

# Quick and easy ideas for healthier eating

## Top tips

- Shop around. Local markets often sell a larger range of fruit, vegetables, meat and fish at reasonable prices. You can buy the quantities you require, so nothing goes to waste.
- Remember to make use of frozen fruit and vegetables and also fruit and vegetables that are canned in water as these items are ready prepared and last a lot longer than the fresh varieties. You can also buy frozen vegetables in bulk and avoid wastage.
- 'Own label' or basic products from supermarkets tend to taste just as good, are often healthier and also cheaper than popular brand names.
- Look out for 'buy 1 get 1 free' offers. (But make sure the food does not go out of date before you use it). Buying larger packets or portions of foods means you have ingredients in stock and are much cheaper over the long term.
- If you have a freezer, cook double portions when you have the time and freeze one. These extra portions are a great back up when you are in a rush.
- Take the time to think about what you or your family are doing over the next week. This will allow you to plan quick and easy meals on your busier days and will help with planning the shopping list.
- Limit intake of takeaways and ready meals as they tend to be higher in saturated fat and salt. Instead why not try cooking the meals yourself by using some of the healthier recipes at <https://letsgetcooking.org.uk/lets-get-cooking-at-home/recipe-collection/fakeaways/>

For a healthy meal use the Eatwell guide on the next page to help you get a balanced intake. The guide shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

**Starchy foods** - include pasta, bread, potatoes, rice, noodles and couscous. These are filling and add variety to your diet.

**Protein foods** - include meat, poultry, eggs, fish, Quorn, tofu or soya. Useful sources are tinned fish (sardines, tuna, mackerel and pilchards), minced beef, stewing steak and stewing pork, turkey mince, baked beans, tinned or dried pulses (lentils, chick peas, kidney beans).

**Vegetables** - include fresh, frozen and tinned as these are equally as nutritious when prepared in the same way.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland © Crown copyright 2016

Please note: Costs based on supermarket basic or own branded items and are correct at time of printing.

## Recipes for tasty meals and snacks

### Filled Jacket Potatoes

These recipes are enough to fill 2 jacket potatoes. Serve with a crispy salad or some cooked vegetables.

#### ➤ Beans and Bacon

- 2 rashers lean bacon
- 1 large tin baked beans

Grill the bacon and chop into small pieces. Add the bacon to the beans in a saucepan and heat gently until piping hot. Pour over the potatoes.



**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.57**



➤ **Garlic mushrooms**

175g mushrooms  
2 cloves garlic  
30g low fat cream cheese

Wash and roughly chop the mushrooms and garlic, dry fry in a pan. Once cooked add the cream cheese and serve over the potatoes.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.39**

➤ **Cheesy leeks**

200g leeks  
2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise  
50g grated cheddar

Wash and chop the leeks, dry fry in a pan (add a little water to stop them sticking). Once softened mix the leeks with the mayonnaise and cheese in a bowl and spoon onto the potatoes.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.71**

➤ **Tuna and sweetcorn**

2 tins (260g) tuna in brine (drained weight of two small tins)  
100g tinned sweetcorn  
2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise  
Pepper

Mix all the ingredients together and spoon onto potatoes.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.26**

➤ **Coronation chicken**

160g cooked chicken (approx 200g raw weight)  
25g low fat mayonnaise  
20g mango chutney  
1/4 teaspoon curry powder  
A small handful of raisins (optional)

Mix all the ingredients together and spoon over potatoes.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.94**





## Recipes for four

(If you are cooking for one or two, portion out and freeze remaining portions for another day.)

### Sweet and sour chicken

400g raw chicken, cut into small strips  
1 teaspoon oil  
Small tin of pineapple chunks  
50g brown sugar  
50g malt vinegar  
150g tomato ketchup  
1 tablespoon light soy sauce  
2 carrots, finely chopped  
300g rice (raw weight)



Start to cook the rice, as directed on the packet. Heat oil and add the chicken, cook until cooked through and no pink remains. Drain the juice from the pineapple pieces, add to the chicken along with the sugar, vinegar, ketchup, soy sauce and carrots. Simmer for 2-3 minutes until piping hot. Drain rice and serve with the chicken.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.93**

### Sausage and Bean Dish

6 sausages  
2 small onions, chopped  
1 large can baked beans  
1 large can chopped tomatoes  
Salt and pepper



Dry fry the onions in a pan (add a little water to stop them sticking), once softened add the baked beans and tomatoes, bring to the boil, cover and simmer. Meanwhile grill the sausages for 10-12 minutes. Remove and slice. Add to the pan with the baked beans, season to taste and cover and cook for a further 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve with mashed potatoes and vegetables.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.55**

### Basic bolognese - mince and tomato sauce

This dish can be altered slightly and served in numerous ways.

