

### A Fact About Family Meals

Families who eat together eat more healthfully. They eat more fruits, vegetables, grains and calcium rich foods and consume less pop. Nutrient wise, they consume more iron, folate, fiber and vitamins A & C.

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University



### Balancing Food, Fun & Fitness



### Enjoy Active Summer Time Fun

Children should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity everyday, and summer is a great time for outdoor fun for you and the kids!

- **Make plans for active fun—In the yard**

Active fun is as close as your own yard. It's as easy as a basketball hoop, a Frisbee™, or a sprinkler for splashing in on a hot summer day. Enjoy old-fashioned fun, like freeze tag, hide-and-seek, kick the can, horseshoes, or badminton.

- **Make plans for active fun—At the park**

Big Sky country is full of parks, each with its own special activities: city parks with splash pools for tots and Folf (Frisbee™ golf) for adults, county parks with smooth paths for biking and running; state parks with lakes, rivers, and streams for paddling; and national parks and forests for lots of seriously fun hiking.

- **Make plans for active fun—On road trips.**

Take a break from sitting in the car and fit some active fun into a long trip. Pack a small bag of 'rest stop toys', like a Frisbee™, a soccer ball, baseball and mitts, or a few Nerf™ toys. A 15 minute break will help everybody be in a better mood— especially the driver!

#### TO SUBSCRIBE:

It's easy to sign up for Mealttime Solutions. Send an email or call one of the MSU Extension Offices listed at the right side of this page and leave your email address. Feel free to spread the word to your family and friends.

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## SILENCE BUSTERS

Do you have trouble getting more than a “yes” or “no” out of your children at meal time? Here are some conversation starters you can use to get the kids talking.

*Pass on your best advice to the person sitting next to you.*

*What is your favorite smell & why?*

*If you could talk to any species of animal which animal would you choose and why?*

*If you could have one super power, what would you choose & how would you use it?*

Keep it on the light side, leaving serious discussion for another time. Turn off the TV, cell phones and iPods and just listen to what each other has to say.

## HALFWAY HOMEMADE

Here are some VERY easy meals you can make at home in minutes. They will save you not only time but the money you would spend eating out.

### QUICK & EASY MEAL IDEAS

Make a quick and easy chili by browning 1 pound of hamburger with 1/2 cup of onion. Add 1 can kidney beans, 1 can chili beans and a large can of tomato sauce. Season with salt, pepper, and chili powder and heat.

Make a hearty tuna casserole in a matter of minutes by using a box of macaroni and cheese dinner, a can of mushroom soup and a can of tuna. Make the macaroni and cheese according to directions (eliminate the margarine for a lower fat version), add tuna and mushroom soup and heat through.

Pizza lovers will appreciate this baked potato topper. Bake potatoes in the oven (time-bake will have them ready when you get home) or microwave. Mix browned hamburger, 1/2 cup chopped onion and 1/2 cup chopped green pepper with a bottle of pizza sauce and heat. Pour over split potatoes, top with mozzarella cheese and heat until cheese melts.

Use leftover meat and gravy to make a meat pie. Simply combine meat, gravy and any vegetables your family likes, heat through, pour in a baking dish and top with a ready-made pie crust or a tube of refrigerator biscuits. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes.

Try fat free refried beans, tortillas, shredded cheese and salsa.

Stir-fries are a quick cooking, low –fat meal; it’s the chopping that takes time. Use pre-sliced or chopped meats and vegetables, or try one of the popular stir-fry kits. Use chicken broth to fry in rather than oil to reduce the fat even more.

For homemade pizza taste, try a ready-made pizza crust, a pizza crust mix or a split loaf of French bread with your favorite toppings and mozzarella cheese.

Cook a beef or pork roast in a slow cooker while you’re gone to work. When you get home shred the meat with a fork and add bottled BBQ sauce. Heat thoroughly and serve on hamburger buns.

