

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES: WEEK 20

Prepare to save

Preparing packed lunches the night before can save you time and money. Mornings are chaotic enough without having to make lunches for the entire family.

When planning dinner, make a little extra on purpose so you can pack it in lunches the next day. You and your family are more likely to take packed lunches to work or school if they were made the night before. Try making all packed lunches for the week ahead on Sundays. You don't have to make everything at once, but you can do things like washing, cutting and storing produce in food-safe containers. Remember to make sure any other containers you may need for the week ahead are clean and ready to use.

Keep cold food cold and hot food hot

When preparing your packed lunch, keep refrigerated foods cold in an insulated lunch bag with a reusable icepack. If you are packing lunches in a throw-away container and don't want to worry about losing icepacks, try freezing water bottles or 100-percent juice boxes. If the juice box doesn't completely thaw by lunchtime, you'll have a delicious slushy to have with lunch. Throw away any perishable foods you haven't eaten by the end of the day.

You could heat soup in the morning and send it in an insulated container (such as a Thermos) to keep it hot until lunchtime. Preheat the container by filling it with hot water for a few minutes, then put in the hot food and seal the container.

Ideally, store lunches in a 40 degree F refrigerator, and if a microwave is available, reheat your leftovers to 165 degree F. If these food-safe options aren't available, choose foods that don't require refrigeration, such as uncut, fresh fruits and vegetables, and canned meat and fish.



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Did you know?

Squeezing a little bit of lemon juice on freshly cut fruit and vegetables can stop them from browning before lunch.

WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Smoky & Spicy Roasted Cauliflower (serves 4)

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Chop **1 head cauliflower** into small pieces. Arrange on a baking sheet or roasting pan with **2 cloves unpeeled garlic**.
3. Drizzle **1 tablespoon butter** (melted) over the cauliflower and sprinkle with **1 teaspoon smoked paprika** and **½ teaspoon cayenne pepper**. Mix with your hands to make sure the butter and spices are evenly distributed.
4. Bake for 45 to 60 minutes, depending on how crunchy you like it. While the mix is baking, occasionally squeeze the garlic over the cauliflower. (Be careful not to burn yourself!) Remove the skins from the garlic before serving.
5. Use leftovers (or the extra you made on purpose) to make cauliflower tacos for lunch the next day. Pack **1 or 2 whole-grain tortillas**, **¼ cup cheese** and **½ cup salsa** in individual containers to keep the tortillas from getting soggy. Include a icepack to keep your food safe.



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Recipe adapted from Brown, L. (2014.) *Good and Cheap: Eat Well on \$4/Day*. NY: Workman.

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