

(Week 2)

FN1473

# COOKING 101

Quick and Easy Menus, Recipes and Tips for Singles and Couples

## HOT TIPS ABOUT FOOD STORAGE



fresh box



**NDSU**

EXTENSION

reviewed APRIL 2020

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ALREADY?

(The answers are on page 5.)

POP  
QUIZ:

1. What temperature range is safest for a refrigerator?
  - a. 34 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit
  - b. 41 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit
  - c. 56 to 69 degrees Fahrenheit
2. True or False: Temperatures below 0 degrees Fahrenheit can kill bacteria.
3. Which method is safe for thawing frozen foods?
  - a. Thawing on the counter
  - b. Thawing under cold water

## YOUR REFRIGERATOR AND THE COLD TRUTH

What should happen when you realize you didn't put your leftover pizza in the fridge last night?

For safety, throw it out. Unfortunately, you cannot reheat the food and pretend leaving it unrefrigerated never happened. Bacteria grew to dangerous numbers during the

night, and some produce heat-stable toxins. Even boiling will not undo the damage.

If you remembered to put your leftovers in the fridge, did you make sure the temperature was between 34 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit? At this temperature, bacteria grow slowly, so food can last longer. If you don't have a refrigerator thermometer, you need to get one ASAP: preferably get a hanging one that won't get in the way.

## CHOOSE YOUR PANTRY STORAGE SPACE WISELY

Do you keep your potatoes under the sink? That is an unsafe habit unless you are trying to grow moldy or sprouted potatoes. If your storage area is moist or warm, food could spoil or decrease in quality. When deciding where to store food, keep these tips in mind:

- Be sure it's a dry, cool and dark place. The ideal temperature of a pantry should be 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Keep food storage away from the oven, range, dishwasher, water heater or any hot pipes.
- Make sure you can see and reach all areas of the pantry easily.

## WHAT FREEZES WELL?

- Meats such as beef, poultry, fish
- Leftover casseroles
- Leftover soups
- Breads/grain products
- Berry fruits such as raspberries, strawberries, blackberries and blueberries

## WHAT DOES NOT FREEZE WELL?

- Whole eggs
- Raw vegetables (unless you blanch or heat-treat them)
- Dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt) — these tend to separate and lose quality, but are safe to eat

# THAWING FROZEN FOODS: THE BASICS

## Here are some safe ways to thaw foods:

- Thaw in the **MICROWAVE** if the food is to be cooked immediately afterward.
  - This is an easy method when reheating leftovers.
  - Make sure the food is heated through by stirring or cutting into smaller pieces.
- Thaw in the **REFRIGERATOR**, but be sure to plan ahead.
  - This takes the longest amount of time but the least amount of effort.
  - Thawing 1 pound of raw meat generally takes one day.
- Thaw under **COLD RUNNING WATER** at 70 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.
  - Make sure the food is wrapped in a water-tight package such as a plastic bag.
  - You also can submerge the food in cold water for a maximum of two hours.
    - Fill with new cold water every 15 to 30 minutes.

## SOME FREEZING TIPS

If you have enough leftovers for multiple meals, try freezing them. Let's use lasagna as an example. While putting the whole pan in the freezer is easy, carving out single servings from a large frozen block of food is not practical. Instead, separate leftovers into individual portions (approximately 1 cup). Place in freezer containers or use freezer bags. Label the package with contents and date.

Don't forget to have a thermometer in your freezer. The freezer should be 0 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. Take note that the freezer does not kill bacteria. Freezer temperatures prevent bacteria from growing until the food is thawed.

## SOME THAWING DON'TS

**Have you ever left a pound of meat on the counter to thaw?**

**Have you ever run a chicken breast under warm water to thaw?**

If you answered "yes" to either question, you could be putting yourself at risk of foodborne illness.

Never thaw food at room temperature or in warm water. If food is warmer than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, but colder than 140 degrees Fahrenheit, bacteria will multiply quickly.

What if that warm water from the chicken breast splashed on a salad you had sitting on the counter? Now you have bacteria growing in your salad. If you think thawing food on the counter is OK because the center of the food is still frozen, think again. The outer, thawed surfaces will serve as a breeding ground for bacteria.

**For more information, visit these Web sites:**

**General care of the freezer:**

[www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/freeze/freezer\\_care.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/freeze/freezer_care.html)

**Respect the Danger Zone:**

[www.netwellness.org/healthtopics/poison/danger.cfm](http://www.netwellness.org/healthtopics/poison/danger.cfm)

**Microwave safety:**

[www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Cooking\\_Safely\\_in\\_the\\_Microwave/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Cooking_Safely_in_the_Microwave/index.asp)

**Storage times for the refrigerator and freezer:**

[www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/storageetimes.html](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/storageetimes.html)