Kids will enjoy this meal-in-one idea. In the middle of a double thickness of foil sprayed with non-stick cooking spray, place a hamburger patty, a sliced carrot, a sliced potato, and sliced onion if desired. Wrap tightly and grill on the barbeque for approximately 1 hour, turning every 15 minutes, or bake in the oven for 1 hour. Prepare one for each person. There’s basically no clean-up—just throw away the foil.

Experiment with different baked potato toppers. Use time-bake to prepare potatoes then be creative with toppings, like left-over chili or taco meat are a great start. How about broccoli and cheese or leftover meat and gravy?

### Salad Sensations

Summer is the perfect time for main dish salads! You can prepare them without heating up the kitchen and they make for a light and refreshing meal. Pair them up with rolls or French bread and seasonal fruit and you have a colorful, nutritious and satisfying meal. To speed up preparation use bagged salad greens and pre-cut veggies.



**Buffalo Chicken Salad:** Mix iceberg and romaine lettuce, red onion slices, tomatoes cut in bite size pieces, blue cheese crumbles and sliced chicken strips from your super market deli. BBQ dressing: mix ranch dressing and BBQ sauce to taste.

**Santa Fe Salad:** Use romaine or iceberg lettuce, sliced deli roast beef cut into strips, rinsed kidney beans, sliced black olives, corn, grated cheddar cheese and top with crushed tortilla chips. Dressing: Salsa mixed with light sour cream or light ranch dressing.

**Crunchy Asian Salad:** Use Spring lettuce mix (or lettuce of your choice), 1 can mandarin oranges, cubed chicken from rotisserie chicken from super market, red onions sliced, sliced carrots, sliced mushrooms. Top with Chinese noodles and Sesame Asian vinaigrette.

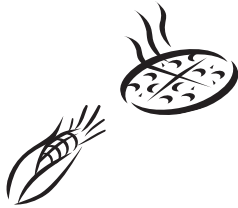
**Mediterranean:** Romaine lettuce, red onion sliced, cubed cucumbers and tomatoes, cube chicken, feta cheese. Sprinkle with oregano and serve with a vinaigrette dressing.

**Cobb Salad:** Lettuce of your choice, cubed rotisserie chicken, chopped hard cook egg, cubed avocado and tomato, and blue cheese crumbles. Serve with your choice of dressing.

**Pasta Salad:** 4 cups cooked pasta of your choice, chopped broccoli and cauliflower, diced green onion, chopped red peppers and chopped chicken, deli ham or deli roast beef. Dress with a light ranch dressing.



## DOABLE DINNER



Grilled Fajitas  
 Bagged salad & dressing  
 Sliced watermelon  
 Fat-free or low-fat milk  
 Sherbet



### Grilled Fajitas

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1 cup fat-free or low-fat Italian dressing | 8 whole grain tortillas |
| 1 1/2 lbs. flank or sirloin steak          | 1 cup lettuce, shredded |
| 2 diced tomatoes                           | Salsa                   |
| 1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese      |                         |

Pour Italian dressing over steak and marinate in a covered container for up to 6 hours in refrigerator. Grill steak 3-4 minutes per side (at least 145°) Slice steak diagonally across grain in thin strips. Assemble fajitas by placing a few pieces of meat on a warmed tortillas; top with lettuce, tomato, cheese & salsa. Roll up and enjoy! Chicken is a nice substitution if you prefer.

### Shopping List

- Italian dressing
- Steak
- Whole grain tortillas
- Tomatoes
- Lettuce
- Salsa
- Cheddar Cheese
- Bagged Salad
- Watermelon
- Milk
- Sherbet

### Safe Cooking Tips

Now that grilling season is here, make sure you are grilling meat to the recommended temperature. These are the minimum temperatures, but you can cook them to higher temperature if you like.

**Beef/Pork: Roasts, Steaks & Chops: 145°**

**Ground Beef/Pork: 155°**

**Poultry: 165°**

**Raw sausages: 160°**

**Reheat ready to eat sausages: 165°**

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