

WIC WELLNESS WORKS

# Dining In

*Fast,  
Easy,  
Healthy!*



Coordinator Packet

# Dining In: *Fast, Easy, Healthy!*

Dear WIC Wellness Works Coordinator,

WIC employees have told us that planning healthy meals that are both fast and easy is sometimes difficult to do. We agree – meal planning can be a daunting task. ***Dining In: Fast, Easy, Healthy!*** can help make meal preparation less of a daily chore and more of a quick, easy routine.

More and more people are choosing “to dine in” instead of “dine out.” Dining in is definitely a healthier option than dining out; restaurant meals are typically higher in calories, fat, and sodium than the same meal prepared at home. At home, you have control over the type of ingredients, the amount used, and the amount of food served. Dining in is also less expensive. No tip is required and you control exactly how you’re spending your food dollars.



The Dining In: *Fast, Easy, Healthy!* employee packet has four one-week sections to help employees master menu planning:

- Week 1:** Designer Plate – Rate Your Plate
- Week 2:** Play With Your Vegetables
- Week 3:** Play With Your Protein
- Week 4:** Menu of Meals

Support your co-workers’ path to quick, easy, and healthy meals at home.

- Distribute ***Dining In: Fast, Easy, Healthy!*** packets to all employees.
- Organize at least one clinic-wide event from the **Dining In Activity Idea List** (see pages 3-4).
- Distribute the weekly **Dining In** handouts included in the Coordinator Packet (see pages 6-10).
- Display the **Designer Plate** poster in a central location.
- Share the clinic copy of ***Cooking Light – Fresh Food Fast: Weeknight Meals*** with all employees.
- Distribute the **Kids Designer Plate** activity (see pages 11-14) to WIC participants – Pass It On!

# Dining In: *Activity Idea List*

Here are some clinic activities to energize employee wellness efforts and reinforce the messages in this packet:



## Weekly Dining In Handouts

Keep **Dining In** fresh each week by copying and distributing handouts (found on pages 6 to 10) to your employees. Visit <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/wellness/overview.shtm> for black and white copies of these handouts.

- Week 1**  
**Meal Planning 101**  
*(tips on the front; online resources on the back)*

*Have employees choose an online resource to review and discuss at the next staff meeting or at lunch.*
- Week 2**  
**The Well-Equipped Kitchen**

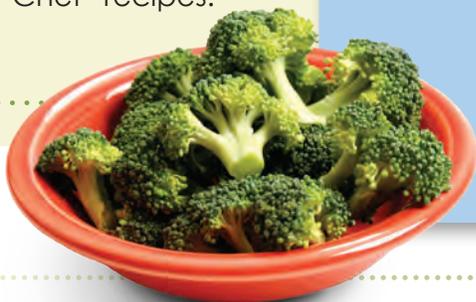
*Have employees share any funny stories of what they found when they were doing an inventory or what they were missing.*
- Week 3**  
**How to Choose a Recipe**

*Have employees share their secrets on how to choose a recipe and where they go to find recipes.*
- Week 4**  
**Foods to Always Have On Hand**  
*check list*

*Have employees share any other food items they like to have on hand in case they need to make a last-minute healthy, balanced meal.*

## WIC "Iron Chef" Cooking Challenge

- Choose a vegetable or lean protein and have everyone bring a dish using that ingredient for a potluck.
- Vote on the best use of the selected ingredient.
- Share the WIC "Iron Chef" recipes.



## Weekly Colleague Catering using Cooking Light

*Fresh Food Fast: Weeknight Meals and recipes from the packet*

- Week 1:** Assign a portion of the **Designer Plate** to each staff member (whole grain, lean protein/entrée, vegetable/fruit, calcium source) and have a **Designer Plate** potluck.
- Week 2:** Encourage volunteers to sign up to bring an easy to prepare and healthy vegetable dish for taste testing.
- Week 3:** Encourage volunteers to sign up to bring an easy to prepare and healthy lean protein/entrée for taste testing.
- Week 4:** Ask employees to share their **Menu of Meals** by posting a copy of it (without the employee's name) on a bulletin board and have employees guess who wrote which menu. Reveal the menu creators at a pot-luck where everyone brings a dish from their **Menu of Meals** to share.

