



# MEAL PREPPING

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# MEAL PREPPING

- What is meal prepping?
  - The act of preparing meals and consuming them at a later time
- Why meal prep?
  - Convenient, cost savings, healthier, saves on time, and more
- Who can meal prep?
  - Anyone can meal prep, but if you don't like leftovers or get bored with foods easily this might not be for you

# MEAL PREPPING BASICS

- What to use for storage
  - Find a container that suits your purposes (ie divided vs not divided, individual vs family size, etc)
  - Look for ones that are BPA free, microwave, dishwasher, freezer safe, durable, and easy to clean
- How long can you store
  - This will depend on the type of food and your personal preferences
    - The longer food is stored in the refrigerator, the more it will start to lose it's integrity
    - Experiment with how long you still enjoy eating foods that have been refrigerated
  - As a general rule, follow the FDA safe food storage chart on the next slide



## REFRIGERATOR & FREEZER STORAGE CHART

These short but safe time limits will help keep refrigerated food 40° F (4° C) from spoiling or becoming dangerous. Since product dates aren't a guide for safe use of a product, consult this chart and follow these tips.

- Purchase the product before "sell-by" or expiration dates.
- Follow handling recommendations on product.
- Keep meat and poultry in its package until just before using.
- If freezing meat and poultry in its original package longer than 2 months, overwrap these packages with airtight heavy-duty foil, plastic wrap, or freezer paper; or place the package inside a plastic bag.

Because freezing 0° F (-18° C) keeps food safe indefinitely, the following recommended storage times are for quality only.

Product	Refrigerator	Freezer
<b>Eggs</b>		
Fresh, in shell	3 - 5 weeks	Don't freeze
Raw yolks, whites	2 - 4 days	1 year
Hard cooked	1 week	Don't freeze
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes, opened	3 days	Don't freeze
unopened	10 days	1 year
<b>TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles</b>		
Keep frozen until ready to heat		3 - 4 months
<b>Deli &amp; Vacuum-Packed Products</b>		
Store-prepared (or homemade) egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni salads	3 - 5 days	Don't freeze
Pre-stuffed pork & lamb chops, chicken breasts stuffed w/dressing	1 day	Don't freeze
Store-cooked convenience meals	3 - 4 days	Don't freeze
Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners with USDA seal, unopened	2 weeks	Don't freeze
<b>Raw Hamburger, Ground &amp; Stew Meat</b>		
Hamburger & stew meats	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
Ground turkey, veal, pork, lamb	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
<b>Ham, Corned Beef</b>		
Corned beef in pouch with pickling juices	5 - 7 days	Drained, 1 month
Ham, canned, labeled "Keep Refrigerated," unopened	6 - 9 months	Don't freeze
opened	3 - 5 days	1 - 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, whole	7 days	1 - 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, half	3 - 5 days	1 - 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, slices	3 - 4 days	1 - 2 months
<b>Hot Dogs &amp; Lunch Meats (in freezer wrap)</b>		
Hot dogs, opened package	1 week	1 - 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 - 2 months
Lunch meats, opened package	3 - 5 days	1 - 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 - 2 months

