

# Smart Choices

## Nutrition News for Seniors

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### Meals for One or Two

We all have one thing in common—we need to eat! It may seem silly to cook for only one or two people, but it can be the wisest and most nutritious thing to do. Meals prepared at home are going to be more nutrient dense, taste better and less expensive than meals eaten away from home.

#### *Nutrition is Still Important*

Eating well and being physically active play a major role in your overall health status. First, and foremost let the USDA's MyPyramid guide you in your food choices. Make sure you are eating enough fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low fat dairy to meet your nutritional needs.

#### *Enjoy Your Meals with A Friend*

Eating is a social activity and if you now find yourself eating alone and that is affecting your appetite find a friend who is in the same situation as you and make plans to eat together as often as you both can.

Set an attractive plate and table to make mealtime more inviting. Add some flowers to the table. Try a new recipe and invite family or friends to dinner.



can save you not only time but money as well. Planning your meals out will help you when you shop.

You can incorporate “planned-overs” into a variety of recipes for the week. An example of a planned-over is cooking a large quantity of chicken breasts at the beginning of the week and using them in several recipes for the week. For example, chicken salad, chicken casserole, chicken soup, etc.

Shop with a friend and split not only the cost of the groceries but the items as well. You will need to make sure you store the items properly to prevent spoilage once you have split a package. Label the items with the name and expiration date that is on the original packaging.

#### *Stock Up on Basics*

Keep the pantry, refrigerator and freezer stocked with basic items such as flour, sugar, baking soda,

#### *Plan Ahead*

It does take a little extra planning to prepare meals for only one or two people but planning ahead

baking powder, herbs, spices, rice, pasta, dried beans, canned tomatoes and tomato sauce. You might also consider purchasing time-saving ingredients such as pre-washed, pre-cut fruits and vegetables if they fit into your budget. While they are usually a bit more expensive than buying the whole product, they may be in more convenient sizes for your needs. Frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are other options which are usually available in smaller containers.

#### *Don't Forget About Food Safety*

Keeping you and your foods safe is very important as well. Even small amounts of unsafe food can cause food borne illness. Follow all the basic food safety procedures of 1) Clean, 2) Separate, 3) Cook, and 4) Chill to keep the food you prepare safe to eat.

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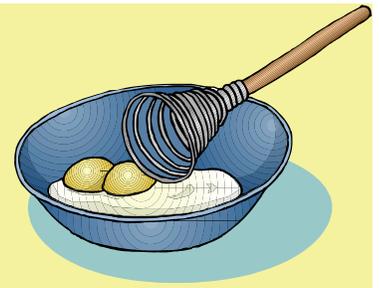
## Reduce Favorite Recipes

Try these tips to reduce recipes:

- Choose recipes that easy to divide into half or thirds.
- If a recipe calls for a can of beans or soup, use half and refrigerate or freeze the other half.
- Add seasonings gradually. Sometimes you will need to add more or less of the spice to get the right flavor.
- Check for doneness of halved recipes five to ten minutes sooner than the original recipe.
- Keep notes about what works and what doesn't.

## Dinner Omelet

4 eggs  
1/4 cup milk  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
Black pepper to taste  
1 tablespoon soft margarine  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped mushrooms  
1/2 cup chopped tomato  
3 tablespoons minced green onion  
1/2 cup low-fat cheese



Combine eggs, milk, salt and pepper in a small bowl and beat well to mix. Place large nonstick skillet over medium high heat and melt margarine in it. Pour egg mixture into the skillet. Reduce heat to low and cook eggs, pulling eggs to center of pan as they cook with a rubber spatula and gently lifting cooked portion to mix. Cook until eggs are set but top is still shiny. Sprinkle vegetables and cheese over top. Fold omelet in half using the rubber spatula, cover and let cook 1 minute longer to melt cheese.

Serves 2

**Note:** You can substitute your favorite vegetables and cheese for the ones used in the recipe if you like.

## Cake for Two

**Unless you buy cake mixes for one, you are going to have too much left over when you make a cake using an entire box. Use this formula to make two cakes out of one two layer mix.**

1 3/4 cups cake mix from box  
2/3 cup water  
1/4 cup oil  
1 egg

**Combine ingredients in an ungreased 8 or 9" square pan and beat with fork until well blended. Spread batter evenly in the pan when mixed. Bake at 350 degrees for 30—35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool and frost with your favorite premade frosting.**

## What's the Purpose of SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is about helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons.

Food Stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic SNAP card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using SNAP. This program can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact 1-888-LA HELPU or visit [www.dss.state.la.us](http://www.dss.state.la.us).

