

*A Client Care Module:*

# COOKING FOR YOUR CLIENTS

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Developing Top-Notch CNAs, One Inservice at a Time

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## A Client Care Module: Cooking for Your Clients

### JESSICA NEEDS A CRASH COURSE

Jessica decided she'd like to make a change and applied for a job as a nursing assistant for a home health agency. She came with excellent references from her previous employer after many successful years working in a long term care facility.

Jessica's first client assignment was Gladys. Gladys was an 83-year-old woman who lived alone and suffered from diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity. Jessica's assignment with Gladys included meal preparation.

Unfortunately, Jessica never had to worry about planning, shopping or preparing foods for clients in the LTC facility. Dietary services took care of all of that. Jessica didn't even know where to start. She wasn't sure what foods to choose, or even how much to serve.

**If you are responsible for meal planning, shopping and/or cooking for your clients, then this inservice is for you! You'll learn:**

- What to feed your clients, including those on special diets.
- How to plan a weekly menu.
- How to build a balanced meal.
- New recipes for easy make-ahead meals, and
- Tips for shopping and cooking on a budget.

**Whether you are learning about meal planning for the first time, or you've been doing it for years, this inservice is sure to make the whole process a snap! Keep reading to learn how!**

## WHAT'S NEW?

Grab your favorite highlighter! As you read this inservice, **highlight five things** you learn that you didn't know before. Share this new information with your co-workers!



## AN OVERVIEW OF COMMON THERAPEUTIC DIETS

As you read through this inservice you will learn all about foods, recipes and meal plans that you can use with your clients. Is your client on a special diet? Look below for the symbol beside your client's prescribed diet. Then, watch for foods and recipes with that symbol throughout the inservice to find options that meet your client's needs. NOTE: If your client is on a "Regular Diet," any of the foods and recipes in this inservice may be used.

### **LF** LOW FAT/LOW CHOLESTEROL DIET

People with heart disease or high cholesterol will have an order for a *low fat diet*. The major types of fat you'll see listed on a nutrition label include total fat, saturated fat and trans fat. It's the saturated and trans fats that cause problems.

- Saturated fat should not exceed 7 percent of the total calories each day. Trans fat intake should not exceed 1 percent of total calories each day.
- Total fat intake should be no more than 30 percent of total calories.

### **Fiber** HIGH FIBER DIET

Fiber in the diet lowers cholesterol and helps with digestion and constipation. A *high fiber diet* usually includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole-grain pasta and bread and beans.

- The recommendation for most people is for about 35 grams of fiber each day. Most Americans get less than half that amount.

### **LS** LOW SODIUM DIET

Clients with high blood pressure may have an order for a *low sodium diet*. The order may be for a specific amount of sodium, such as 1000 mg (1 gram). Or, it might be an order for "No Added Salt" (NAS) which means the client shouldn't add any salt at the table.

- The average adult needs less than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day. Just one teaspoon of salt contains 2,300 milligrams of sodium!

### **RD** RENAL DIET

A *renal diet* involves monitoring fluids, salt, protein and potassium—which are all processed by the kidneys.

No two renal diets are the same. This is because a renal diet is developed *individually* for people depending on their weight and the severity of their kidney damage.

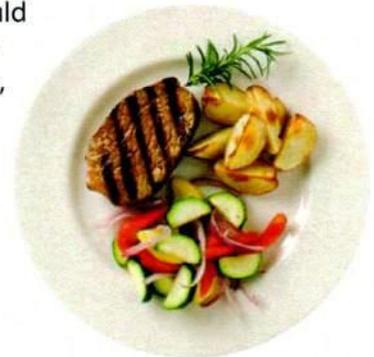
For example:

- Some clients may need to restrict protein (usually people with early kidney disease).
- Some may need to eat lots of protein (usually people on dialysis since dialysis "washes away" protein).

### **DD** DIABETIC DIET

A *diabetic diet* should consist of a variety of foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meats and whole grain bread and pasta.

- A nutrition plan for people with diabetes should include from 10 to 20 percent protein, no more than 30 percent fat and the rest (50 to 60 percent) carbohydrates.