Product	Refrigerator	Freezer
<b>Soups &amp; Stews</b>		
Vegetable or meat-added & mixtures of them	3 - 4 days	2 - 3 months
<b>Bacon &amp; Sausage</b>		
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw from pork, beef, chicken or turkey	1 - 2 days	1 - 2 months
Smoked breakfast links, patties	7 days	1 - 2 months
<b>Fresh Meat (Beef, Veal, Lamb, &amp; Pork)</b>		
Steaks	3 - 5 days	6 - 12 months
Chops	3 - 5 days	4 - 6 months
Roasts	3 - 5 days	4 - 12 months
Variety meats (tongue, kidneys, liver, heart, chitterlings)	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
<b>Meat Leftovers</b>		
Cooked meat & meat dishes	3 - 4 days	2 - 3 months
Gravy & meat broth	1 - 2 days	2 - 3 months
<b>Fresh Poultry</b>		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1 - 2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey, parts	1 - 2 days	9 months
Giblets	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
<b>Cooked Poultry, Leftover</b>		
Fried chicken	3 - 4 days	4 months
Cooked poultry dishes	3 - 4 days	4 - 6 months
Pieces, plain	3 - 4 days	4 months
Pieces covered with broth, gravy	3 - 4 days	6 months
Chicken nuggets, patties	3 - 4 days	1 - 3 months
<b>Fish &amp; Shellfish</b>		
Lean fish	1 - 2 days	6 - 8 months
Fatty fish	1 - 2 days	2 - 3 months
Cooked fish	3 - 4 days	4 - 6 months
Smoked fish	14 days	2 months
Fresh shrimp, scallops, crawfish, squid	1 - 2 days	3 - 6 months
Canned seafood (Pantry, 5 years)	after opening 3 - 4 days	out of can 2 months



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# MEAL PREPPING BASICS

**Some foods are great for meal prepping, others are not.**

■ **Good for meal prepping:**

- Grains
- Beans
- Cooked meats
- Roasted vegetables
- Whole fruits
- Sauces and dips
- Hearty fresh vegetables (celery, carrots, bell pepper, etc)

■ **Bad for meal prepping:**

- Soft fruits and vegetables
  - Berries, lettuce, cut fruits
- Crunchy foods

# DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEAL PREP

- Meal prepping can look different from person to person and family to family
- Different ways to meal prep:
  - Chopping vegetables for dinner in the morning
  - Grouping all of your breakfast items together in the refrigerator
  - Making overnight oats the night before
  - Cooking and freezing quick, reheatable breakfast items
  - Starting a crock pot before leaving for the day
  - Making and freezing dinners that can be defrosted and heated



# HOW TO GET STARTED

- Start small
  - Try prepping one item for one meal for a couple weeks
  - Or try taking leftovers from dinner the night before for lunch the next day
  - Example: veggie and cheese egg cups
- Only prep enough for 2-3 days to start
  - Taste the food on the third day and determine if you enjoy eating it
- Start by prepping recipes that include the full meal ie grain, protein, vegetable is all included
- Find an area that you wish you had a more nutrient-dense option, and focus your efforts on that
- A simple formula to get you started
  - Grain + protein + vegetable

# IDEAS FOR MEAL PREPPING

- **Breakfast:**
  - Veggie and egg cups, waffles, pancake and berry muffins, overnight oats, frozen breakfast burritos, frozen breakfast sandwiches, smoothies, frozen French toasts
- **Lunch**
  - Tuna or chicken salad, soups, grains and proteins for grain bowls, potatoes for loaded potatoes, leftovers, roasted veggies, hard boiled eggs
- **Dinner**
  - Pre-chopped veggies for stir-frys, frozen crock pot meals, frozen lasagnas, salads (with no dressing), burritos, bowls, roasted veggies, stuffed peppers
- **Snacks**
  - Smoothies, energy bites, protein bars, granola, parfaits, hummus, sliced veggies, hard boiled eggs, trail mix



# COOKING DEMONSTRATION – VEGGIE & EGG CUPS

**Yield: 8 cups**

**Cook Time: 35 minutes**

**Ingredients:**

Non-stick cooking spray

6 large eggs

¼ cup 2% milk

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 medium bell pepper, diced

¾ cup fresh spinach, cut into bite size pieces

2 tbsp. green onions, thinly sliced

½ cup shredded or grated cheese of choice

■ **Instructions:**

- Preheat oven to 375 F. Spray muffin tin with cooking spray and set aside.
- Whisk the eggs and milk together in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper.
- Dice the bell pepper and cut the spinach. Slice white and green part of green onion.
- Add peppers, spinach, green onions and shredded cheese to egg mixture.
- Carefully fill the muffin cups until ¾ of the way full. Bake for 20-25 minutes until eggs have set.
- Allow to cool slightly and remove from pans. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days and freezer up to 3 months.