

NUTRITION HANDBOOK

Meals 4 Health and Healing

A GUIDE TO ADOPTING A HEALTHY DIET



THE HEIMERDINGER FOUNDATION

*Meals 4 Health
and Healing*

TABLE OF CONTENTS



| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Introduction |
| 2 | Meals 4 Health and Healing Food List |
| 3 | Healing Mineral Broth Recipe |
| 4 | Why Organic? |
| 5 | Plant-Forward Defined |
| 6 | The Role of Fiber |
| 7-8 | Foods Excluded |
| 9-10 | Power Up with Plants |
| 11-12 | Healthy Fats |
| 13-14 | Cooking Oils for High/Low Heat |
| 15 | Cooking Oils to Avoid |
| 16-17 | Protein |
| 18 | Increasing Calories during Treatment |
| 19 | Cooking Methods |
| 20 | Tips for Getting Started |
| 21-22 | Dirty Dozen & Clean Fifteen |
| 23-26 | Food Safety |
| 28 | References |

If you have any additional questions regarding nutrition, please email our nutrition educator at nutrition@hfmeals.org.

Introduction

The background of the slide features several clear plastic containers filled with a vibrant yellow soup. The soup is garnished with a drizzle of red sauce and fresh green herbs. One container on the left has a white label with the text "Fish Bisque" partially visible. The containers are arranged in a cluster, with some in the foreground and others in the background, creating a sense of depth.

**"Let food be thy medicine and
medicine be thy food."
- Hippocrates**

MEALS 4 HEALTH AND HEALING

The Meals 4 Health and Healing mission is to provide nutrient dense, anti-inflammatory meals to assist our clients and their caregivers during cancer treatment, a time when eating right can make all the difference. Nourishing plant-forward meals can

- **aid in tolerating side effects from treatment**
- **boost your immune system**
- **improve treatment outcomes**
- **promote healing**
- **help you to maintain weight**
- **prevent infections**

Using a wide range of vegetables, whole grains, proteins, and herbs, we provide meals that are nutritious and immune-boosting.

Our foods are always organic and are from local sources whenever available. This ensures that they contain the highest amount of nutrition possible while leaving out pesticides, herbicides, added hormones, preservatives, and overly refined ingredients.



THE HEIMERDINGER FOUNDATION

Meals 4 Health and Healing



**Always organic,
local when possible**



FOODS INCLUDED

All fresh vegetables
Locally grown sprouts
Quinoa
Millet
Amaranth
Fonio
Brown rice
Wild grain rice
Soba noodles
Lentils
Beans: black, pinto, white, navy, garbanzos
Red skinned, purple, and sweet potatoes
Homemade nut milks
Coconut oil* (high heat)
Avocado oil* (high heat)
Extra virgin olive oil* (no heat exposure)
Flax seed oil* (no heat exposure)
Sesame oil* (high heat)
Avocado
Olives
All raw seeds and nuts
Green apples
Berries
Dehydrated unsweetened coconut & cranberries

*all oils unrefined & cold pressed

FOODS INCLUDED

Local pasture-raised chicken & eggs
Wild-caught cod
Wild-caught salmon
Wild-caught shrimp
Raw local honey
Pure grade maple syrup
Coconut sugar
Unprocessed salt & sea salt
Sea vegetables
All herbs and spices
Capers
Vinegars
Vegan parmesan
Cacao
Mushrooms (including various medicinal and local varieties)
Filtered or spring water
Chia seeds
Hemp seeds
Vegetable or chicken stock

FOODS NEVER INCLUDED

All highly processed or refined
Fried foods
Fast food
Red meat/pork
Smoked meats
All forms of gluten
White flours or refined grains
Processed table salt
White sugar
High fructose corn syrup
Corn syrup
Corn
White potatoes
Highly processed refined oils (including soybean, canola, cottonseed)
Chili peppers
Radiated herbs and spices
Artificial sweeteners
Peanuts
All forms of soy
Transfats
Hydrogenated fats
All forms of dairy
Genetically modified organisms
Food colorants
Bottled salad dressings/sauces
Bottled purified water/tap water

