

## SIMPLE MEAL SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY BALANCE

**D**o you find it a challenge to prepare and eat healthy meals while juggling life's many demands? You're not alone! While 92% of Canadians make an effort to eat well, most are often pressed to prepare meals in under 20 minutes. There is good news - healthy eating can be quick, easy AND delicious! Try these time-saving tips and simple meal solutions to help you strike a healthy balance between convenience and nutrition.

### Have a Plan to Save Time

Not sure what to cook for dinner at the end of a long day? A little planning ahead can help. Spending 15 to 20 minutes to plan your weekday menus can make it a lot easier to achieve a healthy balance any night of the week.

**Quick Tip:** *Get your family involved in meal planning. Ask family members to suggest one or two of their favourite meals. Be sure to include foods from all four food groups – Grain Products, Vegetables & Fruit, Milk Products, Meat & Alternatives!*

### Stock Up on Nutritious Foods

Always running to the grocery store at the last minute? Try to stock up on a variety of quick-to-prepare foods from all four food groups. Having these foods on hand will take a lot of extra legwork out of meal and snack prep.

**Quick Tip:** *Start with a list. Once you have your menu plan for the week, spend a few extra minutes making a grocery list to make sure you shop for what you'll need.*

### Quick-to-Prepare Foods to Simplify Healthy Eating

#### Grain Products

- Whole grain cereals
- Frozen pancakes & waffles
- Whole grain breads
- Whole grain wraps
- Whole grain pitas
- Pastas
- Rice – with pre-mixed seasonings
- Couscous
- Cereal bars
- Rice cakes

#### Vegetables & Fruit

- Fresh pre-cut fruit and vegetables
- Frozen vegetable mixes
- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Dried fruit mixes
- Fruit leathers
- Fruit salad cups
- Apple sauce cups
- Pasta sauce
- Bagged salads

#### Milk Products

- Milk boxes
- Yogourt tubes
- Yogourt drinks
- Yogourt cups
- Cheese sticks
- Cheese slices
- Cheese spreads
- Milk puddings
- Frozen yogourt

#### Meat & Alternatives

- Marinated beef, pork and chicken cuts and kabobs
- Pre-cut stir-fry strips
- Refrigerated heat and serve roasts and entrees
- Frozen pre-cooked meat balls, burgers and ground meat
- Quick roasts
- Fish fillets
- Nuts and peanut butter
- Eggs
- Canned beans

# Simple Meal Solutions

Here are 5 simple meal solutions from the Registered Dietitians at the Beef Information Centre. Try a variety of combinations to suit your taste. With a little imagination, the possibilities are endless!

## Weeknight Roasts

Roasts are ideal for rush hour dinners:

- Beef or pork roasts, whole chickens or turkey breast (under one pound or pre-cooked roasts)
- Fresh root vegetables cut into chunks (such as potatoes, carrots, and parsnip)

Roasts are a no-fuss one pot meal. Simply place veggies around roast on a rack in a roasting pan. Roast in the oven for recommended cooking time. Enjoy with fresh crusty bread and a nice cold glass of milk.



**Beef Quick Roasts weigh about 1 lb (500 g) and come in 8 different cuts.**

## Protein Packed Salads

Toss up a hearty salad for a quick meal:

- Pre-washed bagged salad mix
- Small grilling steak or beef strips, fish fillet or poultry (or leftover protein of your choice)
- Lower-fat salad dressing

Grill, broil or sauté your choice of protein (or use pre-cooked leftovers) and slice into strips. Arrange on top of salad mix and toss with a light dressing. Enjoy with pita bread and yogurt.



**Beef Medallions come in a portion size ideal for 1 or 2 and are easy to cook to perfection.**

## Heat and Serve

Save time with heat and serve items:

- Pre-cooked stews, stir-frys, meat-loaf, roasts, meat balls and burgers
- Frozen or canned vegetables
- Quick cooking rice, potatoes or couscous

Microwave any combination of these items for a simple supper that's ready to serve in minutes.

## Speedy Stir-Frys

Stir-fry dinners are ready in a flash with:

- Frozen or fresh pre-cut vegetable mixes
- Pre-cut beef, pork, veal, or poultry strips
- Pre-made marinades and stir-fry sauces
- Quick-cooking rice, pasta or couscous

Pre-marinate meat strips and stir-fry with vegetables. Serve over pasta or rice.

## Wraps to Go

Stuff a wrap for a quick lunch or light dinner:

- Whole wheat tortilla or pita bread
- Sliced Deli meat (leftovers work too)
- Pre-washed bagged salad greens
- Pre-shredded cheese or cheese slices

For added flavour, spread a tortilla shell or pita bread with a favourite mustard, chutney, salsa, hummus or tzatziki sauce. Enjoy with a glass of juice, juice box or milk.

## Lean Beef is a Nutritious Part of a Healthy Eating Plan



The Health Check™ program helps Canadians make healthy food choices. When trimmed of visible fat, all cuts of beef, except Short Ribs qualify for Health Check™. To qualify, meat cuts must be lean, with no more than 10% fat. Extra lean and lean ground beef also qualify for Health Check™. When selecting meat, choosing leaner cuts and leaner ground meats (extra lean or lean) more often is part of healthy eating.

### Nutrition information, on average, per 100 grams raw beef :

Beef Cuts (TRIMMED):	147 Calories, 22 g protein, 5.9 g fat, 0 g carbohydrate
Beef Cuts (Untrimmed):	203 Calories, 20 g protein, 13 g fat, 0 g carbohydrate
Ground Beef (Lean):	201 Calories, 20 g protein, 13 g fat, 0 g carbohydrate
Ground Beef (Extra Lean):	155 Calories, 21 g protein, 7.3 g fat, 0 g carbohydrate

† The Beef Information Centre financially supports the Health Check™ Education Program of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. This is not an endorsement. For more information, visit [www.healthcheck.org](http://www.healthcheck.org).

**Beef is packed with 12 essential nutrients! It's an excellent source of high-quality protein and zinc and the richest source of easily absorbed iron.**



This nutrition resource is brought to you by the registered dietitians at the Beef Information Centre. Questions about Beef? Visit [www.beefinfo.org](http://www.beefinfo.org) or call 1-888-248-BEEF. Beef Information Centre has offices in North Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Mississauga, St. Laurent and Halifax. May be reproduced without permission provided no changes are made and credit is given. Printed June 2003