

Making a Meal Plan Work in a Family

Have a family meeting. Ask everyone for suggestions about how you can eat healthier as a family. Be flexible, creative, and try new things. The support of your family is important.



What if I need to eat foods my family doesn't like? What if my spouse/partner won't cook healthy foods?

- Be prepared to eat a separate meal if necessary, just eat together even if the food is different.
- Keep your own stash of healthy foods.
- Make a separate small portion for yourself without added fat and salt.
- Use different spices and herbs to add some pizzazz. The *MOVE!* handout "Spice It Up" can give you some great ideas.

How do I handle my spouse or partner saying that the food is healthy when I know it has too many calories and fat?

- Be specific about the ways in which you need to reduce fat and calories.
- Provide a grocery list of healthier foods that you prefer and give it to the food shopper or offer to take over food shopping.
- Offer to help with meal preparation.
- Share *MOVE!* handouts and other information you learn from the *MOVE!* Program.
- Ask a registered dietitian for additional help and bring your spouse/partner.



What do I say to my family's complaints about wanting 'real' food, not 'diet' food?

- Lowfat healthy food doesn't have to be *diet* food.
- You may actually be able to eat more food, if it is lower in calories.
- Healthy food makes you feel healthy and have energy.

What if I have tried low fat, low calorie recipes and foods and no one will eat them? I end up throwing out more food than we eat.

- Start small. Only change one recipe at a single meal.
- Try substituting a similar food; just use a version that is lower in fat, sugar or salt.
- You don't have to "Announce" that food is "Healthy", just say it is prepared a "New" way. Or, say nothing at all.

What do I do? My family only wants to eat out and not cook.

- The *MOVE!* handout, "Make It Quick", can help.
- If you do eat out, the *MOVE!* handouts, "Restaurant Tips" and "Fast Food Alternatives", can help you to choose healthy, lower calorie options.

