

Cooking for moms with a full plate

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If you are a mom on-the-go then your time is extremely precious and you have become the master at multitasking. It is often thought it is too difficult to give your family healthy foods without taking too much time. Here are 6 tips to help you provide healthy food even when you have a full plate.

1. Make large quantities and freeze them

Maximise on your time when you are in the kitchen by making double the quantity. It may take a bit longer to chop some food now but it will all be worth it later on. Try to do this on your better days of the week where you can get away with more prep time. Eat the one half that night and freeze the rest in a large container. You will be so grateful when you have just one of those mad days and all you have to do is open the freezer and there is already a homemade healthy meal for you and your family.

2. Make food for the next day

I know some moms who get home after an extremely demanding day at work and the last thing you want to do is start cooking. The solution is taking out the meal you cooked last night from the fridge. Then while the kids are awake and busy doing homework or needing to be bathed you can focus all your attention on them. Once the household has calmed down later in the evening you can even cook a meal in its entirety but refrigerate it once you are done. This different routine might not work for everyone but it could be worth a try.

3. Eat convenient on-the-go foods

Grab foods that require as little as possible preparation for during the day. In the morning try a FUTURELIFE® shake while in the car, or grab some fruit and a yoghurt. During the day pack your lunch box with healthy snacks like fruits, dried fruit packs, small yoghurts, snack bars like a FUTURELIFE® high protein Lite bar, small packs of provitas, cheese etc. There is no need for cooking or preparation with these items so pack yours and the kid's lunch boxes with them.

4. Make simple food

We all wish we could be Jamie Oliver or Nigella Lawson but with the day to day demands of running a family, putting on a delicious extravagant meal every night is all very unrealistic. You should try work up a repertoire of basic meals such as mac n' cheese, chicken a la king, spaghetti bolognese, stir fry's, soups, and stews. These one pot wonders will keep the family happy, keep the dishes to a minimum and prevent complicated grocery lists.

5. Choose healthy

Take-aways are generally the go to for most busy moms. It is easy and quick but often very unhealthy for yourself and the family with food that is high in saturated fats, trans fats, high in carbohydrates, high in salt and low in vegetables. Luckily there are healthy options out there like Kauai. Even the generic fast-food outlets are trying to offer healthier options on the menus so take a moment, read the menu and look for what would be the healthiest. Look for chicken options rather than beef, ask for grilled not deep fried, ask for sauces on the side and don't add as much, watch your portions, avoid the fizzy cold drink and take a water etc.

6. Get the kids involved

Children love to spend time with mom so capitalise on this and get them into the kitchen. We understand how much your children can help with will greatly depend on how old your children are.

Even when they are too young to handle any knives or equipment let them watch you cook and learn from you so when they are older they will know what to do. You could even ask the little ones to help you get food items out of the cupboards if things are reachable. Ask your children to help you stir, fetch or pack away something. They will love this and you can multi-task better to get things done quicker.

Some moms even involve the kids in grocery shopping by giving them their own small trolley and own shopping list with only a handful of items on it and ask them to get items from one aisle. This way you involve them, they don't get bored and drive you crazy plus you have a few less items to look for.

7. Chop down on prep time

If a recipe requires you to finely chop 5 different vegetables into thin julienne strips we are less likely to want to cook healthy as all that chopping would just take too long. Take advantage of how efficient most grocery stores are now days. Buy already peeled and cut veg to chop down your cooking time. They will generally be slightly more expensive so you will need to factor this in. If you are lucky enough to have a great blender or food processor they can come with dicing attachments and the machine will do all the hard work for you in a fraction of the time. If you are on a budget, buy the vegetables whole and cook them with minimal preparation like baked whole butternut in the oven instead of peeled and chopped butternut.

Moms have one of the most difficult jobs out there. Looking after all the family's needs can get tiring and overwhelming. With these few tips moms, you can tackle family life while providing the healthier food for everyone.

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