400g lean minced beef  
2 onions  
2 cloves garlic (finely chopped)



1 red pepper  
160g sliced mushrooms  
2 grated carrots  
2 teaspoons mixed herbs  
2 x 400g tins tomatoes  
2 tablespoons tomato puree

Put mince, onion and garlic in a non-stick frying pan and brown the mince for 5 minutes. Add the pepper, mushrooms, carrots and mixed herbs and cook for a further 5 minutes. Add the tinned tomatoes and tomato puree, cover and simmer for 15-30 minutes.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.00**

**Vegetarian?** Replace the minced beef with two tins of beans of your choice (e.g. butter beans, black eyed beans) or use quorn.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.78 - 1.05**

### Spaghetti bolognese

1 batch of basic mince and tomato sauce  
300g spaghetti (raw weight)

Cook the spaghetti according to the directions on the packet, drain and serve with the mince and tomato sauce.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.03**

### Chilli con carne with rice

1 batch of basic mince and tomato sauce  
1 tin (400g) kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
2 teaspoons chilli powder (or to taste)  
300g rice (raw weight)

Add the kidney beans and chilli to the mince and tomato sauce at the same time as the tomatoes and tomato puree, cook for 30 minutes. Meanwhile cook the rice as per instructions on the packet. Serve the chilli con carne with the rice

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.16**

### Chilli filled tortillas

1 batch of chilli con carne (as above)  
4-8 tortillas

Cook the chilli as above. Warm the tortillas, distribute the chilli evenly between the tortillas and roll them up. Serve with a salad,

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.28 - 1.44**



## Stuffed peppers

1 batch of basic mince and tomato sauce  
200g rice (raw weight)  
4 large red, yellow or green peppers  
100g cheddar cheese, grated

Whilst the mince and tomato sauce simmers cook the rice as per instructions on the packet. Halve the peppers from top to bottom and deseed them. Lay them out on a baking tray. Once the mince and rice are cooked mix them together and spoon the mixture into the peppers, pressing the mixture in firmly. Once filled top the stuffed peppers with the cheese and bake for 20mins or until the peppers are soft.

If you have extra mince and rice mixture left over, heat it back up and serve with the peppers or freeze for another day.  
Serve with a side salad and some bread.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.47**

## White sauce

This simple sauce can be altered slightly and served in numerous ways.  
2 rounded tablespoons cornflour  
300ml milk

Mix the flour with the milk in the pan. Stir constantly over a low heat until thickens.

## Broccoli and Ham Tagliatelle

1 serving of white sauce  
300g packet tagliatelle  
25g sunflower margarine  
2 onions, sliced  
240g broccoli  
1 yellow pepper, chopped  
200g ham, chopped  
100g cheddar cheese, grated  
Salt and pepper

Cook pasta as directed on packet. Meanwhile make up the batch of white sauce. Melt margarine in a saucepan and fry the onion, broccoli and yellow pepper for 3-5 minutes. Add the cooked vegetables, ham and seasoning to the white sauce. Cook for 2 minutes. Drain the pasta and stir in the sauce, pour into a flame proof dish and sprinkle with grated cheese and grill until golden.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.96**



### Fish in parsley sauce

1 serving of white sauce  
600g of white fish e.g. Cod / Coley  
4 heaped tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped  
Salt and pepper

Cook the fish as directed on the packet. Make up the white sauce, add the parsley and seasoning. Pour over cooked fish and serve with potatoes and vegetables or salad.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.02**

### Turkey and vegetable pie

1 serving of white sauce  
400g turkey, diced  
2 medium leeks, washed and sliced  
100g mushrooms, sliced  
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped  
Salt and pepper  
375g packet ready to roll pastry for the topping  
A little milk

Make up the white sauce. Meanwhile fry the turkey, leeks and mushrooms (add a little water to stop it sticking if necessary) until browned. Add the white sauce, parsley and seasoning to taste.

Pour the mixture into an oven proof dish, top with pastry, brush with the milk and cook as directed on the pastry packet. Normally around 20-30 minutes. Serve with vegetables. Use mashed potatoes instead of pastry as a lower fat alternative.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £1.36**

### Pizza

500g plain white flour  
5g powdered dried yeast  
2 teaspoons salt  
325ml warm water  
About 1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tin of chopped tomatoes, some tomato puree, a selection of meat or fish, vegetables, herbs and cheese.

Mix the flour, yeast, salt and water to form a soft dough. Add in the oil, then turn out on to a clean work surface and knead until smooth. Shape into a round, and leave to rise in a clean bowl, covered with a tea towel, until doubled in size. Preheat the oven as high as it will go. Quarter the dough and roll it into a round. Mix the tinned tomatoes and tomato puree, spread over the base and add your toppings and cook for approximately 10minutes, or until browned.

**Average cost per portion (one person): £0.68**

## Basic cooking essentials

The following items of equipment may be useful to have:

Saucepan  
Frying pan  
Chopping board  
Sharp knife  
Measuring spoons  
Spoons (wooden)  
Can opener  
Vegetable peeler  
Grater  
Measuring jug



## Other sources of information:

- [www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes) for cheap and healthy recipes.
- NHS choices [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well) for information on eating well for less.
- Supermarkets often have ideas and suggestions for economical and healthier eating recipes.
- <https://letsgetcooking.org.uk/lets-get-cooking-at-home/hundreds-of-recipes/> - Let's Get Cooking has hundreds of easy healthy great tasting recipes for you to try!

Contact details:

### Nutrition and Dietetic Services

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PALS@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.