

A Free Guide to Living a Balanced & Healthy Life This Year



Getting Started

Changing your lifestyle to one full of healthy habits can be a real challenge, especially when you're trying to get your family involved. It can take a lot of trial and error before you finally find a balance that works for you and your family. The best advice that anyone can provide you is to find something that works for you and stick to it. There will be hard moments, but in the end, you will never regret creating a healthy lifestyle for your family.

Before you get started, write down your goals on a piece of paper and be honest about what you want. Whether you plan to lose weight or get fit, putting your goals in writing will help you stick to them. Some of these goals may be to lose weight, eat healthier, be more active, or even sleep better. No matter what your goals are, this guide will help you achieve them in a way that does not feel overwhelming.

Managing a busy schedule full of family events, work, fun plans, and more is in some ways a job by itself. With careful planning, you can create a healthy menu and a balanced schedule that will keep you active without worrying about missing out on anything. This guide will help you create a solid foundation to build a healthy and balanced life in 2016.



Activities for All

When it comes to heart health, it is important that we think not only of our adult cardiovascular health but also that of future generations. A 2008 study found that obese children and teens have as much plaque in their arteries as a 45-year-old adult, setting them up for heart disease and other health conditions much earlier than their parents.

Start with Light Exercise

Take a run or a bike ride to the local park as a family. While your children work off their energy playing at the park, enjoy the sun and read a book. This kind of outing allows parents to model healthy behaviors, get exercise, and spend time with the kids. Try to plan to do this once or twice a week.

Socialize in Healthier Ways

Combining activities that you love is an excellent way to find balance. If you are hoping to catch up with friends, rather than meeting at a bar or unhealthy restaurant, go for a walk to the park or bring a light picnic to the beach instead.

South Florida Outdoors

We are lucky to live in an area that has gorgeous weather year-round. We can bike, enjoy the water, and hike without worrying about low temperatures or snowfall. In South Florida, we have beautiful wetlands and botanical gardens that we can visit year-round. You can find great places to hike in South Florida [here](#).

Other activities that you can experience as a family include canoeing, biking, and

swimming. Light exercise will burn calories and keep your family healthy.

Exercise at Home

Finding the time to visit a gym is not always easy. Work schedules and caring for children consume a lot of our free time. A good exercise routine doesn't have to include expensive equipment, either. Here are a few light exercises that you can do at home in ten minutes or less.

Chair Dips

Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair, with your hands next to your hips. Slide your bottom off the edge and bend your elbows to 90 degrees. Be sure to keep your back close to the chair, and then push back up. Do 10 to 12 repetitions.

Chair Squats

Stand in front of a chair, feet hip-distance apart, toes forward. Lean your chest slightly forward. Bend your knees, tap (don't sit!) your bottom on the chair, and then stand up. Keep your weight on your heels and your knees over your toes. Do 10 to 12 reps.

Modified Push-Ups

Get down on all fours, knees together. Walk hands out and lift your feet; move your hands slightly wider than your chest. Your head, neck, back, and bottom your back close to the chair, and then push back up. Do 10 to 12 repetitions.

Find a Workout Partner

Get your spouse, a good friend, or a coworker to go on walks or runs with you. Having someone do it with you makes it more fun and easier, and you're more likely to show up if you have an appointment to meet someone. Any new routine will take time to build into a habit. Try to do one of

these light exercises each morning to get you used to working out. Creating a routine is the first step in the process and probably the most challenging. Stick to your routine, and before long, you will begin looking forward to your exercise routine.

Balanced Life

Finding the time to balance the demands of work and home is a constant battle. In recent years, more Americans are finding themselves putting in extra hours at work or using their smartphones to be on call even when they're away from the office. Finding time to unwind at the end of a busy day is important for all families.

Feeling guilty because you don't have time to prepare dinner or exercise?

Fight it. Everyone has bad days, so fight the guilt and be ok with it. Nobody can give 100% every day.

Start Small - Don't Overdo It

Big changes tend to be hard to stick with. Make one small change on this list, then try another, and then another. With each step you take, this new routine will slowly become your new normal. Good luck! We are rooting for you!

