

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES FOR SENIORS: WEEK 12

Homemade convenience

Buying small, ready-to-eat packages of food for snacks and lunches saves time, but you pay extra for the convenience. Try making these foods at home. You might find you can create your favorite snacks quicker and for less money than you thought.

Fruit cups

Fruit cups are easy to grab for a snack, but store-bought varieties usually have a lot of added sugar and might not be your favorites. Look for fresh fruit that's in season (when it's cheapest), and divide into half-cup servings. If the fruit you want isn't in season and seems a bit pricey, buy large containers of frozen or canned fruit (look for fruit canned in 100% juice). Then divide it into half-cup servings.

Veggies & dip

Choose a variety of vegetables that you enjoy such as carrots, celery, bell peppers, snap peas, cauliflower and broccoli. If you have issues chewing raw vegetables, use canned options, thaw frozen varieties or steam fresh versions. Softer fresh vegetables include cucumbers, zucchini, summer squash, mushrooms and tomatoes. Wash, cut and package the veggies into single servings. For the dip, try hummus, cottage cheese, black bean dip or ranch dip made with Greek or plain yogurt (try low-fat). Buy large containers of dip and divide it into smaller portions.

Yogurt with fruit & nuts

Many flavored yogurts (including the fruit flavors) contain a lot of added sugar. Try buying a large container of plain yogurt instead, and separating it into smaller portions. Add flavor and crunch to each container with fruit and nuts such as almonds or walnuts. Use fresh, canned or frozen fruit.



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Did you know?

You're more likely to grab a nutritious snack if it has already been prepped and is ready to go. Give yourself a range of nutritious options to choose from and store them at eye level.

What about containers?

Always choose food-safe containers. Beyond that, experiment to find the containers that work best for you. You don't have to buy new containers – just use whatever food-safe containers you have on hand.



WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Cheesy Bean Dip (serves 6)

1. Drain and rinse **1 cup black beans**, **½ cup great northern white beans** and **½ cup red kidney beans**.
2. Add all beans, **¼ cup no-salt-added, diced tomatoes** (drained), **2 tablespoons lemon juice**, **2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar**, **1 teaspoon coriander**, **1 teaspoon cumin**, **1 teaspoon onion powder**, **½ tablespoon garlic powder**, and **½ tablespoon chili powder** to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth.
3. Divide into six containers with lids and sprinkle each with **1 teaspoon grated parmesan cheese**.
4. Store in refrigerator next to portion-sized bags of vegetable sticks for snacks or lunch.



Recipe adapted from Michigan State University Extension. (2015). *Eating Right Is Simple Recipe Set*.

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To help you be healthy at every stage of life, MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Programs focus on helping you gain the skills you need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods, increase your physical activity and stretch your food dollars.

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and giving youth the opportunity through 4-H programs to build leadership and teach practical life skills.

With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

For more information or to join a class, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/. To find your local county office, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county.

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