HEALTHY MEAL PLANNING

You may find it easier to eat a healthy balanced diet and lose weight if you **plan your meals** at least one or two days ahead and prepare meals at home more often. It could also help to save you time and money, especially if you’re eating fewer takeaways and convenience foods.

To prepare a healthy meal takes a little planning. Making more **meals from scratch** is the best way to be certain they are nutritionally balanced, but it is also possible to improve convenience meals with a few simple changes.

This guide will give you suggestions on how to plan healthy meals.

### PLAN YOUR MEALS

- **Plan ahead** at least 1 or 2 days of meals and healthy snacks.
- **Decide how many meals** you need to make and how many people each meal will need to serve, so that you won’t waste food or cook more than you need.
- **Build up a collection** of quick, easy, tasty and healthy recipes that all the family enjoys.
- **Keep a stock of store cupboard items** that are commonly used in your favourite dishes. E.g. herbs and spices, stock cubes, vinegar.
- **Make use of leftovers** to avoid waste, for example leftover roast chicken makes a great salad or stir-fry the next day.

### SHOP SMART

- **Make a list** and stick to it. Don’t be tempted by special offers on high-calorie snack foods that you didn’t plan to buy.
- **Check** the fridge and food cupboards to plan dishes around what you already have.
- **Don’t shop when you’re hungry.**
AIM FOR BALANCED MEALS

- Include foods from the **3 main food groups** in each meal:
  - **Protein**: lean meat, fish, eggs, pulses, tofu.
  - **Starchy Carbohydrate**: pasta, rice, potatoes, yam.
  - **Vegetables or Salad**

- If you need to use **ready meals**, choose the healthier option by reading the label and add frozen vegetables to make the dish more balanced and filling.

ADAPT YOUR FAVOURITE MEALS

Instead of abandoning your favourite dishes, by adjusting the portion size and adding vegetables it is possible to improve the balance of the meal and lower the calorie content. Here are a few examples...

### 3 Sausages & Mash

- **73g Carbs**
- 165g sausages
- 355g mash
- **847 Cals**
- 31g Prot
- 50g Fat
- 22g SatFat
- 9g Fibre

### Carrots

- **5g Carbs**
- 80g
- 1 5-a-day
- **23 Cals**
- 0g Prot
- 0g Fat
- 0g SatFat
- 2g Fibre

### Broccoli

- **2g Carbs**
- 80g
- 1 5-a-day
- **22 Cals**
- 3g Prot
- 0g Fat
- 0g SatFat
- 2g Fibre

### 2 Sausages & Mash

- **48g Carbs**
- 110g sausages
- 235g mash
- **563 Cals**
- 20g Prot
- 33g Fat
- 14g SatFat
- 6g Fibre

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Pasta Bake

48g Carbs
458 Cals
32g Prot
16g Fat
8g SatFat
5g Fibre

1/2 5-a-day

Shepherd’s Pie

51g Carbs
709 Cals
33g Prot
43g Fat
20g SatFat
6g Fibre

1 1/2 5-a-day

swap to

Pasta Bake

32g Carbs
306 Cals
21g Prot
11g Fat
5g SatFat
3g Fibre

1/2 5-a-day

Shepherd’s Pie

38g Carbs
527 Cals
24g Prot
32g Fat
15g SatFat
5g Fibre

1 1/2 5-a-day

Mixed Salad Leaves

0g Carbs
2 Cals
0g Prot
0g Fat
0g SatFat
0g Fibre

Peas

8g Carbs
63 Cals
5g Prot
1g Fat
0g SatFat
4g Fibre

1 5-a-day

swap to