Healthy Eating Starts at Home

The Importance of Meal Planning

Heading to the store without a shopping list in hand can lead to some big problems. Not only are you more likely to be unsatisfied with thrown-together meals but it is also easier to buy junk food if a plan isn't in place. Coming up with an entire week of meal options will get you excited about cooking and help you create healthy meals with the right size portions. Planning your meals as a family will help everyone feel involved in the process and help picky eaters try new ingredients. Set a half hour aside every Sunday to sit down as a family and discuss the upcoming week's meal plan. Include high-protein, low-carb meals for the adults, but increase the carbs for children. When it is time to go grocery shopping, bring the family with you and

involve everyone in the process of selecting foods. When we appreciate good food, we are more likely to make better food choices later in life.

Make Extra for Lunch

Packing your lunch is a tried-and-true way to stick to a healthy and budget-friendly meal plan. But bringing something you're not excited about to the office may just have you heading to the nearest takeout joint. Make an extra serving of your favorite high-protein, low-carb meals and pack it for lunch the next day.

Never Skip Breakfast

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. A balanced breakfast will fuel your energy levels and help you stay focused throughout the day. Eating breakfast helps

manage weight. If you are looking to lose weight or maintain recent weight loss, eating breakfast is crucial. Eating a small, sensible breakfast will help you curb hunger throughout the day. When you already have good, sustainable food in your system, you are less likely to reach for the junk you may be surrounded by throughout the day. A protein shake, eggs, and yogurt are just a few suggestions for a quick and easy breakfast.

Make It on Sunday

Some meals can be made earlier in the week to save time throughout the week. Make a large batch of Lemon Pepper Chicken on Sunday evening and use it throughout the week.

Get Rid of the Junk

Junk food that is high in salt and sugar may taste appealing, but it will cause damage to

your family's health and moods. Create healthy snacking habits by leaving out bowls of fruit, sliced vegetables, nuts, or dried fruit.

Sample Meal Plan

- Monday – Lemon Pepper Chicken
- Tuesday – Salmon with Herb Mustard Glaze
- Wednesday – Turkey Ratatouille
- Thursday – Cajun Lime Shrimp
- Friday – Zucchini & Mushroom Frittata

For children, add a serving of whole grains with each meal. Examples might be a cup of brown rice, a slice of bread, or a cup of cooked pasta.

You can find the recipes for these dishes below.

Lemon Pepper Chicken



Servings Per Recipe: 6

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 tbls lemon-pepper seasoning (such as McCormick Lemon & Pepper®)
- 1 lb thinly sliced boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tbls butter
- Half a fresh lemon (optional)

Nutritional Information - Servings Per Recipe: 4

Amount Per Serving: Calories: 221.0
Total Fat: 9.0 g | Total Carbs: 7.0 g
Protein: 28.0 g

Preparation:

In a shallow dish, mix flour and lemon-pepper seasoning. Coat chicken evenly with seasoned flour.

In a large, nonstick skillet melt butter on medium heat. Add some fresh lemon juice to melted butter, this will give the chicken a more lemony taste (optional). Cook chicken 3 to 4 minutes per side or until golden brown and cooked through.

Variation: To make a pan sauce for the chicken, remove cooked chicken from skillet; keep warm. Stir 3/4 cup chicken broth into the skillet. Bring to boil on medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. To serve, spoon sauce over chicken.

Steam fresh green beans and serve as a light and healthy side dish.

Salmon with Herb Mustard Glaze



Servings Per Recipe: 6

Ingredients:

Mustard Sauce

- 2 garlic cloves
- 3/4 tsp fresh rosemary leaves
- 3/4 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tbsp dry white wine (optional)
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp whole-grain mustard
- Non-stick olive oil cooking spray
- 6 (4- to 6-oz) salmon filets
- Salt and pepper
- 6 lemon wedges

Preparation:

In a mini food processor, combine garlic, rosemary, thyme, wine, extra-virgin olive oil, Dijon mustard, and 1 tbsp of whole-grain mustard. Grind the mustard sauce until combined, about 30 seconds. Transfer to a small bowl. Add remaining 1 tbsp of whole-grain mustard to the sauce and stir to combine. Set aside mustard sauce.

