

Facilitator's Guide



FRESH
CONVERSATIONS



Volume 8, Issue 6

Cooking for 1 or 2

Background Information:

- [UNL Reducing Recipe Sizes](#)
- [All Recipes](#) - lets you adjust the servings
- [Preserve the Taste of Summer - Freezing: Fruits and Vegetables \(iastate.edu\)](#)
- [SNAP-Ed Cooking](#)
- [ISU Extension Tips for Thawing Safely](#)
- [Freezing and Food Safety USDA](#)
- [How to Halve an Egg for Baking](#)

Behavior Goals

1. Participants will learn what low-impact activity is, and why it is important.
2. Participants will learn about efficient ways to cook for 1-2 people.
3. Participants will learn about food safety strategies to implement in their cooking.

Meeting Preparation:

1. Review the newsletter. Send questions or concerns to your coordinator.
2. Review the background resources (website links are provided above).
3. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful hints for the group. If virtual, have ideas on what to share about the recipe you tried.
4. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.
5. If the meeting is virtual, prepare ideas for how to engage participants in the recipe making process.
 - a. Prepare a grocery list for the recipe chosen that can be sent with newsletter for participants to purchase.
 - b. Demonstrate recipe on video and direct participants to the recipe in the newsletter.
 - c. If conference call: create a conversation about the recipe: serving size, freezing instructions, tips, discussion on ingredients, nutrition etc.

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The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the facilitator directions are in ***bold, dark red italic.***

It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

Props:

1. Example Sticker Label to Display (to put on container of food to freeze; need name of food contents and date)
2. Paper and Pen for participants

Conversation

Welcome back to Fresh Conversations! At our last meeting, we discussed vitamin D and it's connection to depression. Does anyone remember the 3 ways to get vitamin D?

Allow participants time to answer. Sunlight, Food, Supplements

Did anyone incorporate new ways to get more vitamin D in their lifestyle?

Ideas could be to walk outside 3 times a week, for 15 minutes, eat more fatty fish, or adding a supplement after speaking with their doctor.

Introduction

Today we are going to talk about cooking for a smaller household and the difficulties associated with that. For many of you, you may be used to cooking and/or eating with a larger household. Maybe you cooked for your family of 4. Maybe you grew up with 8 siblings and eating alone was never an option then. What are some of your favorite memories growing up at the dinner table?

Allow time for participants to answer.

Did you have any traditions that you remember from growing up or even with your own families?

I.e. always eating fried chicken on Sundays, pizza on Fridays, etc.

Many of us have some of our fondest memories around mealtimes, especially on holidays. We are going to dive deeper into some ways to continue to find enjoyment in your meals as you get older.

Discussion

Cooking for a smaller household can pose some challenges. Many of your favorite recipes may serve 4-8 people but if you are cooking for 1-2, most of us don't want to have that many leftovers. One tip to combat this is to divide your favorite recipes to make a smaller amount. But sometimes this can be tricky.

What if the recipe calls for 1 egg?

Usually 1 large egg is about 3 Tablespoons or you can whisk the egg into a bowl and take half. (You can use the reference above for more information).

If you have leftover egg you can heat on the stovetop for scrambled eggs or throw in a stir fry!

What if a recipe calls for 1 can of condensed soup and I only need a half of a can? Did you know you can put the rest that you didn't use in the refrigerator? Don't forget to label it with the date and use within 3-4 days though! In our newsletter this month, there are some other common measurements that are used in recipes and how to cut them in half for something for you to reference when cooking.

Another thing you can do with larger recipes is to freeze the rest for a later time.

What are some of your favorite things to make extra of and freeze?

It's important to remember to always label with the food item and the date, like this (show an example).

You can even label with your use by date as well. Let's look at the newsletter under "How long can I freeze it?" You can see common foods and how long it is recommended to freeze those foods.

Either read through them or have participants take turns reading through them.

Another great tip for cooking for a small household is "planned-overs." This means that through planning, you can use your leftovers and repurpose them into a new meal.

Let's do a quick activity. On a piece of paper, try thinking of a supper meal that you can repurpose into a different meal for lunch the next day. One example could be chili with a side salad for supper and then making a baked potato for lunch using the chili as a topping.

Allow time for participants to write something down.

Does anyone want to share?

If nobody wants to share, you could use your own example such as using extra taco meat for spaghetti the next day.

