

Smart Choices

A Community Nutrition Education Program



Thrifty Choices

Menu Planner



Sample Meal Planner for Family of 5 for 1 Week

Family Favorites from <i>MyPyramid</i>	Daily Portions per Person from <i>MyPyramid</i>	Portions x Number of People (5)	Reminder	Shopping Cycle Totals <i>(daily portions x 5 people x 7 days)</i>
Breakfast <i>Cereal, milk, banana</i>	½ cup fruit 2 oz grain 1 cup dairy	2 ½ cups fruit 10 oz grain 5 cups dairy	Servings are based on an average of 2,000 calories per day. Some people at the table may need more or less.	17.5 cups fruit 70 oz grain 35 cups milk
Lunch <i>Tuna sandwich with lettuce and tomato on whole-wheat bread, milk, carrots, apple</i>	2 oz grain 2 ½ oz MPFEN* 1 cup dairy 1 cup vegetables ½ cup fruit	10 oz grain 12 ½ oz MPFEN* 5 cups milk 5 cups vegetable 2 ½ cups fruit	These amounts will be less if some family members don't eat lunch at home.	70 oz grain 87.5 oz MPFEN* 35 cups milk 35 cups vegetables 17.5 cups fruit
Evening <i>1 chicken thigh, mac & cheese, broccoli, green salad, milk, peach.</i>	3 oz MPFEN* 1 cup dairy 1 ½ cup vegetable 2 oz grain ½ cup fruit	15 oz MPFEN* 5 cups milk 7 ½ cups vegetables 10 oz grain 2 ½ cups fruit	Buy a variety of vegetables: dark green, orange, starchy, legumes, other.	105 oz MPFEN* 35 cups milk 52.5 cups vegetables 17.5 cups fruit
Snacks <i>Grapes</i>	½ cup fruit	2 ½ cup fruit	Plan for snacks on-the-go. If you want a grain for a snack, balance it out in the meal plan.	17.5 cups fruit

* MPFEN = Meat, poultry, fish, eggs or nuts.

- Put your favorite foods from *MyPyramid* in the boxes in the *first* column on the left, using the food group categories in the second column to guide you. For example, at breakfast you might put cereal and milk and a piece of fruit.
- Multiply** the recommended portions in *column 2* by the number of people at the table to give you the total number of *portions* needed for the meal.
- Adjust your menu according to the recommendations in *column 4*.
- For a **weekly shopping cycle**, multiply the portions in *column 3* by the number 7 (days). If your shopping cycle is more or less, multiply by a different number of days.

(This sounds like a lot, and that's why we are doing the exercise...so you can get a feel for how much food you'll need to feed everyone well.)



If all five people eat breakfast seven days that week, you'll need **10 ounces of grain per day x 7 days = 70 ounces.**

Note: Fats and Oils are used sparingly in cooking and flavoring foods.

Who depends on you for meals?



Use the *MyPyramid Calorie Level handout* to find the calorie level for each person that you feed.

Name	Gender	Age	Activity Level	Recommended Calorie Intake

Calculate each person's recommended intake

Use this information when planning meals, writing your menus and grocery lists.

You will figure roughly what you don't need to buy for each shopping cycle depending on how many meals are eaten elsewhere.

Knowing this will help you to purchase only what you need so that no foods spoil or go to waste.

Tips and tools for planning:

1. Use the **My Pyramid Weekly Food Intake Pattern handout** to determine how much food is recommended in the calorie range for each person that you feed.
2. Use the **Need/Have/Purchase Work Sheet** to record what you have on hand and to figure what you still need to buy. Record that on the Food List.
3. When foods don't have a label, it's difficult to figure out how much to buy. Use the **Buying Guide for Fresh Foods**.
4. Check your grocery sales flyers and coupons for ideas when planning the menu.
5. Use the **Food List** as a guide to plan for a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy products and meat and beans. Make out your **Menu Plan** for the week.

(If it's a weekend, be sure to have enough food on hand for those school kids)



Authors:

Judy Myhand, MS
Annrose Guarino, PhD, RD, LDN
Heli J. Roy PhD, RN, LDN

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Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, William B. Richardson, Chancellor
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, David Boethel, Vice Chancellor and Director
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director
Pub. 3008 (20M) 10/07

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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