# WEEKLY MENU PLANNER – week 2

\*indicates recipe is provided

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
MON.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole-wheat toast with peanut butter</li> <li>Banana</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetarian Taco Salad*</li> <li>Apple</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minestrone Soup*</li> <li>Whole-wheat crackers</li> <li>Ham and cheese sandwich</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celery sticks with dip of choice</li> <li>Popcorn</li> </ul>
TUES.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oatmeal with chopped apple</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baked potato with shredded cheese, sour cream, salt and pepper</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pulled pork sandwich*</li> <li>Leftover Minestrone Soup*</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granola bar</li> <li>Orange</li> </ul>
WED.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oatmeal with almonds and dried cranberries</li> <li>Orange</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chef salad with deli ham, cucumbers, grape tomatoes, salad dressing, shredded cheese</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy Chicken Parmesan*</li> <li>Baked (or microwaved) potato</li> <li>Microwaved veggies</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granola bar</li> <li>Banana</li> </ul>
THURS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole-wheat toast with peanut butter</li> <li>Banana</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leftover Minestrone Soup* with whole-wheat crackers</li> <li>Small spinach salad with cucumbers, grape tomatoes, salad dressing, shredded cheese</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chicken and Black Bean Quesadilla*</li> <li>Microwaved veggies</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popcorn</li> <li>Orange</li> <li>Celery sticks with dip of choice</li> </ul>
FRI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrambled Egg Burrito*</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deli ham and cheese sandwich on whole-wheat bread with cucumbers and spinach</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy Pasta Bowl*</li> <li>Orange</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granola bar</li> <li>Apple</li> </ul>
SAT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole-wheat pancakes topped with fresh banana slices</li> <li>Orange</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leftover Pulled Pork* in tortilla</li> <li>Microwaved veggies</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grilled chicken salad with spinach, grilled chicken, cucumber slices, shredded cheese and salad dressing</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popcorn</li> <li>Apple</li> <li>Celery sticks with dip of choice</li> </ul>
SUN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cereal of choice</li> <li>Apple slices with peanut butter</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grilled ham and cheese sandwich</li> <li>Microwaved veggies</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oriental Chicken Stir-fry*</li> <li>Skim milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granola bar</li> <li>Banana</li> </ul>

**HINT:** Cooking a few chicken breasts at the beginning of the week and refrigerating or freezing them will make cooking meals much faster.

# GROCERY LIST

Read through the recipes and check your supplies to see what and how much you need.

To save money, compare unit prices (price per ounce) on the store shelving.

## GRAINS

- Whole-wheat bread
- Whole-wheat tortillas
- Oatmeal
- Whole-grain spiral pasta
- Reduced-calorie microwave popcorn
- Whole-grain pancake mix
- Whole-grain crackers
- Cereal of choice
- Box of granola bars (whole grain, preferably)

## VEGETABLES

- 1 large bag prewashed spinach
- 1 bag celery
- 1 bag pre-chopped/washed stir-fry vegetables (Make sure it includes bell peppers)
- 1 large cucumber
- 1 to 2 packages frozen vegetables (such as corn, mixed vegetables)
- 1 small package grape tomatoes
- 2 Russet potatoes

## FRUIT

- 5 bananas
- 5 apples
- 5 oranges
- 1 bag dried cranberries

## DAIRY

- 1 gallon (or more) skim milk
- Shredded cheese (such as mozzarella)
- Parmesan cheese
- Sour cream

## MEAT/OTHER PROTEIN FOODS

- Small pork tenderloin
- 1 bag frozen boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- ½-1 pound shaved deli ham
- 1 carton eggs
- Bag of unseasoned, pre-chopped almonds

## CANNED/DRY GOODS, ETC.

- 1 jar peanut butter
- Soy sauce (preferably reduced-sodium)
- Barbeque sauce of choice
- Salsa
- Low-fat salad dressing of choice
- Dip of choice for celery (optional)
- Olive oil
- 1 packet dry onion soup mix
- 2 cans low-sodium chicken broth
- 28-oz. can low-sodium diced tomatoes
- 15-oz. can white beans (cannellini or navy)
- 15-oz. or smaller can black beans
- 1 small jar tomato/spaghetti sauce of choice

# RECIPES

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

tsp. = teaspoon	pkg. = package
Tbsp. = tablespoon	g = grams
c. = cup	mg = milligrams
oz. = ounce	lb. = pound



## PULLED PORK

- 1 small pork tenderloin (2 or 3 lbs.)
- 1 packet dry onion soup mix
- $\frac{3}{4}$  c. water

Cut thawed tenderloin into three or more chunks. Add all ingredients in the slow cooker. Turn slow cooker on high for six hours. Pull apart meat with a fork after four to five hours. This recipe is good on a wheat bun or wrap with barbeque sauce, tomato slices, zucchini slices or cucumber slices.

**Makes eight servings.** Per serving: 150 calories, 4.5 g fat, 210 mg sodium, 2 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber, 24 g protein

## EASY PASTA BOWL

- 1 c. cooked spiral pasta
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. sauteed grape tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. shredded cheese (mozzarella cheese recommended)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cook pasta according to package directions. At the same time pasta is cooking, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in pan on medium-high heat and add grape tomatoes. Saute grape tomatoes for two minutes. Combine sauteed grape tomatoes, remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil, cooked pasta and shredded cheese. Add salt and pepper to taste.