## MODIFIED CONSISTENCY ORDERS

**LIQUID DIET:** A *liquid diet* means only liquids (or foods that become liquid at room temperature) are allowed. Examples include juice, water, broth, popsicles, and Jell-o. If the order reads, "full liquid" diet, then the client can add milk, ice cream and creamy soups.

**SOFT DIET:** The *soft diet* may be ordered for clients who have trouble chewing or swallowing. Examples of soft foods are: soft breads, cooked cereal, bananas, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, soup, yogurt and pudding.

**PUREED DIET:** A *pureed diet* means all the food is blended to the consistency of baby food. This diet is usually ordered when chewing is impossible. Any food can be pureed. Water, broth, juice, or milk are usually added to foods to make them thin enough to be pureed.

# MEAL PLANNING MADE SIMPLE!

If it's your job to shop for and prepare food for your clients, then you should start with a meal plan. You may want to make a plan for one week, two weeks, or even for an entire month. *(You'll find blank worksheets at the end of this inservice to make meal planning a snap!)*

There are a few considerations to take into account before you start your plan. For instance, you will need to know:

- **Is your client on a special diet?** Special diets are prescribed by the doctor or nutritionist. Be sure you know the specific guidelines for your client's special diet.
- **What are your client's favorite foods?** You can ask clients who are verbal—or ask family members about favorite foods or foods related to cultural preferences. *(See the food preferences checklist included at the end of this inservice.)*
- **Is there a food budget?** Clearly, you should know if your client can afford to eat lobster and caviar everyday or if roasting a whole chicken in the crockpot for a week's worth of meals is more realistic!

**Once you have the answers to the above questions you can begin to make your plan! Here's how you do it:**

1. **Determine how many calories your client needs.** This may be stated in the meal plan. If not, follow these USDA guidelines for people who are 50 years or older:

	NOT ACTIVE	MODERATELY ACTIVE	VERY ACTIVE
WOMEN	1600 calories	1800 calories	2000 calories
MEN	2100 calories	2300 calories	2,600 calories

2. **Break the calories into groups.** The chart below shows how to how much of each food group to choose to reach an average **1600 calorie** goal.

FOOD GROUP	HOW MUCH?
Grains	5 ounces / day
Vegetables	2 cups / day
Fruits	1-1/2 cups / day
Protein	
• Nuts, Beans, Soy	5 ounces / day
• Seafood	8 ounces / <b>week</b>
• Meat, Poultry, Eggs	24 ounces / <b>week</b>
Dairy products	3 cups / day
Oils	5 teaspoons / day
Solid fats and added sugars (SoFAS)	121 calories / day

3. **Start adding your client's foods to the blanks on the meal plan worksheet.** For example:

- *Your client needs 5 ounces of grains a day. (You can check portion sizes on page 4.) Go through the first day plugging in grains where appropriate. You may plan for a whole English muffin at breakfast (2 ounces), a slice of whole grain bread for a sandwich at lunch (that's 1 ounce), and one cup of cooked brown rice with dinner (the final 2 ounces). That adds up to the 5 ounces of grains your client needs on that particular day.*

- *Next go through each of the groups for every day in the week.*

- *Remember to keep your client's **preferences** and **budget** in mind.*

- **Always think ahead!** *For example, if you cook chicken on Monday night, you can always plan to serve the leftovers for lunch on Tuesday.*



## ESTIMATING PORTION SIZES

### GRAINS: *One ounce equals...*



### VEGETABLES: *One-half cup equals...*



### FRUITS: *One-half cup equals...*



### PROTEIN FOODS: *One ounce equals...*



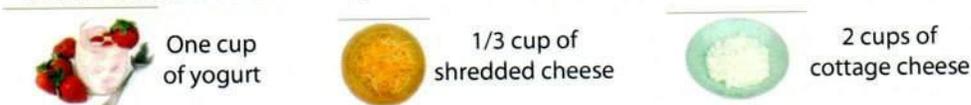
### SEAFOOD: *Common choices include...*



### MEAT AND POULTRY: *Three ounces equals...*



### DAIRY PRODUCTS: *One cup of milk is the same as...*



### OILS: *How much oil is in...?*



## CONNECT IT!

### START A FOOD DIARY

*A Food Diary is a daily list of all the foods offered and eaten by your client. It can be especially useful in home health when there is more than one caregiver.*

#### Here's how to start a Food Diary:

Get a notebook just for the Food Diary. Use one page for each day. Create three columns on your sheet. Label the columns, "Time", "Food and Amount Served", and "Amount Eaten".

