Tips to Eat Healthy During the Coronavirus

Even though you are stuck at home, some advanced planning can help you to keep your family eating well. Here are some tips to help make delicious and nutritious meals.

1. Limit grocery store visits to lessen risk of exposure. Make sure to wear your mask and socially distance to lower the risk to yourself and others.

2. Plan meals before shopping, but be flexible as some of your favorite food items might not be available. Keep your pantry and freezer organized. If you know what is in your pantry, it helps to plan meals and keep costs down so that you do not purchase items that you already have.

3. Keep healthy foods that have a longer shelf life at home to lessen the need for frequent shopping trips. Use canned beans to add additional protein and nutrition to soups and salads. Canned tomatoes are packed with vitamin C, fiber, and the antioxidant lycopene, shown to reduce your risk of cancer and heart disease. Use tomatoes in chili, sauces or to add a nutritious punch to macaroni and cheese. Canned salmon and tuna can be made into patties or used in a casserole. *See recipe below for Salmon Patties.

4. To reduce costs, buy frozen fruits and vegetables. Buy fresh produce that is on sale and even in-season.

5. Prepare large batches of soup, chili, meatballs and other freezer-friendly meals and freeze in smaller portions.

6. Use leftovers in other recipes. If you chop onions or peppers for a dinner recipe, use extras in an omelet for breakfast, or freeze the unused vegetables to add extra flavor and nutrition to fajitas or a casserole.

7. Get your kids involved in meal preparation. Try some new recipes together. Not only does it make meals more fun, but it is a great way to teach them about math and science.

Tips to Stay Healthy During the Coronavirus

In these uncertain times, you might feel like you have less control, but there is still a lot you can do to stay physically and mentally healthy. Here are some small changes in your diet and lifestyle that can make a big difference.

1. Wash your hands, wear a mask, and avoid close contact in public. Following these guidelines can help to slow or prevent the spread of this virus.
2. Use family meals as a time to unplug and connect with each other. Studies have found that children who participate in regular family meals not only eat healthier, but are less likely to have behavior problems or abuse drugs.
3. Consume a healthy diet with a variety of fruits and vegetables. Each has their own vitamins, minerals and antioxidants to keep you healthy. Eat less processed foods, and consume less foods and beverages with added sugar.
4. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water. Even mild dehydration can reduce your energy level and make you less productive.
5. Mental health is important too. Now more than ever, we need to stay connected with friends. Connect with friends with an online Zoom meeting. Schedule a virtual game night or dinner party. Follow a free online meditation program, or join a prayer group. If needed, to talk to a mental health professional.
6. Exercise! Walking outdoors is great for your physical and mental health. Use your home exercise equipment. Try a new exercise program like an online yoga class.
7. Get adequate sleep to keep a positive mood and reduce stress levels. Establish healthy sleep hygiene by keeping a consistent bedtime, turning off technology, and avoiding stimulants, like caffeine and nicotine, before bedtime.

Take this time to reconnect as a family by planning fun activities like exploring a nearby park, playing frisbee in the backyard, or starting a new hobby. Using this time to establish some positive habits will provide a long-term benefit for you and your family.