

Session 7

Group Presentation/Demonstration

Quick and Easy Meals

Cooking for One

Training Objectives

At the end of this training session, participants will be able to:

- Prepare a basic pantry list of ingredients for making quick and easy meals.
- Discuss strategies for saving time in the kitchen with everyday meal preparation.
- Identify the pros and cons of convenience foods.
- Prepare a variety of quick and easy meals.
- Discuss factors that make eating well for one difficult.
- Provide suggestions on menu planning, shopping, meal preparation and eating for individuals living alone.
- Assist peers in selecting healthier convenience and restaurant foods.

Training Outline

Topic/Activity	Suggested Time
1. Check in and Review	10 minutes
2. Group Presentation/Demonstration	45 minutes
3. Warm up: Are you Winning at Meal Preparation?	30 minutes
4. Getting Organized in the Kitchen	
5. Time Saving Tips	
6. Break	15 minutes
7. Cooking for One Solutions	30 minutes
8. Don't Feel Like Cooking Tonight	15 minutes
9. Wrap up	5 minutes

Advance Preparation

- Photocopy and gather workbook materials for this session.
- Visit your local grocery store to find current and local prices for the food items in the Convenience Foods Activity (optional).
- Gather equipment and food required for the convenience foods demonstration(s).
- Prepare snack for the break.

Supplies and Equipment

- Name tags
- Data projector with computer or overhead projector
- Flip chart, paper and markers
- Extra pens, pencils, paper, masking tape
- Extra copies of handouts and worksheets included in the workbooks
- Copies of Presentation Feedback Checklist

Background Information

- Quick and Easy Meals: A Presentation Module for Community Food Advisors

Resource Binder Reference

- Section 2 - Healthy Eating and Active Living
- Section 4 – Food Shopping
- Section 7 – Food Preparation

Detailed Outline of Training Session

1. Check in and Review (10 minutes)

- Welcome the participants and remind them to use their name tag
- Review the Home Activity from Session 6

Home Activity from Session 6

- Ask participants if they were able to stick to their menu plan and/or shopping lists.
 - Ask them to share the meals that worked well and the shopping strategies that were successful. Will they continue with menu planning?
- Distribute workbook materials for this session.

2. Group Presentation/Demonstration (45 minutes)

- Provide 30 minutes for the assigned group of 2 or 3 participants to complete their presentation, **Eating Healthy with More Fibre**
- Provide 15 minutes for the assigned group of 2 or 3 participants to complete their food demonstration **Increase the Fibre in a Recipe**
- Distribute and encourage other participants to complete the **Presentation/ Demonstration Feedback Checklist** as they are listening to the presentation
- At the end of the presentation and demonstration, provide constructive feedback to the group. Encourage participants to provide feedback based on the checklist they have completed

3. Warm up: “Are you Winning at Meal Preparation?” (10 minutes)

- Ask the participants to turn to the handout in their workbook: **Are You Winning at Meal Preparation?** Ask them to complete this quiz to help them see how well they manage their time in the kitchen. With the participants, discuss the results of the quiz:
 - If they answer most of the questions '**frequently**', they probably manage their time very well. However, they may be dissatisfied with the quality, nutrition value, or variety of meals. In taking shortcuts to prepare quick meals, are they using products that are high in fat, sugar or salt?
 - If they answer most of the questions '**sometimes**' and '**almost never**', they need not be discouraged. By the end of this session, they will learn some easy ways to save time in the kitchen.

4. Organize the Kitchen (10 minutes)

- Use the **Quick and Easy Meals** (slides 1 -7) presentation to discuss basic principles of getting organized in the kitchen
- Ask the group to brainstorm a list of easy to prepare, basic ingredients and foods needed to keep their cupboards, refrigerator and freezer stocked. Organize foods into the food groups in Canada's Food Guide. Record responses on the flip chart
- Ask participants to look at the handout in their workbook **Basic Pantry List** to see if anything was missing from the group's list. Indicate that this is just an example of a Basic Pantry List. The list will be different for different people depending on their needs and cultural backgrounds
- Ask participants to suggest quick and easy meals that could be prepared from the ingredients on the **Basic Pantry List**

5. Time Saving Tips (10 minutes)

- Ask participants to share their time saving tips in the kitchen. Write them down on a flip chart.
- Continue the **Quick and Easy Meals** presentation (slides 8 – 13) to discuss tips for saving time with everyday meal preparation.