MEALS 4 HEALTH AND HEALING

Mineral Broth

Ingredients

- 6 unpeeled organic carrots
- 2 unpeeled medium organic yellow onions
- 1 organic leek, both white and green parts
- 1 stalk organic celery
- 4 unpeeled organic cloves garlic, halved
- ½ bunch organic parsley
- 4 medium organic red potatoes, quartered with skins on
- 2 organic Japanese yams or organic sweet potatoes, quartered with skins on
- 1 organic Garnet yam, quartered with skin on
- 1 T sea salt
- 1 strip of kombu
- 2 organic bay leaves
- 12 organic peppercorns
- 4 organic whole allspice or juniper berries

Method

Cut the vegetables into large chunks and place in a 12 quart stockpot along with other ingredients. Fill pot (two inches below rim) with filtered water, then cover and bring to a boil. Turn down to a simmer and cook uncovered for 2 - 6 hours until vegetables are tender and stock is a medium caramel color. Strain broth and serve hot or refrigerate/freeze, then reheat as needed.

This magic mineral broth is great to drink on its own, seasoned to taste with salt and pepper. It also makes an excellent base for soups, stews, sauces, and as a cooking liquid for grains and braised dishes.

This recipe is used weekly in our Meals 4 Health and Healing Kitchen. It is very nourishing and can be a great source of nutrition and hydration when you may not have an appetite for a full meal.

Why Organic?

The Meals 4 Health and Healing Kitchen only uses organic food because we deeply care about providing the most nutritious and healing meals possible for you - our client!

Definition of Organic:

Produced or involving production without the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or other artificial agents.

Any food labeled 'organic' must be certified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Organic products can be more expensive due to the certification fees the farmer or producer must pay.

Produce can be called organic if it's certified to have grown on soil that has had no prohibited substances applied for three years prior to harvest. Prohibited substances include most synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. A few of the benefits of organic farming practices include:

- Enhanced soil and water quality
- Reduced pollution
- Provision of safe, healthy livestock habitats
- Enabled natural livestock behavior
- Promotion of a self-sustaining cycle of resources on a farm

Additionally, organic food has been shown to contain higher amounts of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals due to the quality of the soil it is grown in. We believe supporting organic agriculture is the best choice for our clients and the environment. However, if you do not have access to organic food, it is still worthwhile to eat a wide variety of plant foods instead of processed and packaged foods.

Are Organic and Natural the Same?

No. In the United States, neither the FDA nor the USDA has regulations for products labeled "natural." As a result, food manufacturers can use the term 'natural' on their products without meeting any standards as far as food production or farming go and many contain heavily processed ingredients.

PLANT-FORWARD DEFINED



Our Meals 4 Health and Healing program embraces a plant-forward diet. Plant-forward refers to:

"A style of cooking and eating that emphasizes and celebrates, but is not limited to, plant-based foods—including fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses) and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices—and that reflects evidence-based principles of health and sustainability."

Source: Menus of Change, a joint initiative of the CIA and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

The American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR) states that reducing the total amount of animal foods in the diet is best for overall health and disease prevention. We follow their guidelines which states that **2/3 of the plate should contain plant-based whole foods**. We do include organic pastured chicken, eggs, or wild caught fish to supplement the other 1/3.

Plants produce many phytochemicals (literally, plant chemicals) that protect cells from damage. They also provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, healthy fats, and antioxidants—all of which are crucial for long-term health.

The Role of Fiber

We are a plant-forward kitchen, which also means that all of the meals we serve out of our kitchen are very high in fiber!

Fiber Defined:

The parts of plant-based foods (grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and beans) that the body can't fully break down. It travels through the body to clean out and help regulate our digestive system.



Benefits of a High Fiber Diet

- Aids digestion
- Reduces cancer risk
- Regulates blood sugar (reduces diabetes risk)
- Helps maintain a healthy body weight
- Improves heart health by balancing cholesterol
- Improves skin health by flushing toxins



MEALS 4 HEALTH AND HEALING

WHY CERTAIN FOODS ARE LEFT OUT OF OUR MEALS

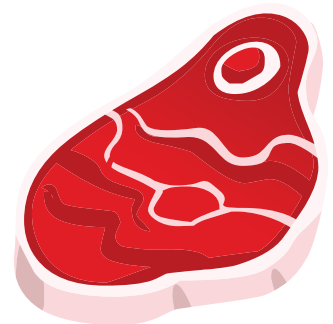
DAIRY

Dairy is controversial due to the increased amount of research that shows that the more dairy is consumed, the greater risk of disease and illness. We have very talented chefs and volunteers who are able to create flavorful, delicious dishes each week without dairy.