To estimate the "amount eaten, use these guidelines:

- Less than half eaten 0 - 25%
- Half eaten 50%
- More than half eaten 75%
- Entire amount eaten 100%

If your client requires daily weight checks, write this information in the Food Diary as well.

Be sure to teach other caregivers and family members to keep up with the Food Diary when you are not there.



## THE NEXT STEP!

### COMFORT FOOD MAKEOVERS

It's no secret, your family and your upbringing shape your relationship with food.

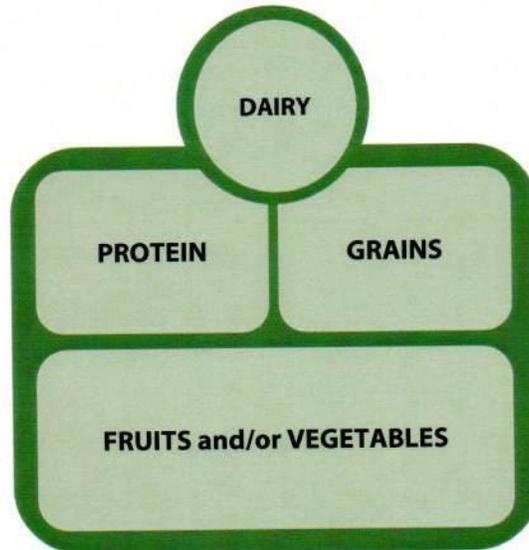
The foods you ate with your family as a child are probably what you refer to now as your "comfort foods." The same is true for your clients.

- What are your client's comfort foods?
- Are they healthy?
- Do you notice that your client eats (or over-eats) these foods at certain times?
- What are those times?

Think of healthy ways to rework the recipes for your client's "comfort foods." For example, make meatloaf with ground turkey instead of beef, or make mac n' cheese with whole wheat pasta and melt the cheese in low fat milk.

## BUILDING BALANCED MEALS

**The best way to build a balanced meal is to think about a divided plate.** The USDA recommends choosing more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein, grains and dairy. Here is what a balanced meal might look like:



**IMPORTANT:** While the USDA uses a divided plate diagram to help you think about portions, the balanced meals you serve do not all have to fit into tidy little boxes!

For instance, a taco can have vegetables (lettuce and tomatoes), protein (chicken), dairy (cheese) and a grain (the shell). But, all the parts won't be separate on the plate!



### THE KEY TO BUILDING A BALANCED MEAL IS UNDERSTANDING THE PORTIONS.

It used to be common for protein (usually meat) to be the largest item on the plate. However, research now suggests that this is not the best way to balance nutrition. Now we know that protein should only make up about one fifth of the total meal.

1. Start with the fruits and veggies! The largest item on the plate should be the fruits and/or vegetables. **In fact, the USDA suggest filling 1/2 the plate with fruits and veggies!**
2. Next, you'll add a lean protein, such as lean beef, pork, chicken, turkey, beans, tofu or seafood.
3. Compliment every meal with a grain. **A good rule of thumb is to make at least half the grains whole.** In others words, strive to serve whole grains more often than other grains. Look for items that say 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain.
4. And finally, don't forget the dairy! Clients who drink milk may enjoy a glass of fat-free or low-fat milk. Others may enjoy yogurt or low fat cheese. Clients who cannot tolerate cow's milk can get the same nutrients from soy, almond or rice milk .