6. Break (15 minutes)

7. Cooking for One Solutions (30 minutes)

Activity (15 minutes)

- Divide participants into small groups. Assign each group *one* of the Cooking for One Solution activity sheets found in the workbook:
 - Menu Planning for One
 - Shopping Suggestions for Solo Cooks
 - Easy Meals to Make
 - Enjoy Eating Alone
- Ask the groups to read the instructions on the activity sheet. Using a variety of case studies, this activity requires participants to discuss strategies and food ideas to make cooking for one easier and healthier. Ask participants to write their ideas on the activity sheet. Have the groups assign someone to present the ideas to the large group.
- Ask a spokesperson for each group to read their case study aloud and present their ideas. Encourage discussion and further sharing of ideas.
- To save time, choose one or two of the case studies to discuss as a large group. Assign the remaining case studies as a home activity.

Discussion (15 minutes)

- Use the **Cooking for One** presentation (slides 14 to 25) to summarize the concepts discussed on menu planning, shopping, and meal preparation and eating for individuals living alone.
- Spend some time reviewing examples, sharing ideas and encouraging group participation.

8. Don't Feel Like Cooking Tonight? (15 minutes)

Ready-Made Foods

- Explain that while ready-made foods are convenient, many lack the nutritional quality, texture and flavour found in home cooked foods. Not all frozen meals are well balanced, so it is a good idea to add fresh fruits or vegetables, bread or a tossed salad to the frozen entrée to make the meal complete.
- Continue the **Cooking for One** presentation (slide 26) to discuss ways to spice up both the nutrition and flavour of convenience foods. Encourage participants to suggest their own ideas.
- Ask participants to turn to **Ready-made Meals in a Flash** activity sheet. Complete the table as a large group. Ask participants to provide suggestions of foods for each food group to complete the meal. When the meals are complete, point out that the meals are more nutritionally balanced because all four food groups are in one meal.

Eating Out

- Explain that it is still possible to enjoy healthy eating following **Canada's Food Guide** when eating out or ordering in.
- Continue the **Cooking for One** presentation (slides 27 to 29) to discuss good choices when eating out or ordering in. Encourage participants to suggest their own ideas.
- Provide a brief overview of the Health Check restaurant program. Several restaurant chains in Ontario are part of the Health Check program. The Health Check symbol on menus indicates that choice fits the Heart and Stroke Foundation's nutrition criteria, including type of fat, sodium, fibre, protein and vitamins and mineral. The Health Check symbol indicates as a healthier choice. For more information on the nutrition criteria and participating restaurants, go to: www.healthcheck.org/page/restaurant-overview.

9. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

- Recap the objectives covered in this session.
- Remind participants to try some of the recipes from the convenience food activity.
- Assign Home Activities.
- Identify the focus for the next session. Encourage participants to read the appropriate sections in the Resource Binder

Home Activity

- Ask participants to complete the *Quick and Easy Menu Planning* Activity Sheet in their workbook. Provide direction on how to complete this activity.
- Encourage participants to read the resources for this session and complete optional activities as they choose.

Workbook

Session 7

Community Food Advisor Program

**Quick & Easy Meals
and
Cooking for One**

Workbook Materials

- Quick & Easy Meals and Cooking for One Presentation Notes
- Are You Winning at Meal Preparation?
- Basic Pantry List
- Quick and Easy Menu Planning Activity Sheet
- Cooking for One Solutions Activity Sheets
- Additional Activities and Resources
- Cooking for One Frequently Asked Questions

Are You Winning at Meal Preparation?

Organization is the key to saving time during food preparation. Think about the way you normally prepare meals and answer the following questions with:

"Frequently", "Sometimes", or "Almost Never"

1. How often do you plan meals in advance? _____
2. How often do you prepare parts of a meal in advance? _____
3. How often do you spend 30 minutes or less preparing meals? _____
4. How often do you use leftovers as the basis for another meal? _____
5. How often do you use mixes, frozen dinners and ready-to-eat foods in your meals? _____
6. If you prepare meals for others, how often do they help prepare meals and clean up? _____

Find Out How Well You Did:

If you answered most of these questions with "**frequently**," you probably manage your time very well. This session can still provide you with more ideas on how to save time in the kitchen.