RED MEAT & PORK

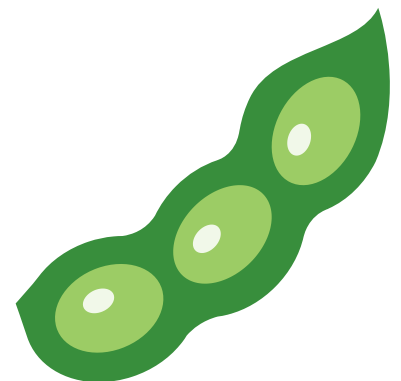
Frequent consumption of red meat and pork has been linked to many different illnesses and diseases. Try to use animal products as a topping or condiment rather than the base of a meal. 3 oz or the size of most individuals palm is a portion of meat according to the USDA. If resources allow, select animal foods that are organic, local, and raised without antibiotics and bovine growth hormones (BGH).



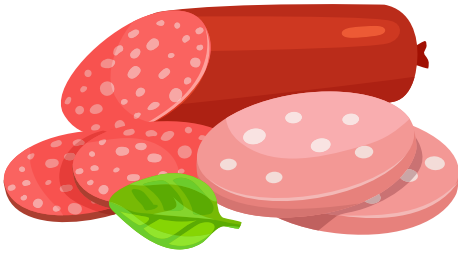
SOY

There is much debate over the benefits and potential implications of soy based foods. We prefer to be cautious and leave out foods that are controversial in our kitchen.

If you choose to eat soy, research shows that eating organic soy in its whole form has the most health benefits. Some examples of this would be edamame, tofu, or tempeh.



PROCESSED MEATS



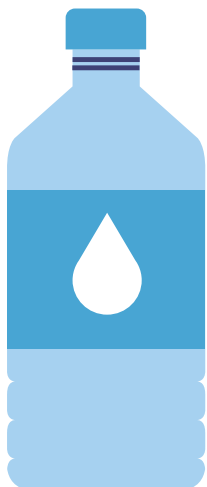
"The evidence on processed meat and cancer is clear-cut. The data show that no level of intake can confidently be associated with a lack of risk. Processed meats are often high in salt, which can also increase the risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease". - Professor Martin Wiseman, World Cancer Research Fund

GLUTEN/WHEAT



We are a gluten-free kitchen out of caution for our clients. A growing number of the population either has a gluten allergy or a sensitivity that causes an inflammatory reaction and unwanted symptoms such as bloating, stomach pain, or thyroid issues-to name a few. However, if you do not have a sensitivity or allergy, gluten (in its whole grain form such as whole wheat bread) can be a part of a healthy and balanced diet.

TAP WATER



In our Meals 4 Health and Healing kitchen, we have a Berkey water filtration system. Research has shown that the best choices for drinking water are spring or a filtration system that removes contaminants that are found in your area. To determine the quality of water in your area, simply head to the Environmental Working Group's database and type in your zip code. From there, you can find a water filter for your home that removes the specific contaminants necessary.

Daily water consumption is integral to optimal health. If tap water is all you have access to, then drink tap water! Limit alcohol, carbonated and sweetened beverages.

POWER UP WITH PLANTS

Plant-based diets can be creative, nourishing and delicious. Vegetables, legumes, fruits, and whole grains offer impressive variety.

CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

Cruciferous vegetables include broccoli, cabbage, collard greens, kale, and radishes, just to name a few. Compounds from these vegetables have been shown to enhance the detoxification pathways in the body and inhibit the development of cancer. They are most effective when consumed raw or lightly cooked.

DARK LEAFY GREENS

Dark leafy greens include some cruciferous vegetables in addition to lettuces, chard, spinach, dandelion and watercress. These vegetables are packed with cancer-fighting antioxidants. They are great sources of vitamins A, C, E, and K as well as fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, and calcium.