Planned overs are a great way to reduce food waste and also reduce your time cooking! Don't forget, though to use your leftovers within 3-4 days!

So all of this talk about cooking, what about the shopping part? Does anyone have any ideas for shopping for smaller households?

See the list below for examples:

1. Make a list, check it twice. Make a menu plan and create a list before you go.

2. Only buy larger packages if you will use it. It's not a good deal if it's wasted.

*****It is important to look at the date on the product when shopping.***

1. Individual serving packages might be a good option to consider for perishable items.

*****Are there any foods you like buying in individual packages rather than large ones?***

(Examples could be yogurts, salad mixes, coffee, cheese, snack mixes, crackers, condiments)

1. Purchase generic brands of items, if applicable.

2. Use coupons only for the items you typically buy.

3. Buy frozen vegetables so you can pour out what you need.

4. Ask the butcher to give you smaller cuts if needed.

*****You can always ask for smaller amounts of deli meat, smaller cuts of pork chops, steaks, roasts, ground beef, etc.***

Physical Activity:

Open by reflecting on the “take action” item from last month, finding three ways and days you would like to be active outdoors this week. Facilitators should share the three ways they have been active outdoors in the last week or two. Ideas: Gardening, a walk around the neighborhood to look at the flowers, riding bikes with the grandkids, etc.)

This month’s newsletter focuses on low-impact activities. What does low-impact mean to people?

- *Easy on my joints*
- *Doesn’t make me out of breath*
- *Feels good*
- *Is less scary/intimidating*

Low-impact activities are much easier on the joints and better suited for our bodies as we age. These activities require a minimal force between your body and the ground. Hence the name, low-impact. They are a great way to use your heart muscle and there is a less risk of injury due to their more gentle nature.

Does anyone have a favorite low-impact activity that comes to mind?

Examples are: walking, swimming, cycling, strength training, yoga, and golf.

These are all great examples. Sometimes physical activity or exercise can seem really intimidating, and that it’s too hard for our bodies. But low-impact activities are a great fit for us as we age.

Cardiovascular activities include things like walking, swimming, cycling, golf.

- Walking is a fantastic exercise. It’s something you can do anywhere, and the only equipment “needed” is shoes.
- Swimming is great because when you are in the water, all of the pressure is taken off your joints. Swimming and any water activities like water aerobics or water walking can be a particularly good fit for those with arthritis.
- Cycling is a terrific way to get around town quickly, without having to take a car, and because you’re seated, there isn’t any pressure on your joints.
- Golf is nice because it uses your whole body. You are walking to and around the holes and your upper body is utilized as you swing the clubs. Sure, there is a debate about taking a cart or not. Walking the course is definitely more steps, but taking a cart can make it easier for some adults to get out on the course to play. And that is a win for everyone.

Strength training is also great low-impact activity. We will learn more about the need and benefits of strengthening our muscles next month.

Tasting Activities:

1. Sweet Pork Stir Fry

- a. You can use whole wheat angel hair, spaghetti or even fettuccine noodles.
- b. Stir fries are great for using up leftovers - you could add virtually any vegetables you have in your fridge or freezer.
- c. You could also use different protein options such as beef, chicken, or shrimp.
- d. Add a side of fruit and glass of milk or ½ cup cottage cheese (or dairy alternative) to make this a complete, balanced meal.
- e. Look for low sodium or reduced sodium soy sauce. You can save up to 40% of the sodium by choosing the lower sodium version.
- f. 1 garlic clove equals ½ teaspoon of minced garlic.
- g. You will want to use any leftover pork or noodles in your fridge within 3-4 days of originally cooking them so you may need to plan your meals accordingly!

2. Sweet Potato Burritos

- a. <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/sweet-potato-burritos/>
- b. This would be a good recipe to use up extra sweet potatoes from a different meal.
- c. Try adding other ingredients such as chopped vegetables (avocado, corn, onion, peppers), salsa, sour cream or plain yogurt, or sliced or shredded cooked meat (beef steak, chicken breast, pork chop).
- d. This recipe is a great source of fiber (11 g per serving, almost half of the minimum recommendation for women 50+)
- e. Sweet potatoes can also easily be made in the microwave, similar to baked potatoes.

Take Action

Write down one low-impact activity you plan to participate in this week.