HEALTHY CANNED FOOD MEAL IDEAS

Many say fresh produce is best, but what if you can't get fresh? Or what if it is too expensive? Canned fruits and vegetables are a great way to stretch your budget. Not only are canned items less expensive, but they can last for months in your pantry, unlike fresh fruits and vegetables. They are usually picked and packed at the peak of freshness, so they are still delicious and nutritious! There are even canned items that you can make a meal out of like canned tuna or beans. Here are some great canned food meal ideas:

- **Vegetables** -- These can be used in soups, stews, or served as sides. The canned versions are still packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Look for "no salt added" or "low sodium" on the label and drain and rinse before using to reduce the sodium even more.

- **Fruit** -- It can be enjoyed as a snack or added to cereal and oatmeal in the morning. Try creating a fruit and yogurt parfait as a delicious dessert! Look for ones packed in 100% juice or "no sugar added". Avoid ones packed in "heavy syrup" since these have a lot more sugar.

- **Beans and legumes** -- Beans, peas, and lentils are all great additions to a meal. They are rich in vitamins and minerals as well as an inexpensive source of protein. Try them in chili and stews or use black beans to make vegetarian tacos or burgers. The possibilities are endless!

- **Canned meats** -- When you think of canned meat, SPAM® usually comes to mind. But there are healthier options! Canned fish can go beyond the regular old tuna fish sandwich. Try using canned tuna and salmon to make fun burgers or add to soup to make a fish chowder. They can be less expensive than fresh meats and the fish adds some omega-3 fats for a healthy heart. Canned white meat chicken is also a great option for casseroles or soup recipes. Look for "water packed" when looking at all of these products rather than oil which can add more unwanted fat and calories.

Source: [http://eatsmartmd.blogspot.com/2014/02/healthy-canned-food-meal-ideas.html](http://eatsmartmd.blogspot.com/2014/02/healthy-canned-food-meal-ideas.html)

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5 TYPES OF HEALTHY SNACKS FOR A BUSY LIFESTYLE

Snacking sometimes is seen as an unhealthy habit because people often think of a mound of chips, dips, cookies, and ice cream washed down with a large soda. However, snacking should be a healthy and enjoyable part of everyday. A healthy snack can be as simple as raw fruits or vegetables or a granola bar. Here are some tasty snacks you can add to your day!

Fresh Fruit

• Fresh fruit is a great snack because it can easily be brought with you in the morning when you leave for work. Good choices that transport well would be apples, bananas, and oranges.
• Don't be afraid to get creative. Try cutting up cantaloupe, watermelon, strawberries, kiwi, mangos and more! Make fruit kabobs with your cut up fruit!

Raw Vegetables

• Raw vegetables are another great option. Celery and baby carrots are good on-the-run and go great with hummus. Another idea is making "Ants-on-a-log" with celery, peanut butter (or another type of nut butter) and raisins on top!
• A small salad tossed with your favorite low-fat dressing can be a very satisfying way to increase your vegetable intake.

Low-Fat Dairy

• A low-fat yogurt is a great way to get some calcium and protein while you snack. Freeze yogurt for a healthy twist. Just be sure to check the sugar content on the nutrition facts label when you buy because some products contain a lot.
• Reduced-fat string cheese is a great grab-and-go item! It is super easy to pack with you and is low in calories, but has the protein to help satisfy a food craving.

Nuts

• Nuts are a great source of healthy fats and a good source of protein. Choose nuts or trail mixes that are no salt added for the healthiest choice. A portion of nuts can help curb hunger. A serving of nuts is a small handful which will help with portion control. Some good examples of healthy nut options are almonds, walnuts, and cashews.

Bars

• Granola bars and fruit and nut bars can be healthful snacks that the whole family will enjoy. Just be sure to check the label to make sure the first ingredient is 100% whole grain or a fruit.

Source: adapted from http://eatsmartmd.blogspot.com/2014/02/5-types-of-healthy-snacks-for-busy.html
LET'S TALK FAMILY CONVERSATION STARTERS

Strong families are based on good communication. Each month we will provide some good conversation starters for you to use with your children or the children in your care. These starters can help to begin a discussion and are much more effective than asking “how was your day?” The idea is to increase communication while getting to know each other better and sharing family values at the same time.

Some ideas for this month:

- The weather is getting very nice out-what is your favorite thing to do outside that is active?
- Talk about the fun things you can do in the spring.
- If you could change one thing about where we live, what would it be?
- What is your favorite summer beverage?
- Tell one good thing about each family member
- What makes you really happy?

Source: The Ohio State University Extension

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR SPRING

Spring has arrived and it's time to fill up a water bottle, put on a pair of comfortable shoes and get moving! After all, the warm weather and extra daylight is a great time to get outdoors and get active. Getting physical activity into your family's daily routine will help to reduce stress, boost your family's energy levels and improve your overall health!

