

Healthy in a Hurry !



Nutritious Foods on a Hectic Schedule

- Shop smarter and faster
- Save time and money
- Add color to your plate
- Decrease salt and unhealthy fats
- Increase energy level
- Enjoy more quality time with your family

**A 13-day self-directed activity incentive program
Open to all employees**

Starts April 18 and ends April 30, 2017



Recognizing the impact of food on our overall health is the first step to eating well, but the realities of our busy lives makes this difficult. Family meals are replaced with working parents picking up children at day care, evening meetings, caring for elderly family members, and more. It is easy to fall into the habit of eating delivery pizza and drive through fast food.

But a little planning and preparation can go a long way in providing nutritious, tasty foods for our families and us. Take the “Healthy in a Hurry” Challenge to find out how and earn cool prizes. Only MIIA/Blue Cross members are eligible for prizes.

Wellness Tip:

Most cooked leftovers will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3-4 days and in the freezer for 4-5 months.



Keys to Success

Prep and cook on the weekends (or whenever you have a couple extra hours)

A few hours of prep work on the weekend will go a long way to reduce stress and improve your meals during the week. Cook up a big batch of brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat couscous, etc., and freeze in extra large ice cube trays for quick defrosting in the microwave. [See examples.](#)

Wash and chop vegetables as soon as you get back from the grocery store; if your weekend is busy, buy precut vegetables and prewashed greens. Hard boil eggs for salads and sandwiches, pre-make a pesto or tomato sauce and store in the freezer. Cook a large batch of your favorite soup or chili recipe and store in single size portions. Take a look at six quick, easy recipes at [Healthy in a Hurry Recipes.](#)

Prepare a meal consisting of a lean protein, vegetable, and whole grain source and freeze in a BPA-free, microwavable container. [Check out examples.](#)

Make your own frozen smoothie packs by combining 2 cups fruit, 1 sliced banana, 1 cup greens, optional but recommended to pump up nutritional value, in a zip lock freezer bag. To use, add 1 cup of liquid (water, coconut water, juice, almond milk, low-fat milk) to the blender, then add frozen smoothie pack contents and blend away!

Make a Mason Jar Salad Recipe in the evening for lunch the next day. Prepare an Overnight Oatmeal Recipe the night before for a grab and go breakfast. Take a look at these [Healthy in a Hurry Recipes.](#)

Shop Smart

A trip to the grocery store doesn't have to be a painful experience. Try to plan a menu for the week and construct your shopping list from the menu. Also organize your list by food category to save even more time. Keep it simple and focus on fresh foods, most often found along the perimeter of the grocery store. When you are shopping within the aisles look for unprocessed or minimally processed foods; the fewer ingredients on the label, the better! If buying canned foods, choose the low sodium varieties. Different varieties of canned beans are high in protein and fiber, rinse in a colander to reduce sodium.

Try to seek out produce in season. Produce has more nutrients and tastes better when at its peak. In some cases, frozen vegetables without sauces can be more nutritious than fresh vegetables that have been transported from distant locations.



Be Creative

Choose one of the following “Theme Nights” for one day of the week. Push yourself to try new foods to avoid boredom. Try one of our “15 Minute Recipes with 5 Ingredients” at [Healthy in a Hurry Recipes](#).

- Meatless Monday...go vegetarian!
- Taco Tuesday...use corn or whole wheat tortillas with your choice of lean protein, vegetables, salsa and low-fat sour cream!
- One Pot Wednesday....cook in one skillet, pot or pan for easy clean-up!
- Throw-back Thursday...do a recipe makeover of longtime favorites such as mac and cheese, lasagna, chicken pot pie, chicken parmesan, etc. [Recipes makeovers examples](#).

Have you heard of “spiralizing”? It is the new food craze and a quick and easy way to increase your vegetable intake and color your plate with nutrients. Many grocery stores carry pre-spiralized vegetables. [Try a vegetable spiralized recipe](#).

Stock Your Pantry

A well-stocked pantry ensures you have the basics to throw together a fabulous meal at the last minute. Check to see you have a constant supply of extra virgin olive oil, balsamic and other flavored vinegars, dried herbs and spices, canned beans, extracts such as vanilla, almond and rum, locally sourced honey and maple syrup; nuts, olives, capers; rice such as brown, Arborio, jasmine, long grain, wild and white; canned or packaged tuna and salmon (canned salmon is wild salmon); dried fruits, mustards and other condiments; grains such as barley, bulgur, rolled oats, quinoa; pastas such as whole wheat and low gluten varieties; and low sodium broths such as chicken and vegetable.

Replace whole spices every 4 years, ground spices every 2-3 years, and leafy herbs every 1-3 years. Avoid sprinkling spices and herbs directly from the bottle over a steaming pot or there will be loss of flavor. Do not store spices and herbs over the stove. They are best stored in cool, dark places.

Embrace Leftovers

During meal prep, make extra food for a bag lunch the next day or a home cooked meal that only needs zapping in the microwave after a busy day. Also, create speedy side dishes with leftover vegetables. Most cooked leftovers will keep in an airtight container for about 3-4 days, or in the freezer for 4-5 months. Remember to let the food cool completely before packing it up for storage. Clearly label items including the date for freezing. It is important to thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or microwave; never at room temperature and never, never expose frozen foods to warm water



Healthy in a Hurry Challenges

Choose at least 6 of the following to complete between April 18-April 30.

1. Make a Mason Jar Salad the night before for lunch the next day
2. Prepare an Overnight Oatmeal in a Jar for breakfast
3. Plan a week's worth of dinner menus and make your shopping list based on the menu
4. Try a spiralized vegetable recipe
5. Batch cook a recipe and freeze for future use
6. Overhaul and restock pantry
7. Prepare a meal consisting of a lean protein, vegetable, and whole grain source and freeze in a BPA-free meal, microwavable container
8. Precook a whole grain and freeze in extra large ice cube trays
9. Cook one of the recipes suggested in this program
10. Remake a favorite recipe into a healthier alternative
11. Make extra food at dinner one night to have for a bagged lunch
12. Prepare your own frozen smoothie pack
13. Buy pre-cut vegetables and/or pre-washed greens
14. Create vegetable medleys with left overs
15. Prepare a crockpot or slow cooker recipe before leaving for work. Recipes to try.
16. Enlist other family members to help with dinner prep!



Healthy in a Hurry Log and Prize Form

Complete and return to mharrington@mma.org or fax 617-542-6513 by May 8, 2017. Write the # of the challenge (challenges are all numbered on previous page) you completed in the appropriate box below. If you completed 2 challenges on the same day, record that # as well. *In order to earn a prize, you need to complete at least 6 challenges within the 13- day period. Only MIIA/Blue Cross members are eligible for prizes.*

Name: _____ MIIA/BCBS ID#: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing address: _____

Employer: _____

Day	Challenge #	Challenge #
Ex. April 2	# 7	#9
Ex. April 3	#11	
April 18		
April 19		
April 20		
April 21		
April 22		
April 23		
April 24		
April 25		
April 26		
April 27		
April 28		
April 29		
April 30		

Prize selection (choose one)

- Bike repair kit
- Soup to go container
- Bamboo cutting board
- Sports towel in bag
- Mag lite combo set
- Yoga mat
- Salad to go container
- Fruit infused water bottle
- Pyrex storage set (4 sizes)
- Soft Touch travel tumbler
- Pack it refreezable lunch tote
- Stainless steel water bottle
- Cold/hot herbal hug wrap
- Wind chimes
- Back in Motion back wrap