

# VitaMin

Vital health information in a minute

## Health and savings tips, served up family-style



### Produce that produces savings

Adding fruits and vegetables to your family meals doesn't have to take a big bite out of your budget:

- Buy whole fruits and vegetables and cut them up at home. Pre-sliced, pre-chopped or pre-diced means you're paying extra for labor.
- Does your fresh produce go bad too fast? Try frozen or canned instead. Just try to avoid canned vegetables with added salt, or fruits packed in heavy syrup.
- Your local farmer's market is often less expensive because there's no middle man. Or, try going to a farm that lets you pick your own right from the field.

### School-night solutions

Looking for an easy, nutritious solution for school-night dinners? Mixing low-cost groceries with fresh, seasonal fruits and veggies can help you cook up nutritious, inexpensive meals the whole family will enjoy.

- Monday – Boil a box of pasta and toss with seasonal veggies like broccoli, cauliflower and garlic.
- Tuesday – Mix ground turkey with savory spices for a meatloaf. Try roasted Brussels sprouts on the side.
- Wednesday – Your kids will flip for whole wheat pancakes topped with fresh, seasonal fruit.

- Thursday – Stir things up with stir-fry. Start with chicken or frozen shrimp. Toss in a bag of your kids' favorite frozen veggies and add soy sauce.
- Friday – Make your own burgers from a package of lean, ground beef. Let your kids use cookie cutters to create unique sweet potato "fries."

### Family meal appeal

Having dinner (or breakfast or lunch) as a family can make a real difference in your child's life – and in their health. In fact, research shows that children who eat family meals:

- Get more fruits and vegetables and less saturated fat
- Have an overall better diet
- Are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol
- Are more likely to do better in school
- Tend to be the best-adjusted children

Sources:

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>

<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/raising-fit-kids/recharge/family-mealtime-stress>

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