ORANGE AND RED VEGETABLES

Examples of orange and red vegetables include carrots, sweet potatoes, rhubarb, red and orange peppers, winter squashes, and beets. These foods contain bioflavonoids that keep our blood vessels open, promoting heart health and preventing varicose veins. They are also rich in potassium as well as vitamins A, C, and K.

HERBS AND SPICES

Herbs and spices do not provide calories, but are a great way to flavor foods and add nutrition. Turmeric, ginger, garlic, black pepper, and cayenne pepper may have protective effects against cancer. Most herbs and spices are loaded with anti-inflammatory properties. Try using them to flavor food and minimize salt!



FRUITS

Fruit is a great source of fiber and antioxidants. Our program, Meals 4 Health and Healing, emphasizes berries and green apples because they have a lower glycemic index than other fruits. This means they do not spike your blood sugar. The American Institute of Cancer Research has studied and endorsed the protective effect of apples, blueberries, cherries, cranberries, grapefruit, and grapes, specifically.

WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grains offer a healthier source of carbohydrates in addition to greater nutrition, fiber, and phytochemicals than refined grains such as white bread or pasta. Our program uses brown rice, amaranth, and the pseudoo-cereal grain, quinoa.



LEGUMES

Legumes consist of beans, peas, and lentils. These foods provide protein, carbohydrates, fiber, and healthy fats and are great alternatives to red meat. They are full of antioxidants and resistant starch, or starch not digested in the small intestine, both of which protect against cancer.

Healthy Fats

Here is what you need to know to nourish yourself with heart healthy, anti-inflammatory fats on a regular basis



Omega-3 fats and Omega-6 fats are also called 'essential fatty acids'.

We must get adequate amounts through our diet because our bodies cannot produce them and we require them to live.

The ratio we consume of omega-3 to omega-6 fat matters.

Most Americans get much more omega-6's than -3's. (15:1)

The ideal ratio is 1:1

Too much omega-6 fats can cause inflammation, which can eventually lead to illness.



Functions of Fats:

- Making hormones (including satiety hormones)
- Protecting our organs
- Enhancing Immune function
- Vitamin and phytochemical absorption
- Brain health

Sources of Healthy Fats

Here is what you need to know to make the best choices about which fat sources to include in your diet and how often



Omega-3 fats

- Flaxseeds
- Walnuts
- Hemp seeds
- Wild salmon
- Wild sardines
- Wild herring
- Oysters
- Chia seeds

Omega-6 fats

- Most Nuts and Seeds
- Safflower, Sunflower, & Grapeseed oils
- Meat, poultry, fish and eggs
- Soybeans



What about omega-9 fats?

Omega-9 fats are not considered an 'essential' fat in our diet because our bodies can actually make them! They are often contained in combination with omega-3 and 6 sources included in this guide. Some examples include:

- Cashews
- Salmon
- Hemp seeds
- Olive Oil

HEALTHY OILS FOR HIGH HEAT COOKING



01. **Grapeseed oil**

02. **Sunflower oil**

03. **Macadamia nut oil**

04. **Avocado oil**

05. **Sesame oil**

We recommend using avocado oil the most frequently for high heat cooking due to its omega-3 content. Omega-3s are the anti-inflammatory superstars of fats! They have many powerful health benefits for your body and brain.

HEALTHY OILS FOR LOW/NO HEAT COOKING



01. Extra virgin olive oil

02. Flax seed oil

03. Hemp seed oil

04. Almond oil

05. Walnut oil

All oils have different smoke points. You do not want to exceed their smoke point because it can create harmful free radicals and destroy the nutrients in the oil.

Try using these oils for drizzling over cooked veggies or making simple salad dressings.



COOKING OILS TO AVOID

It is best to avoid oils that are heavily processed, and/or made using genetically modified organisms (GMOs). These usually include soybean oil, canola oil, corn oil, and peanut oil.

Beware of cooking oil brands that use hydrogenated fats such as margarine or vegetable shortening. These are trans fats, which are known to cause heart disease and other health issues.