## Dining In: *Activity Idea List*



### Herb and Spice Tasting

- Have employees pick an herb or spice from the list on page 7 of the employee packet and bring in a sample for a taste test.
- Mix it up by blending some of the herbs and spices to create a unique spice mix and then have everyone taste the new blend.
- You can also have employees bring a unique herb or spice not listed in the employee packet for everyone to taste.

### Meatless Entrée Challenge

- Challenge employees to try a meatless entrée and share at a clinic potluck.
- Have employees vote on which entrée is the easiest to prepare.
- Share the top five results on a clinic bulletin board.

### Fast, Easy, Healthy Recipe Sharing

- Challenge employees to choose a recipe with five ingredients or less, or a recipe that takes less than 15 minutes to prepare and cook.
- Prepare and bring the recipe to a potluck to share with colleagues.

## *Pass It On:*

### ... To the Kids

- Copy and distribute the **Kids Designer Plate** activity found at the end of this packet to WIC participants.
- Create a **Kids Designer Plate** art station in the clinic where kids visiting the clinic with their parents can cut out and paste foods onto their plate.

### ... To the Parents

- Encourage employees to share their experiences with applying the **Designer Plate** model for planning meals with WIC participants.
- Dedicate a bulletin board to **Dining In** in an area of the clinic where it is visible to participants. Feature recipes from potlucks or a **WIC "Iron Chef" challenge**, post the handouts from the coordinator packet, and post pictures of the different activities that clinic staff participate in related to the packet.
- Distribute the weekly employee handouts found in this packet to WIC participants.

## Dining In: *Weekly Handouts*

Pages 6 through 10 are handouts that can be used for employees. They can be used as handouts or can be posted throughout the clinic. If you would prefer black and white copies, you can find them online at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/wellness/overview.shtm>

- **Meal Planning 101** (page 6-7) - These pages support the basics of meal planning and can be turned into a front-and-back handout. Distribute them during week 1 to give people a good foundation in planning fast, easy, and healthy meals.
- **The Well Equipped Kitchen** (page 8) - This handout is meant to be a checklist of items that make up a well-equipped kitchen so you have the basics of what you need to make a meal at home.
- **How to Choose a Recipe** (page 9) - This handout contains tips on how to choose a recipe and where to go to find recipes.
- **Go-To Foods To Always Have On Hand** (page 10) - This handout is meant to give an idea of what foods to have on hand.