## SAMPLE WEEKLY MEAL PLAN

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Breakfast</b>	1/2 cup Oatmeal w/raisins 4 oz. Juice Coffee	Veggie Omelet* Banana 4 oz. Juice Coffee	Corn Flakes w/milk 1/2 Pear Coffee	1/2 cup Oatmeal w/raisins 4 oz. Juice Coffee	Veggie Omelet* Banana 4 oz. Juice Coffee	Corn Flakes w/milk 1/2 Pear Coffee	Waffles Banana Coffee
<b>Snack</b>	1/2 apple Mini bagel Low fat cream cheese	Graham crackers 1 Tbsp. peanut butter Milk	1/2 Pear Mini bagel Low fat cream cheese	Banana Bread* Hot Tea	Graham crackers 1 Tbsp. peanut butter Milk	1/2 Pear Mini bagel Low fat cream cheese	Banana Bread* Hot Tea
<b>Lunch</b>	Very Veggie Soup* 1/2 turkey & cheese sandwich Milk	Chicken salad (from leftover chicken) w/ lettuce & tomatoes Milk	Very Veggie Soup* 1/2 turkey & cheese sandwich Iced Tea	Leftover meatloaf sandwich Grapes Iced Tea	Very Veggie Soup* 1/2 turkey & cheese sandwich Iced Tea	Meatloaf patty melt Applesauce Iced tea	Very Veggie Soup* 1/2 turkey & cheese sandwich Milk
<b>Snack</b>	English muffin Hot or Iced Tea	Banana Bread* Hot or Iced Tea	1 Hard cooked Egg 1 slice whole wheat toast Hot or Iced Tea	English muffin Hot or Iced Tea	1/2 apple Mini bagel Low fat cream cheese Hot or Iced Tea	Banana Bread* Hot or Iced Tea	1 Hard cooked egg 1 slice whole wheat toast Hot or Iced Tea
<b>Dinner</b>	Roasted chicken* Brown Rice Steamed Broccoli Iced Tea	Leftover Chicken Mashed potatoes Corn Milk	Mighty Meatloaf* Egg Noodles w/unsalted butter Asparagus	Mellow Chicken Gumbo* Iced Tea	Mighty Meatloaf Shepherd's Pie* Milk	Salmon Brown Rice Steamed carrots Milk	Baked Potato with broccoli, bacon and cheese Milk
<b>Snack</b>	Apple slices 1 Tbsp. peanut butter Decaf Herbal Tea	Banana Mini Bagel Milk	Graham crackers 1 Tbsp. peanut butter Decaf Herbal	Apple slices Cheddar cheese Milk	Banana Bread* Decaf Herbal Tea	Graham crackers 1 Tbsp. peanut butter Milk	Apple slices Cheddar cheese Milk

In the sample menu plan above, you may notice that some items repeat. For example, Very Veggie Soup is served four times for lunch. This is a "Make-Ahead" soup that you can prepare in advance, store in individual sized portions and reheat as needed. This plan also makes efficient use of a "Make-Ahead" Roast Chicken and a Meatloaf. **Recipes for items marked with an \* above can be found on the next couple of pages.**

## EASY "MAKE-AHEAD" RECIPES

"Make-Ahead" meals are an easy way to stock the freezer with homemade foods that you can take out any day and quickly reheat. The best recipes for "make-ahead" meals are casseroles, soups and stews, roasted meats and meatloaf. **Over the next few pages, you'll find some easy "make-ahead" recipes to get you started!**

### SOUPS & STEWS

*Soups and stews are very easy to make and they freeze fantastically. In addition, homemade soup is much healthier than canned because it does not contain extra sodium and preservatives. Freeze in individual portions for best results.*

#### Very Veggie Soup (Makes 6 cups)



- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 1 medium potato, diced                               |
| 2 carrots, diced        | 5 cups of chicken broth (see note about broth below) |
| 2 stalks celery, diced  | 1 tablespoon parsley                                 |
| 1/2 onion, chopped      | Salt (if allowed) and pepper to taste                |
| 1 small turnip          |  |

**Directions:** Heat olive oil in a soup pot, then add all the veggies. Cook over low heat for about 10 minutes. Add the broth, cover and simmer for 30 minutes.

- Variations:** Tomatoes, cabbage, green beans, squash, corn or any other in-season vegetables can also be added.
- Broth:** Chicken broth can be store bought or homemade. To make a nice, light broth from a chicken carcass, simply boil the carcass with about 6 cups of water for one hour.

#### Mellow Chicken Gumbo (Makes 6 cups)



- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons olive oil        | 2 cups sliced okra             |
| 1 onion, chopped fine          | 2 cloves garlic, minced        |
| 2 stalks celery chopped fine   | 1 1/2 cups canned tomatoes     |
| 4 cups chicken broth           | 1 cup diced raw chicken breast |
| 1/2 green pepper, chopped fine | 1 cup cooked brown rice        |

**Directions:** Heat olive oil in a soup pot, add the chicken and cook just until browned. Remove the chicken and set aside. Add onion and celery to the pot and cook for about 5 minutes. Stir in broth simmer for 30 minutes. In a separate pot, cook rice according to instructions on package. Add the chicken and rice to soup pot and cook an additional 2 minutes.