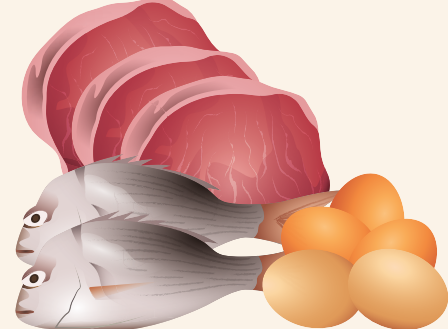
Avoid cooking oils with the words 'light' or 'refined' on them. When oils are refined, they are being altered using chemicals that are harmful to us.



Tips for storing your oils:

- Keep in a cool environment.
- Avoid light, which can quickly degrade oil. Buy oil stored in a dark colored glass bottle if possible.
- Avoid excess exposure to air, which also degrades oil due to the oxygen. Keep lid tightly closed.

Protein



Protein is an essential macronutrient that is needed for maintenance, immunity, and repair in our bodies.

- Most Americans get more than enough protein in their diets. However, if you are going through active cancer treatment, you will likely have higher protein needs. Discuss with your doctor or our nutrition educator, who is a registered dietitian.
-

Importance of Quality

As you may guess, all proteins are not created equal.

Choose fish, poultry, beans, and nuts; It is best to limit or avoid red meat and cheese, bacon, cold cuts, and other processed meats.

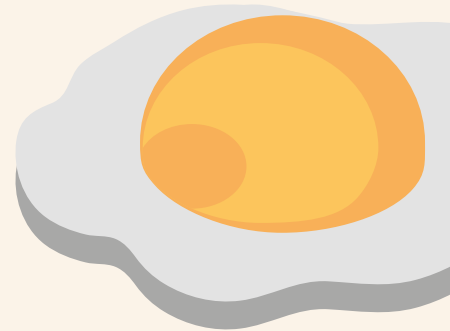
Wild-caught fish/shellfish, organic pasture-raised poultry, and grass-fed organic meats all have higher nutrient content (more good omega-3 fatty acids, less cholesterol, and more antioxidants) and less risk of exposure to antibiotics, growth hormones, and pesticides than conventionally raised animals.

Portions

Although protein is extremely important, it still does not need to be the main focus of every meal. For example, a salad with 4 oz of pasture-raised chicken, among other toppings such as nuts and seeds and other colorful veggies, will be a more well-rounded choice than if you have one large chicken breast with a small side of veggies.

Try to get in small amounts of quality protein with every meal and snack!

Protein



Below are the main sources of protein that we provide in our Meals 4 Health and Healing kitchen, and what we recommend for an overall healthy diet.

Wild-Caught Fish & Shrimp

Choosing wild-caught fish is safer than farmed fish (there are some reputable fish farms but they are few and far between). Wild fish does not contain antibiotics, chemicals or the toxic load of most farmed fish. However, you do want to look for wild fish that is low in mercury. Large predatory fish such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tuna and tilefish tend to be highest in mercury. Anchovies, sardines, salmon, cod, pollock and shrimp are all good low-mercury choices that are also high in antioxidants and nutrients.

Legumes

Beans and legumes — meaning all types of dried beans, split peas and lentils — are a great source of healthy protein. They are low in fat, high in fiber (which helps to keep you full longer), iron, folate, potassium and magnesium.



Pastured Chicken & Eggs

You get more bang for your buck when you seek out pasture raised, organic chicken and eggs. They have higher Omega 3s, a lower Omega 6:3 ratio, increased vitamin content, and more antioxidants.

No Appetite?

Tips for Getting Adequate Nutrition During Treatment

- Eat small amounts frequently.
- Limit fluids during mealtimes.
- Have a plant-based meal replacement shake between meals or if you can't eat (such as Garden of Life powder or Kate Farms shakes).
- Have a bedtime smoothie or snack.
- Freeze extra meals for when you are too fatigued to cook.
- Try cold foods (they tend to be more appealing to people when feeling sick).
- Add full fat coconut milk to coffee, tea, smoothies, or soups.
- Use heart healthy oils liberally on foods.
- Snack on nuts or trail mix throughout the day.
- Add almond butter (or any kind of nut butter) to apples, smoothies, or oatmeal.
- Add vegan mayo or avocado based mayo to sandwiches, wraps, etc.