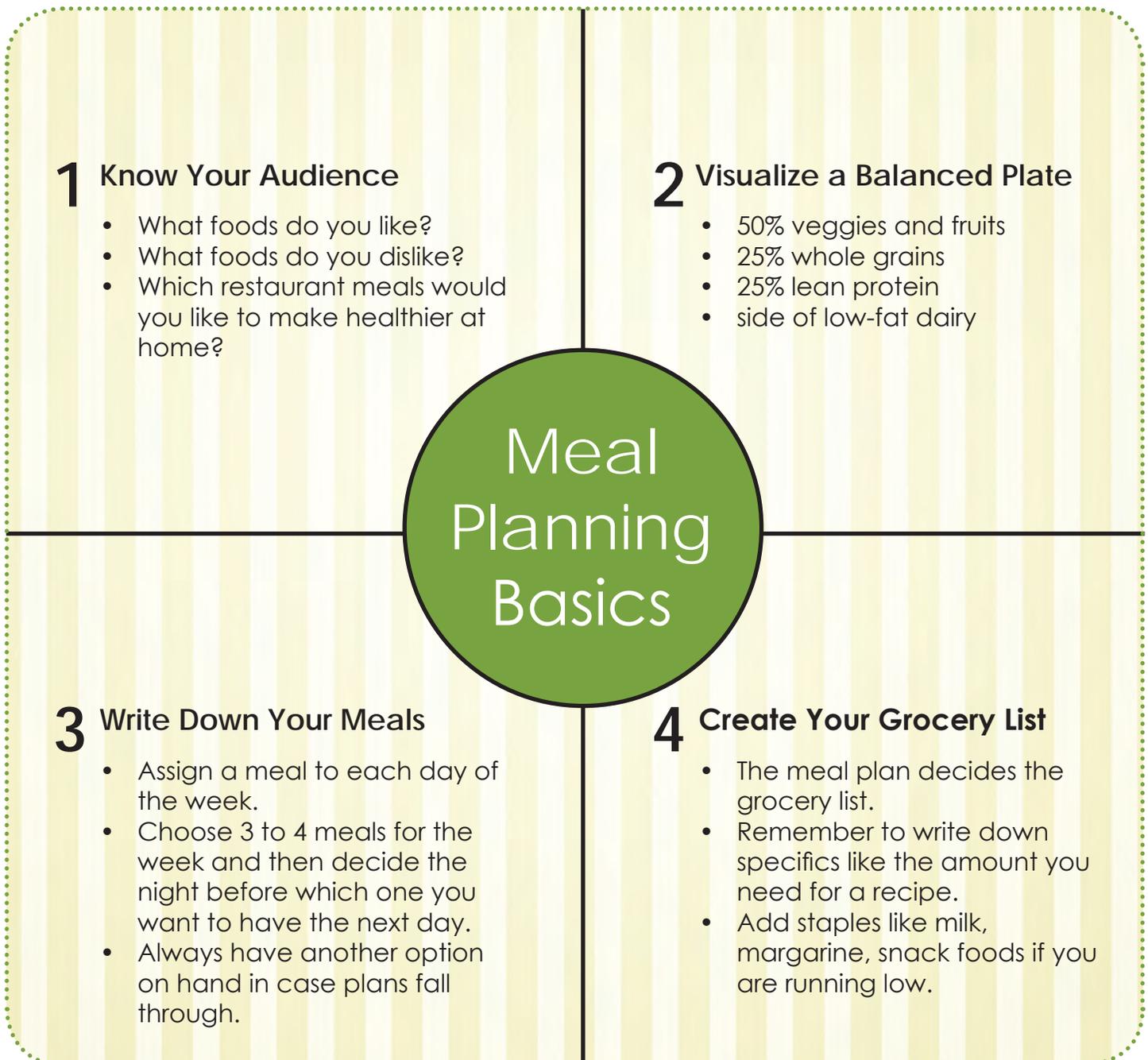
### *Kids Designer Plate Activity*

Pages 11 through 14 contain the **Kids Designer Plate activity**. It can be copied and distributed to WIC participants and their families to do at the clinic or at home. There is a full colored version and black and white version. Kids can learn what a “**Dining In**” dinner looks like by cutting out the fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy items (found on pages 13 and 14) and placing them onto the plate in the appropriate sections.



# Meal Planning 101

Use the meal planning steps on the chart below to assist you as you create your personal meal plan for a week.



## Meal Planning Resources Online

Here are free web sites that will assist you with your meal planning endeavors.

### Ready Set Eat

<http://www.readyseteat.com/>

Give this website your zip code and it will point you toward recipes that feature items on sale at local grocery stores. You can get personalized meal ideas (how much time, how many ingredients, healthy or not) sent to your email address weekly.

### Keep the Beat - Deliciously Healthy Eating

<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/healthyeating/ingre.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

This website contains lots of heart healthy recipes and cooking tips for the inexperienced and experienced cook.

### Fruits and Veggies More Matters, Healthy Meal Planning Guide

[http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=1635](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=1635)

Fruits and Veggies More Matters reviews the basics of meal planning and contains links to pre-made meal plans and shopping lists that will help you include plenty of fruits and vegetables in your meals.

### Meal and Menu Planning for Two Weeks

[http://lds.about.com/od/visualmusicalaids/a/meal\\_planning.htm](http://lds.about.com/od/visualmusicalaids/a/meal_planning.htm)

This helpful site includes several different meal planning charts and hundreds of simple meal ideas.

### Meal Planning - MealsMatter.org

<http://www.mealsmatter.org>

Mealsmatter.org allows you to set up nutrition goals, organize your pantry, organize your recipes, and create shopping lists based on the recipes you choose for each meal. This free site is maintained by the Dairy Council of California.

### Meal Planning 101

<http://themealplanner.blogspot.com>

This personal blog is expertly done and has a huge following. It provides weekly plans for dinner meals plus meal planning, and money saving tips and techniques, all in an engaging, easy-to-use format.

In addition to the free web sites above, there are lots of meal-planning websites out there that will do the planning for you for a price. They will send you a menu of meals each week plus the shopping list for all items needed to prepare the week's meals. These vary in pricing and ability to customize based on your health goals and you and your family's likes and dislikes. The most reputable will have a Registered Dietitian on staff or will consult with one to ensure they are providing healthy meal options.