**Makes one serving.** Per serving: 520 calories, 31 g fat, 44 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 220 mg sodium



## VEGETARIAN TACO SALAD

- 2 c. fresh spinach
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. corn kernels, cooked
- $\frac{1}{4}$  c. canned black beans, drained and rinsed (cold or heated)
- 2 Tbsp. shredded cheese
- 2 Tbsp. salsa
- 1 Tbsp. light sour cream

Toss all ingredients together.

**Makes one serving.** Per serving: 180 calories, 7 g fat, 22 g carbohydrate, 10 g protein, 6 g fiber, 610 mg sodium



## CHICKEN AND BLACK BEAN QUESADILLA

- 2 whole-wheat tortillas
- ½ c. cooked chicken
- ¼ c. canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- ¼ c. shredded cheese
- ¼ c. bell peppers, chopped
- Salsa, sour cream (optional)

Place pan on stove and turn to medium heat. Put one tortilla in pan, add half of the cheese, add the other toppings and sprinkle on the other half of the cheese. Place other tortilla on top of cheese and cover pan for approximately two to four minutes. Flip quesadilla very carefully to heat other side approximately one to two minutes. Cut into six pieces and serve with salsa and sour cream.

**Makes two servings.** Per serving: 250 calories, 7 g fat, 29 g carbohydrate, 18 g protein, 4 g fiber and 620 mg sodium



## ORIENTAL CHICKEN STIR-FRY

- 2 c. pre-chopped, prewashed stir-fry vegetables
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ c. precooked chicken
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce

Heat olive oil in large pan on medium to medium-high. Add vegetables and cook for approximately seven to 10 minutes. Stir every minute and adjust temperature as needed. Add precooked chicken when vegetables are almost done. Remove from heat and add soy sauce.

**Makes one serving.** Per serving: 420 calories, 29 g fat, 16 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 1,100 mg sodium  
 \*To reduce sodium content, choose reduced-sodium soy sauce.

## SCRAMBLED EGG BURRITO

- 1 whole-wheat tortilla
- Cooking spray
- 1 whole egg and 2 egg whites
- 1 c. spinach
- ¼ c. canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 Tbsp. shredded cheese
- 2 Tbsp. salsa
- 1 Tbsp. light sour cream

Spray pan. On stovetop with medium heat, cook eggs and spinach until eggs are completely cooked.

On a heated tortilla, add cooked eggs, black beans and shredded cheese. Roll up tortilla and serve with salsa and sour cream.

**Makes one serving.**  
 Per serving: 370 calories, 37 g carbohydrate, 15 g fat, 6 g fiber and 900 mg sodium

# MINISTRONE SOUP

3 c. reduced-sodium chicken broth  
28-oz. can diced tomatoes  
15-oz. can white beans  
(cannellini or navy), drained  
2 celery stalks, chopped  
3 c. fresh spinach  
½ tsp. each salt and pepper  
2 c. uncooked spiral pasta of choice  
Parmesan cheese (optional)



Combine chicken broth, tomatoes, beans, celery, salt and pepper in slow cooker. Cover and cook on low heat for six to eight hours or on high for three to four hours. Add spinach during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

Cook pasta in separate pot according to package directions. Drain and add pasta to slow cooker right before serving. When soup is done, dish into bowls and add salt, pepper and parmesan to taste.

**Makes six servings.** Per serving: 200 calories, 1 g fat, 38 g carbohydrate, 10 g protein, 5 g fiber, 840 mg sodium



# HEALTHIER CHICKEN PARMESAN

1 small chicken breast  
½ c. dry pasta (1 c. cooked)  
½ c. tomato sauce  
¼ c. shredded cheese (mozzarella cheese recommended)

Cook one small chicken breast in pan on medium heat (in a small amount of oil or broth, as needed). Boil water with pasta according to package directions. Heat tomato sauce in microwave while chicken is cooking (Note: Thoroughly heating the sauce only takes about 30 seconds.) Cook chicken to 165 F. Place chicken on top of drained, cooked pasta and pour tomato sauce and then shredded cheese on top of chicken. Serve hot.

**Makes one serving.** Per serving: 380 calories, 4 g fat, 45 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber, 940 mg sodium

**Julie Garden-Robinson**, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D.  
Food and Nutrition Specialist

**EAT SMART. PLAY HARD. TOGETHER.**  
For more information, visit [www.ndsu.edu/eatsmart](http://www.ndsu.edu/eatsmart).

NDSU Nutrition Education in the Community Students: **Leah Gramlow**, Student Dietitian, Lead student writer;  
**Katie Myrold**, Student Dietitian; **Joan Nagel**, Student Dietitian

The NDSU Extension Service does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names. NDSU encourages you to use and share this content, but please do so under the conditions of our Creative Commons license. You may copy, distribute, transmit and adapt this work as long as you give full attribution, don't use the work for commercial purposes and share your resulting work similarly. For more information, visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/creative-commons](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/creative-commons).

**For more information on this and other topics, see [www.ndsu.edu/extension](http://www.ndsu.edu/extension)**

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost for Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, NDSU Main Campus, 701-231-7708, [ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu). This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881. 2M-5-10, 2M-4-11, 500-12-15