- Variations:** This is a very basic (and bland) recipe. If your client likes more flavor, add salt (if allowed) and pepper to taste. Clients who like foods a little spicy may enjoy having a pinch of cayenne pepper added.



## THINK ABOUT IT!

**Think about a client for whom you currently provide care.**

What is this client's diet order?

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What types of foods are added or restricted with this diet?

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What are your client's food preferences? (If you don't know, ask!)

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Does your client have any food allergies you need to be aware of?

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**Are you confident in your ability to plan and prepare meals for this client? If not, ask your supervisor for help today!**

## MORE SIMPLE AND HEALTHY RECIPES

### BREAKFAST & BREADS

Breakfasts, like eggs and cereals are easy enough to make as needed. Prepare one serving at a time. Breads, like banana bread or zucchini bread can be made in advance and frozen in individual portions.

#### Veggie Omelet

(One serving)



½ onion, chopped	2 egg whites
¼ red bell pepper, chopped	1 tablespoon water
1 large egg	½ teaspoon canola oil
	Salt and pepper

**Directions:** Spray nonstick pan with cooking spray, cook onion and pepper over medium heat until tender. Transfer veggies to a plate and set aside. Beat egg, egg whites, and water in a small bowl until frothy. Heat oil in pan and pour in egg mixture. Swirl to cover pan. Cook until egg is set. Sprinkle the onion and bell pepper evenly over half the omelet; then fold. Slide the omelet onto a plate. Sprinkle with the salt (if allowed) and pepper.

#### Banana Bread (Makes 12 servings)



2 eggs, beaten	1 ¾ cups flour
¼ cup buttermilk	1 teaspoon baking soda
½ cup vegetable oil	½ teaspoon salt
1 cup mashed bananas	½ cup chopped pecans (optional)
1 ½ cups white sugar	

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Spray one 9x5 inch loaf pan with non-stick spray coating. Blend together the eggs, buttermilk, oil and bananas. Sift together the sugar, flour, baking soda and salt. Add to banana mixture and stir in pecans. Mix well. Pour into prepared loaf pan and bake 1 hour and 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

### CHICKEN, ROASTS and MEATLOAF

Most meats can be cooked in advance. This is a very economical way of cooking. For example, you can buy a whole chicken for \$3.50, but a package of 2 skinless, boneless breasts could cost over six dollars.

#### Crockpot Rotisserie Chicken



1 whole roasting chicken

Cooking spray

Mrs. Dash, any flavor

**Directions:** Make 4 or 5 loose balls of aluminum foil and place in bottom of crock pot. Clean chicken inside and out. Spray with cooking spray. Sprinkle generously inside and out with Mrs. Dash. Put chicken back-side down in crock pot (on top of foil balls). Cook on high 4-6 hours.

Allow chicken to cool, then separate into pieces for individual portions. To freeze, place portions inside a doubled Ziploc baggie.

#### Mini Mighty Meatloaf



¼ cup chopped onion	½ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ cup chopped green pepper	½ teaspoon onion powder
¼ cup chopped fresh mushrooms	Salt & pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon olive oil	½ pound ground turkey
2 tablespoons apple juice	

**Directions:** Sauté onion, green pepper and mushrooms in oil until tender. Allow to cool. In a large bowl, combine the vegetables, apple juice, garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper. Add turkey and mix well. Shape into a loaf and set in a baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees F for 40-45 minutes.

## COOKING FOR CLIENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**DULLING OF TASTE AND SMELL:** Imagine how discouraging it would be if your favorite food had no aroma. Or, what if homemade blueberry cobbler tasted no better than overcooked mashed beans? Both taste and smell can be dulled by illness, infection, medications and age. **TIPS:**



- Cook with fresh herbs which have more intense flavor and aroma.
- Add lemon, lime or wine to meats and vegetables when cooking to jazz up the flavor.