Here are some ideas to get you moving this spring with fun and easy physical activities:

1. **Have a day at the park.** Go to a local park and fly a kite, find a walking trail, play baseball or kickball, jump rope, take the dog for a walk, or throw a Frisbee. Bring a picnic lunch and large blanket for everyone to sit on for a family meal.
2. **Plant a vegetable garden.** Growing and eating from your own garden can be very exciting. Kids love to see how food grows and they have fun helping to pick their own veggies. If you have limited space at home, try growing lettuce, tomatoes, or fresh herbs in pots that can sit on your porch. Kids love to eat the foods that they have helped to grow.
3. **Turn off the TV and go for a walk.** Limit your family's screen time and go for a walk around the neighborhood instead. The sunlight helps your body get Vitamin D. Being out in the sun also helps to improve our mood and energy.
4. **Create a routine with family and friends.** Find a friend or family member to be physically active with on a regular basis. Create a routine such as taking a walk after dinner at least 3 times per week. This will give you something to look forward to and you can support each other's physical activity goals.

As you become more physically active this spring, you'll boost your energy level and find yourself needing a cool treat. Try a **Yogurt Berry Parfait** for a healthy treat to help cool you down!

Source: http://eatsmartmd.blogspot.com/2013/04/physical-activity-for-spring.html
Yogurt Berry Parfait

Ingredients

2 cups yogurt (low-fat or fat-free, plain or vanilla*)
1 cup banana (sliced)
1/2 cup blueberries (fresh)
1/2 cup strawberries (fresh, sliced)
other optional fruit (raspberries, peaches, pineapple and/or mangos)
1 cup granola

Instructions

1. Line up 4 parfait or other tall glasses.
2. Spoon about 1/4 cup of yogurt into each glass.
3. Top with about 1/4 cup of fruit.
4. Next sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of granola.
5. Repeat the process.

*Low-fat vanilla yogurt used for costing and nutrient analysis.

Note: Optional ingredients are not included in the nutrient or cost analysis.

Cost

Per recipe: $3.83
Per serving: $0.96

Source: Food and Nutrition Information Center at www.nutrition.gov/life-stages/children/kids-kitchen
Chicken Fajitas

What You Need:

- 8 6-inch flour tortillas
- Nonstick spray coating
- 1 small onion, sliced and separated into rings
- 1 medium sweet red or green pepper, cut into bite-size strips
- 9 ounces boned skinless chicken breast halves, cut into bite-size strips
- 1/3 cup salsa
- Low-fat shredded cheese if desired
- ¼ cup of Italian salad dressing

Directions:

- Wrap tortillas in foil. Place in a 300° oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until heated through.
- Meanwhile, spray a large skillet with nonstick spray coating.
- Add onion; stir-fry for 2 minutes.
- Add red or green pepper; stir-fry for 1 to 2 minutes more or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Remove from skillet.
- Spray again with nonstick spray.
- Add chicken; stir-fry 3 to 5 minutes or until chicken is tender and no longer pink.
- Return vegetables to skillet. Add salsa and salad dressing. Cook and stir until heated through.
- To serve, divide chicken mixture evenly among tortillas. Top with shredded cheese. Roll up tortillas.
20 INTERESTING AND USEFUL WATER FACTS

It seems like everywhere you look and go there is something about the benefits of water. We all know that we should have about 32-48 ounces a day to stay hydrated and healthy, whether it is from a glass of water to eating fruits and veggies that contain water. Because of how important it is, here are some fun facts about this clear liquid:

1. Roughly 70 percent of an adult’s body is made up of water.
2. At birth, water accounts for approximately 80 percent of an infant’s body weight.
3. A healthy person can drink about three gallons (48 cups) of water per day.
4. Drinking too much water too quickly can lead to water intoxication. Water intoxication occurs when water dilutes the sodium level in the bloodstream and causes an imbalance of water in the brain.
5. Water intoxication is most likely to occur during periods of intense athletic performance.
6. While the daily recommended amount of water is eight cups per day, not all of this water must be consumed in the liquid form. Nearly every food or drink item provides some water to the body.
7. Soft drinks, coffee, and tea, while made up almost entirely of water, also contain caffeine. Caffeine can act as a mild diuretic, preventing water from traveling to necessary locations in the body.
8. Pure water (solely hydrogen and oxygen atoms) has a neutral pH of 7, which is neither acidic nor basic.
9. Water dissolves more substances than any other liquid. Wherever it travels, water carries chemicals, minerals, and nutrients with it.
10. Somewhere between 70 and 75 percent of the earth’s surface is covered with water.
11. Much more fresh water is stored under the ground in aquifers than on the earth’s surface.
12. The earth is a closed system, similar to a terrarium, meaning that it rarely loses or gains extra matter. The same water that existed on the earth millions of years ago is still present today.
13. The total amount of water on the earth is about 326 million cubic miles of water.
14. Of all the water on the earth, humans can use only about three tenths of a percent of this water. Such usable water is found in groundwater aquifers, rivers, and freshwater lakes.
15. The United States uses about 346,000 million gallons of fresh water every day.
16. The United States uses nearly 80 percent of its water for irrigation and thermoelectric power.
17. The average person in the United States uses anywhere from 80-100 gallons of water per day. Flushing the toilet actually takes up the largest amount of this water.
18. Approximately 85 percent of U.S. residents receive their water from public water facilities. The remaining 15 percent supply their own water from private wells or other sources.
19. By the time a person feels thirsty, his or her body has lost over 1 percent of its total water amount.
20. The weight a person loses directly after intense physical activity is weight from water, not fat.