## The Well-Equipped Kitchen

You don't need a fancy kitchen with expensive gadgets to cook healthy meals, but there are a few items that come in handy when cooking at home. Here's a list of the basics. As you do an inventory of your kitchen and find something is missing, add that item to a birthday or holiday gift wish list.

### — Knives

- 3 or 4 inch paring knife (small knife used to peel fruits and vegetables)
- 8 or 10 inch chef's knife (large knife used to chop, dice, mince)
- Serrated knife (used to cut bread and tomatoes)

### — Measuring cups and spoons

#### — Spoons (2 of each)

- Slotted spoon
- Wooden spoon
- Sturdy metal spoon
- Soup ladle

#### — Mixing utensils

- Hand held mixer (electric or manual)
- Wire whisk in different sizes

#### — Spatulas

- Straight spatulas
- Rubber scraper spatulas used to get batter off the side of a bowl

#### — Sieves and colanders (various sizes)

#### — Pots and pans (for the stove and the oven)

- Sauté pans of various sizes (at least one small and one large)
- Small and large pot for boiling water
- Two cookie sheets
- Muffin tin

#### — Casserole dish (various sizes)

#### — Microwave safe bowls (various sizes)

#### — Mixing bowls (various sizes)

#### — Storage containers for leftovers (various sizes)

#### — Miscellaneous

- Vegetable peeler
- Cheese grater
- Rolling pin
- Zester (like a cheese grater but much smaller holes)
- Can opener
- Kitchen timer
- Kitchen scissors



There is nothing more frustrating in cooking than trying a new recipe only to be disappointed with how the dish turned out. Here are some things to consider when picking out recipes to try:

## How to Choose a Recipe

### Top Things to Consider When Choosing a Recipe

- 1) Does the recipe sound good to you? Do the ingredients seem like things you and those you are cooking for will like?
- 2) Do you have all the kitchen equipment the recipe requires?
- 3) Do the ingredients fit your budget and are they currently available at your local grocery store?
- 4) If the recipe was reviewed by anyone, did it receive more positive than negative reviews?
- 5) Does the recipe have all the essential information:
  - a. Ingredients with exact measurements and consistencies listed in order of use?
  - b. Cooking time?
  - c. Preparation time?
  - d. Cooking method?
  - e. Cooking temperature?
  - f. Utensils and other cooking equipment needed?
  - g. Preparation instructions?
  - h. Number and size of servings?

*If the answer is yes to these questions, it's a good recipe for you to try.*

### Best Places to Find Recipes

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| On the internet    | <i>Most websites allow recipe testers to submit reviews. These reviews help you to know if the recipe is good or not and what others did to improve the recipe.</i>  |
| On TV              | <i>Cooking shows are a great way to learn new cooking techniques.</i>  |
| At the library     | <i>Before you buy a new cookbook, see if it's available at your library. If you love it after testing it, you can buy it at a later date.</i>  |
| Friends and family | <i>Some of your best childhood memories may involve certain dishes your family would make at home. Share these with your family and friends, including any changes you make to the recipe to make it healthier or different.</i> |

## 'Go-to Foods' to Always Have On Hand

A well-stocked refrigerator and pantry can save you when your meal plans fall through, you didn't have time to plan ahead, or the meal that you prepared didn't turn out as expected. Here are some great foods to have on hand:

- Frozen fruits
- Bagged salad or other vegetables
- Frozen vegetables
- Salad dressing
- Frozen meat
- Eggs
- Frozen tortellini (whole wheat or spinach) or other frozen or fresh pasta
- Peanut butter or other nut butter
- Frozen veggie pizza
- Low-fat cheese and whole grain crackers
- Frozen dinners (healthier option = less than 500 mg sodium per serving, less than 12 grams of fat per serving)
- Whole wheat pasta
- Canned fish or chicken
- Spaghetti sauce
- Canned beans
- Whole wheat macaroni and cheese
- Canned fruit in own juices or light syrup
- Whole wheat baking mix (for pancakes, waffles, muffins, etc.)
- Canned diced tomatoes
- Quick cooking brown rice