**CONSTIPATION:** As the digestive process slows and becomes less efficient, constipation may become a problem. Constipation can cause bloating, nausea, and abdominal pain, often making it too uncomfortable to eat. **TIPS:**

- Be sure to offer plenty of whole grains and high fiber foods. Substitute whole grain pasta and brown rice for the white varieties.

**PROBLEMS WITH CHEWING:** For example, decreased saliva production can make chewing and swallowing difficult. **TIPS:**

- Offer frequent sips of water or other beverage throughout the meal.
- Serve meals in small bite-sized pieces with sauces, gravies, dressings and dips.
- Avoid sticky foods, like peanut butter. They make the mouth muscles work too hard.
- Prepare nutrient-rich smoothies with fresh fruit and Greek yogurt.
- Offer steamed veggies and soft food such as couscous, rice, and mashed potatoes.
- Soak dry foods in coffee, milk or soup until they are soft enough to chew.

**FOOD ALLERGIES:** If your client has food allergies or sensitivities, you must take special care to read labels and prepare food properly. Most commonly, you may have clients who are allergic to dairy products or peanuts (or other nuts). **TIPS:**

- Food manufacturers have to disclose if there are any known allergens in their products. Always read labels before preparing any food for clients with food allergies.



• Peanut allergies are generally the most dangerous for food allergy sufferers. For some, just touching a peanut product can cause hives. Eating peanut products can cause the throat and tongue to swell and breathing can be compromised. This type of reaction means a trip to the emergency room.

- People who have problems with dairy can be lactose intolerant or sensitive to the casein in milk. Lactose is a milk sugar. Casein is a milk protein. People who are lactose intolerant can usually handle Lactaid brand milk. People who are sensitive to casein will have to drink almond, rice or soy milk.
- Cooking with non-dairy milks can be a challenge. They are usually sweeter and often thicken quicker than cow's milk.



***"WHY IS IT THAT . . . it's only after you have lost your teeth that you can afford to buy steaks?"***

~ Pierre Auguste Renoir



## FIVE KEY POINTS!

### REVIEW WHAT YOU LEARNED!

1. If it's your job to shop for and prepare food for your clients, then you should always start with a *plan*.
2. Before you can make a meal plan, you need to know if your client is on a special diet, if there is a food budget and what your client's food preferences are.
3. The best way to build a balanced meal is to think about a divided plate. Choose more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein, grains and dairy.
4. Make-Ahead" meals are an easy way to stock the freezer with homemade foods that you can take out any day and quickly reheat.
5. When making choices about what to plan, purchase or cook for your clients, always ask yourself: Is it nutritious? Is it fresh? Is it affordable? And, is it preferred?

## SHOPPING & COOKING ON A BUDGET

**Chances are, your client has a limited budget for food. That means you have to get good at saving money and stretching meals. Here are some money saving tips:**

- Make a plan! Figure out all of your client's meals for the week, then make a grocery list from that plan before you go shopping.
- Clip coupons and check out the weekly grocery store ads before you go shopping. A few dollars per week adds up to real savings over the course of a year.
- Buy store brands whenever possible. They are usually just as good as major brands, but cost a lot less.
- Purchase fresh fruits and vegetable when they are in season. If your client can get out of the house, a trip to your local farmer's market is a great way to save money on produce and get some exercise at the same time.
- Buy a whole chicken on sale and roast or slow cook it. Cut up and freeze the cooked meat in individual portions to be used in salads, sandwiches, soups, stir-frys or casseroles. Use the bones and any bits of meat still clinging to them to make broth for soups.
- Make stews with cheaper, tougher cuts of meat, like beef chuck roasts or pork shoulders. Cook *low* and *slow* for tender, tasty meat.
- Cook from scratch whenever possible. Prepackaged products like Macaroni and Cheese and "Rice-a-Roni" cost a lot more than making the same dish from scratch and they also contain excess salt and other additives and preservatives.
- Learn to prepare and use dried beans, peas and lentils. They are an inexpensive, healthy source of protein and fiber,
- Make your own "TV Dinners." Each time you cook, prepare an extra serving or two. Arrange an entire meal in a freezer-safe container and seal it well. Label the container with the contents and the date. Then, when needed, the meal can be easily reheated and ready to eat in minutes.