If your answers to the questions are mostly "**sometimes**" and "**almost never**," don't be discouraged. This session is right for you! You will be able to identify some easy ways to make more efficient use of your time.



Basic Pantry List

In your Cupboard

- brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat couscous, bulgur, barley, rolled oats
- whole grain cereals
- bread crumbs
- beans, peas and lentils (canned or dry)
- baking needs: flour (white and whole wheat), sugar, baking soda, baking powder, cornstarch, honey, syrup, evaporated milk, powdered milk, vanilla extract, raisins
- canned tuna (packed in water) and salmon
- peanut butter
- canned tomatoes, tomato sauce and tomato paste
- canned vegetables and canned fruit
- canned soups (lower sodium varieties)
- fresh garlic, potatoes
- vinegars, soy sauce
- an assortment of seasonings, herbs and spices, such as: minced garlic or garlic powder, minced onion or onion powder, salt, pepper, oregano, basil, bay leaf, thyme, chili powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, reduced sodium bouillon cubes
- vegetable oil

In your Refrigerator

- milk and yogurt (2% M.F. or less)
- cheese (20% M.F. or less)
- eggs
- 100% juice
- non-hydrogenated margarine, lower-fat salad dressings and sauces
- fruit: grapes, oranges, apples, bananas (on the counter)
- vegetables: carrots, sweet potatoes, onions

In your Freezer

- a small assortment of whole grain breads: sandwich bread, rolls, pita, bagels
- meat: chicken breasts, fish, ground meat
- frozen vegetables: peas, corn, broccoli, spinach, mixed vegetables
- frozen berries, frozen 100% juice concentrate, frozen yogurt

Quick and Easy Menu Planning Activity Sheet

Complete the following chart by filling in the missing meals and snacks. Use leftovers, healthy convenience foods and quick and easy recipes. For recipe ideas refer to the Resource Binder – Section 9: Recipes.

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Breakfast	Fresh fruit Scrambled egg Pancakes (make extra and freeze) Glass of skim milk	Whole grain cereal with skim milk Banana	1/2 grapefruit Wholegrain toast Slice of lower fat cheddar cheese		Fresh fruit Peanut butter on whole wheat toast ½ glass of skim milk	Orange Hard cooked egg Whole wheat toast Glass of skim milk	
Lunch	Homemade vegetable soup Salmon sandwich Fruit Water		Tuna Salad Fruit Glass of skim milk	Split pea soup Whole grain bread Carrot sticks Glass of skim milk			Vegetable omelet Whole wheat bread Canned peaches (packed in juice) Water
Dinner	Pot roast Roasted potatoes Carrots Whole grain bread Apple crisp Glass of skim milk	Pasta and Lentils Green Salad Pears with vanilla pudding Water		Roast Chicken Baked potatoes Broccoli Whole wheat bread Yogurt Water	Speedy Bean Casserole Rice Oatmeal cookie Canned fruit (packed in juice) Water	Lasagna (from the freezer) Tossed salad Frozen yogurt Water	Spaghetti with meat and tomato sauce Tossed salad Glass of skim milk
Snacks	Whole wheat toast OR English muffin Apple	Whole grain crackers or pita bread Hummus	Celery sticks with peanut butter		Fruit Smoothie (made with frozen fruit, plain, 1% M.F. yogurt and orange juice)	Rice cakes with lower fat cheddar cheese	

Cooking for One Solutions

Activity Sheet

Menu Planning for One

Read the case study below. Discuss ideas for making menu planning for one easier. Write your ideas in the space below.

Case Study:

Ruby is an 80 year old widow who lives alone in a seniors' apartment building. She occasionally eats lunch with friends or goes to her daughter's for supper. Otherwise, she prepares and eats most of her meals alone. She finds it a challenge to find new ideas for simple meals to prepare. She also knows little about planning balanced meals. Ruby often finds herself eating toast or a bowl of cereal for supper.

What are your suggestions to help Ruby with menu planning for one?

Give examples of healthy meals for one for breakfast, lunch and supper.