Adapted from http://www.allaboutwater.org/water-facts.html

WALK MARYLAND!

Spring time is just around the corner! This means goodbye snow (we all hope!) and hello sun. Many people are looking for ways to get active without breaking the bank. One option is the new Walk Maryland Program developed by the University of Maryland Extension. Here are some quick facts:
**What is Walk MD?**
Walk MD is a program that encourages you to increase your physical activity in a fun, community-oriented way with a challenging 500 mile virtual walk around the state of Maryland. You may participate as an individual or as a group with others, such as a classroom or youth group, such as 4-H. The goals of this program are to help you develop regular physical activity habits, get healthier and more physically fit, and have fun!

**How does Walk MD work?**
As a registered "walker," you have access to an online activity record that you will use to not only track actual steps, but also convert other types of physical activity, such as biking or gardening, into miles "walked." We want you to get all the credit you deserve for getting more active! As you log in your miles, a personalized map automatically shows your progress as you "travel" across the state of Maryland. Along the way you'll discover interesting places and facts about the state and new ways to improve your health. We hope you will be inspired to join us and others in your county as we get more active and become healthier!

How do I start?
The full website and program will be available sometime in April. Go to [https://extension.umd.edu/walkmd](https://extension.umd.edu/walkmd) for more information and to register.

**GREEN CLEANING RECIPE:**

Non-abrasive soft scrubber

**Ingredients:**
- ¼ cup borax
- Vegetable oil based liquid soap
- ½ tsp. lemon essential oil

**Directions:** In a bowl, mix the borax with enough soap to form a creamy paste. Add lemon oil and blend well. Scoop a small amount of the mixture onto a sponge, wash the surface, and then rinse well.

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Terry Serio        Virginia Brown, DrPH
Extension Educator       Extension Educator
Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program   Family & Consumer Sciences
Family & Consumer Sciences

University of Maryland Extension-Carroll County
700 Agriculture Center
Westminster, MD 21157-5700

Phone: 410-386-2760
Toll-Free: 888-326-9645
Fax: 410-876-0132

If you have a disability that requires special assistance for your participation in a program, please contact the Carroll County Extension Office at 410-386-2760; fax 410-876-0132, two (2) weeks prior to the program.

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University of Maryland Extension-Carroll County

Presents

Grow It, Eat It, Preserve It Workshops
Preserving Your Garden’s Bounty!

Carroll County Extension Office
700 Agriculture Center Drive
Westminster, MD 21158

The following Workshop will be held on June 14, 2014:
9:00 am to 12:00 - Hot Water Bath Canning
Lunch (please pack)
12:30 to 4:00 pm - Pressure Canning

Registration cost is $65.00 for the whole workshop, or $35.00 for each session. Advance registration with payment is required. Make checks payable to CCEAC.

Don’t wait, sign up now, all classes are limited to first 15 paid registrations.

Registration includes It's So Easy To Preserve publication.

Registration deadline is Tuesday, June 10th at 4:00 pm.

No refunds after registration deadline.

Register by calling 410-386-2760 or 1-888-326-9645

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University of Maryland Extension–Carroll County

Presents

Grow It, Eat It, Preserve It Workshops
Preserving Your Garden’s Bounty!

Carroll County Extension Office
700 Agriculture Center Drive
Westminster, MD 21157

The following Workshop will be held on July 12th:
9:00 am to One - Sizzling, Sensational Salsa

Registration cost is $35.00 for the workshop. Advance registration and payment is required.

Don’t wait, sign up now, all classes are limited to first 15 paid registrations.

Registration includes It’s So Easy To Preserve publication.

Registration deadline is Tuesday July 8th at 4:00 pm.

No refunds after registration deadline.

Register by calling 410-386-2760 or 1-888-326-9645

If you need special assistance to participate in this program, please contact the office at 410-386-2760 before September 6. University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or national origin.