From this list you can easily create **10 healthy, super fast meals:**

- 1) Veggie pizza with a side salad and a fruit and yogurt parfait
- 2) Peanut butter sandwich, fruit, skim milk, and vegetables and dip
- 3) Beans and rice with frozen onions and peppers, and salad
- 4) Whole wheat cheese tortellini with frozen spinach, side salad, and canned fruit
- 5) Frozen chicken breasts with canned Italian diced tomatoes, frozen vegetables, and brown rice
- 6) Breakfast for dinner: scrambled eggs with your choice of veggies, and whole wheat blueberry pancakes with light syrup
- 7) Light tuna salad sandwich and side salad
- 8) Whole wheat tuna pasta salad with broccoli, fruit, and low-fat string cheese
- 9) Low-fat cheese and whole grain crackers, tuna salad, and fruit
- 10) Frozen cheese enchiladas, frozen broccoli with Mexican style canned tomatoes, and fruit



### Kid's Designer Plate

Use this plate to involve your child or children in planning your family meals. Review the foods on the next two pages with your child. Ask your child to cut out two or three food items from each group that they would like to eat this week and glue them onto the plate in the appropriate areas.

Dairy



### **Kid's Designer Plate**

Use this plate to involve your child or children in planning your family meals. Review the foods on the next two pages with your child. Ask your child to cut out two or three food items from each group that they would like to eat this week and glue them onto the plate in the appropriate areas.

Dairy

Fruit

Whole  
Grain

Vegetable

Lean  
Protein



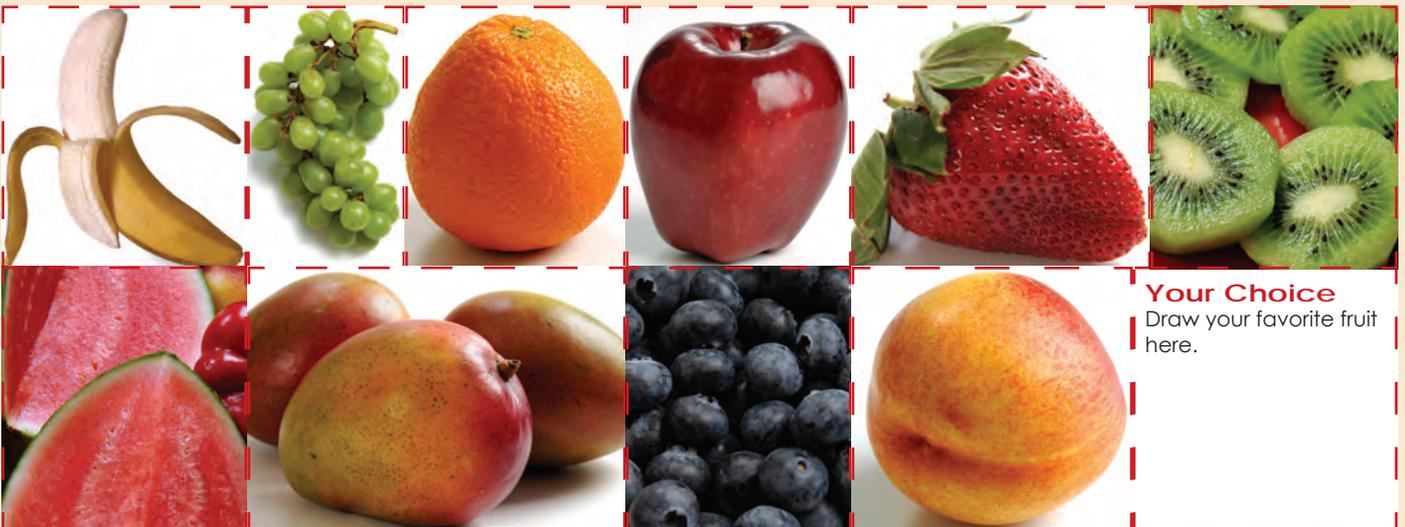
# Food Cut-Outs

## Vegetables



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite vegetable here.

## Fruits



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite fruit here.

## Lean Protein



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite lean protein here.

## Whole Grains



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite whole grains here.

## Dairy



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite dairy here.

**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite dairy here.

# Food Cut-Outs

Vegetables



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite vegetable here.

Fruits



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite fruit here.

Lean Protein



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite lean protein here.

Whole Grains



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite whole grains here.

Dairy



**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite dairy here.

**Your Choice**  
Draw your favorite dairy here.