Cooking for One Solutions

Activity Sheet

Shopping Suggestions for Solo Cooks

Read the case study below. Discuss ideas to make shopping for one easier. Write your ideas in the space below.

Case Study:

Mac lives alone in a subsidized apartment. His limited budget makes shopping a challenge. He is frustrated by large package sizes and the price of ready-made foods. Mac generally does the grocery shopping once a month and picks up other supplies at the convenience store. He considers himself a good cook and would like to prepare better meals if his budget would allow it.

What are your suggestions to help Mac with grocery shopping?

Give examples of healthy, low cost meals that would be easy for Mac to shop for.

Cooking for One Solutions

Activity Sheet

Easy Meals to Make

Read the case study below. Discuss ideas for easy meals to make for one. Write your ideas in the space below.

Case Study:

Jo-Ann is a University student who has just moved into her own apartment. She has stocked her kitchen with equipment, baking dishes and cookbooks she found at garage sales and discount stores. The only problem is that these kitchen supplies are designed for large quantity cooking. Jo-Ann finds it difficult to prepare small amounts of foods. She finds herself wasting a lot of food. As a busy student she doesn't have a lot of time to cook.

What are your suggestions to help Jo-Ann make meals for one?

Give examples of healthy and easy meals for Jo-Ann to make.

Cooking for One Solutions

Activity Sheet

Enjoy Eating Alone

Read the case study below. Discuss ideas to help make eating alone enjoyable. Write your ideas in the space below.

Case Study:

Mohammed has recently come to Canada to start a job. Until he is established, he has left his large family behind. He has always enjoyed family meals at the table. Now that he is on his own he finds mealtime depressing. He often grabs a quick snack rather than sitting down to enjoy a meal.

What are your suggestions to help Mohammed enjoy eating alone?

Suggest some ways that Mohammed could cook and/or eat with other people in his community.

Session 7

Quick & Easy Meals and Cooking for One

Additional Activities and Resources

Additional Activities

- Complete “Quick & Easy Menu Planning” Activity Sheet
- Complete “Cooking for One Solutions” Activity Sheets

On-line Resources

- EatRight Ontario, My Menu Planner
www.eatrightontario.ca/en/MenuPlanner.aspx
- Senior Friendly Ideas for Healthy Eating: a series of fact sheets on healthy eating designed with seniors in mind
www.dietitians.ca/Downloadable-Content/Public/Senior-Friendly-collection.aspx

Readings

- Cooking for One: Frequently Asked Questions
- CFA Resource Binder:
 - Section 2: Healthy Eating and Active Living
 - Section 4: Food Shopping

Cooking for One

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How can I purchase small enough quantities, especially when buying fresh foods?

A. There are several ways you can do this:

- Shop with a friend and share.
- Buy vegetables and fruit in season, they will be cheaper.
- Choose fresh vegetables and fruit that will keep well for a week or more (e.g., potatoes, carrots, squash).
- Wash vegetables and fruit when you are ready to use them; they will last longer.
- Ask the grocery store butcher to package fewer items – most grocery stores will do this at no extra cost.

Q. Is it better to buy in bulk?

A. Bulk items may be cheaper, but not always. Check the unit prices to be sure.

Tips for buying in bulk:

- Go to bulk bins to buy the exact amount needed of an ingredient not normally kept on hand.
- Purchase foods in bulk that store well and can be bought in larger quantities (e.g., cereals, pasta, rice, coffee, legumes)
- Buy yogurt in tubs instead of individual portions. It can be portioned into small re-usable containers and you can add your own fruit or other toppings.
- Buy larger cuts of meat and poultry when they are on sale, cut into individual serving sizes and freeze.

Q. What about frozen microwave dinners? Are they okay for me?

A. Frozen microwave dinners can be quick and easy meals. Some are marketed as healthier or calorie-controlled, but they still tend to be high in sodium. Usually frozen entrées alone will not give you a balanced meal, so be sure to round out the meal by adding steamed or raw vegetables or a salad, whole grain bread and fruit or yogurt for dessert.

Q. What should I look for in easy-to-prepare recipes?

A. Easy-to-prepare recipes:

- have 10 ingredients or less
- use only one major piece of cooking equipment (e.g., saucepan, frypan, casserole dish, baking sheet)
- require limited preparation and clean-up time