Even very young children like being involved in planning and preparing healthful meals. Assign age-appropriate jobs, like choosing the fruit for dessert, mixing pre-cut vegetables into a salad, setting the table with unbreakable dishes or clearing the dishes afterwards.

### Make Family Meal Times a Priority

Some times a very simple act can

have important, long-lasting benefits. According to parenting and health experts, that is exactly the case with family meal times. Eating and talking together helps:

- Foster family unity
- Prevent behavior problems at home and school
- Enhance academic success
- Improve nutrition
- Promote healthy weight for kids.

With that impressive list of benefits, it's worth making the time and effort to enjoy more family meal times each week. Look for easy ways to add just one family meal to the schedule. If evenings seem too hectic for family dinners, set aside time for a weekend breakfast or lunch. After a month or two of this new pattern, you can add another family meal each week. Before you know it, you will be eating together on most days



*Personalized Care*

# Eating Right when Money's Tight

Eating well can fit well within anyone's budget. Just like anything, all it takes is a little advance planning. Guys, that includes you. "Just because men generally need more calories than women, doesn't mean they need to break the bank to enjoy lean and manly meals."

Try some of these top strategies for healthful eating on a lean budget.

## Pre-Game Plan



- Go for a green thumb. To save green, cultivate some of your own vegetables, fruits, or herbs. Ask a garden center expert for tips on what grows best in your region. Choose at least three seed packets, seedlings, or plants.
- Steer clear of a ravenous appetite. "When you're over-hungry, you may wind up over-eating—and over-spending". Have a snack so that you don't make a bad investment in foods that lack sufficient nutrients.
- Land a good deal. Real men know how to buy low ... and clip coupons! Just be sure to use coupons only on foods that you need.

## At the Market

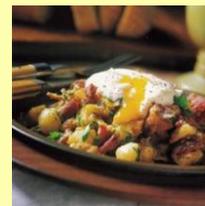
- Satisfy before you shop. Shopping on an empty stomach can lead to "grocery goggles" ... where everything looks good and you ultimately buy excess unhealthful items—or too much, period! Gans suggests, "Enjoy a grab-and-go snack, like an apple and string cheese, about 20 to 30 minutes before your shopping trip, to help signal your brain that you're stomach is satisfied—and to forgo buyer's remorse."
- Peruse the perimeter. Most foods for a health- and cost-conscious eating plan are found by shopping the supermarket's boundary. Then, with your shopping list in tow, visit just the aisles you need to balance fresh selections.
- Draft a produce dream team. Choose a variety of in-season whole fresh fruits and vegetables. They'll be most abundant, most nutritious, and least expensive. Alternatively, pick by sports seasons—enjoy citrus fruits and sweet potatoes during football season; buy berries and tomatoes during baseball season.

Above all, know that you can enjoy the taste of eating right ... even when money's tight.

## Healthy Family Activities

Be sure to check out this month's healthy family activities in your community at:

<http://search.active.com/?tab=events>



## Corn Beef and Cabbage

### Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 cups diced cooked potatoes, or frozen hash-brown potatoes
- 1 cup chopped lean corned beef brisket, (4 ounces, see Tip)
- 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 large eggs

### Preparation

1. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and saute; until it starts to brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Add potatoes and cook, stirring, until they brown in spots and become crusty, about 8 minutes more. Stir in corned beef and broth and cook, scraping up any browned bits, until liquid is absorbed, 5 to 8 minutes. Add parsley and season with salt and pepper.
2. Meanwhile, fill a large skillet with 2 inches salted water and bring to a gentle simmer. Break eggs, one at a time, onto a saucer and slide into the simmering water. Poach eggs until set to desired firmness, 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Divide hash among 4 plates. Place eggs on top of hash.

### Nutrition

**Per serving:** 320 calories; 13 g fat

(4 g sat , 6 g mono ); 240 mg cholesterol; 36 g carbohydrates; 15 g protein; 3 g fiber; 493 mg sodium; 695 mg potassium.

Source: [www.eatingwell.com](http://www.eatingwell.com)