Preheat the broiler. Line a heavy rimmed baking sheet with foil. Spray the foil with nonstick spray. Arrange the salmon filets on the baking sheet and sprinkle them with salt and pepper. Broil for 2 minutes. Spoon the mustard sauce over the filets. Continue broiling until the filets are just cooked through and golden brown, about 5 minutes longer. Transfer the fillets to plates and serve with lemon wedges.

Steamed broccoli is a low carb side dish that is the perfect accompaniment to this dish.

Nutritional Information - Servings Per Recipe: 6

Amount Per Serving: (4-oz filet) Calories: 236.0

Fat: 14.6 g | Carbs: 0.0 g | Protein: 22.6 g

Source: <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/member/views/SALMON-WITH-DIJON-SAUCE-52656071>

Turkey Ratatouille



Servings Per Recipe: 8

Ingredients:

- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil –divided
- 2 lbs turkey breast cutlets
- 1 Japanese or small Italian eggplant – cut into 3/4'' cubes
- 1 small zucchini – cut into 3/4'' cubes
- 1 small red pepper – cut into 3/4'' pieces
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 garlic cloves – pressed
- 1/2 cup tomato puree
- 1 tsp dried basil
- Salt and pepper

Preparation:

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sprinkle cutlets with salt and pepper. Cook cutlets 3 minutes per side, just until lightly golden and cooked through. Transfer to a plate.

Heat remaining oil in skillet. Add eggplant, zucchini, and red pepper. Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add mushrooms, garlic, tomato puree, basil. Mix well; bring to a boil.

Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Return turkey and accumulated juices to skillet. Cook uncovered 3 minutes until turkey is heated through.

Nutritional Information - Servings Per Recipe: 8

Amount Per Serving:

Calories: 205.0 | Total Fat: 1.8 g | Total Carbs: 14.4 g
Protein: 28.0 g

Source: <http://drpacholec.com/healthy-recipes/>

Cajun Lime Shrimp



Servings Per Recipe: 8

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsl Cajun seasoning (such as Emeril's Essence®)
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 tbsl extra virgin olive oil
- 1 lb peeled and deveined medium shrimp (30-40/ lb)

Nutritional Information

Servings Per Recipe: 8

Amount Per Serving:

Calories: 69.0

Fat: 2.0 g

Carbs: 2.0 g

Protein: 10.0 g

Preparation:

Mix together the Cajun seasoning, lime juice, and olive oil in a re-sealable plastic bag. Add the shrimp, coat with the marinade, squeeze out excess air, and seal the bag. Marinate in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes.

Preheat an outdoor grill for medium heat, and lightly oil the grate. Remove the shrimp from the marinade and shake off excess. Discard the remaining marinade.

Skewer the shrimp and cook on the preheated grill until they are bright pink on the outside and the meat is no longer transparent in the center, about 2 minutes per side.

Add grilled squash and zucchini as a side. Season with salt and pepper.

Don't have grill, no problem, you can sauté the shrimp and veggies on the stove.

Source: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Spicy-Lime-Grilled-Shrimp/>

Zucchini & Mushroom Frittata



Servings Per Recipe: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup zucchini, medium dice
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- Pinch black pepper
- Cooking spray
- 1 cup egg substitute
- 2 tsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Preparation:

Preheat a skillet and add extra-virgin olive oil. Sauté zucchini and mushrooms until they are slightly golden. Season with pepper. Set aside to cool, removing any excess liquid.

Pour egg substitute into heated skillet, making sure that the skillet is evenly coated. Lower the heat and add the cooked vegetables on top. Make sure eggs are loose on the bottom of pan and vegetables are spread evenly.

When eggs are set, add Parmesan cheese and place under a broiler to finish cooking the top.

Nutritional Information - Servings Per Recipe: 4

Amount per Serving:

Calories: 60

Total Fat: 1.5 g

Total Carbs: 3.2 g

Protein: 8.8 g

Source: <http://www.lowsugar-recipes.com/breakfast-recipes/zucchini-and-mushroom-frittatas-recipe.php>

We hope that you found this guide to be a helpful resource on your journey.

Want more help with your journey? Our weight loss coaches are here to help you! Contact us today for a [free consultation](#). We are here to help you with meal plans, weight loss plans, fitness regimens, and more.

We look forward to hearing from you!