Examples of High(er) Calorie Nutrient-Dense Foods

Nuts/nut butters

Tahini

Oils

Dried fruit

Jackfruit

Legumes

Quinoa

Avocado

Wild salmon

COOKING METHODS



SAUTÉING, BAKING, STEAMING

These are all very time tested, healthy and easy ways to prepare or heat up food. All three of these methods allow food to hold their nutrients well as long as you don't overcook them. It is a good idea to mix up your cooking methods, just like you want to have variety in your diet.

GRILLING



Grilling can be a great way to cook fruits, vegetables, or foods such as flatbreads, but use caution with meats. If you do grill meats, limit the amount of fat that drips on the coals to prevent a toxic compound called Heterocyclic amines (HCAs) from forming. Another way to ensure HCAs do not form is to cut down on grilling time by using smaller portions of meat on the grill. Protect yourself further by adding parsley to grilled meats to minimize the cancer-causing effects of HCAs.

MICROWAVING



Since there is conflicting research about the use of microwaves, we encourage our clients to heat up their food on the stove or in the oven if possible. If they are too fatigued or that is not an option, we encourage heating in a glass container in the microwave. Keep in mind that microwaves may not be as effective at killing bacteria and other pathogens from leftovers because the heat tends to be lower and sometimes cooks the food unevenly.

Tips for Getting Started

Easy ideas to try

EAT THE RAINBOW

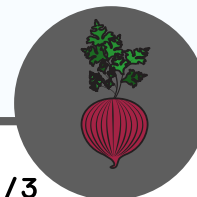
Try to eat 7-10 servings of colorful fruits and veggies per day. Different colors correlate with different protective nutrients, vitamins, and minerals.

1 c of leafy greens, 1/2 c cooked veggies or 1 medium piece of fruit all equate to 1 serving.



MAKE YOUR PLATE 2/3 PLANT FOODS

Try to make 2/3 of your plate plant-based foods at each meal. If you do eat animal products, use as a topping or condiment rather than the center of your meal.



SIP ON HEALING MINERAL BROTH

Mineral broth is both nourishing and hydrating.

When you don't feel like eating, it can be a great way to still get nutrients in and prevent heartburn, gas, or bloating.



VISIT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS MARKET AND BUY ORGANIC

Buying local, organic produce when possible ensures you are getting a variety of nutrient dense produce in your diet.

Buying produce in season can save you money. Freeze extras and add to stocks or smoothies. Additionally, many markets accept SNAP dollars.



SWITCH UP YOUR OILS

Try using avocado oil for high heat cooking and extra virgin olive oil for low heat or drizzling on salads.

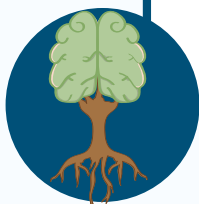
Both oils contain healthy anti-inflammatory omega-3s; they just have different smoke points.



PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

If you eat undistracted, in a calm state, and chew food thoroughly, your body can digest nutrients more efficiently.

Mindfulness can improve our relationship with food and, ultimately, our overall health.



Dirty Dozen

Each year, the Environmental Working Group publishes a list of produce with the highest amounts of pesticide residues. The foods on this list tested positive for multiple pesticides and had markedly more pesticides than other produce. If possible, try to buy these foods organic.

1 | Strawberries

7 | Cherries

2 | Spinach

8 | Peaches

3 | Kale/collards

9 | Pears

4 | Nectarines

10 | Bell & hot pepper

5 | Apples

11 | Celery

6 | Grapes

12 | Tomatoes

Clean Fifteen

The Environmental Working Group's Clean Fifteen list ranks produce least likely to contain pesticide residues. Keep in mind they still may be genetically modified.

If you are on a budget, these are "cleaner" nonorganic produce options.

1 | Avocado

8 | Asparagus

2 | Sweet corn

9 | Broccoli

3 | Pineapples

10 | Cabbage

4 | Onion

11 | Kiwi

5 | Papaya

12 | Cauliflower

6 | Sweet peas

13 | Mushroom

7 | Eggplant

14 | Honeydew

15 | Cantaloupe

Food Safety

You may be more susceptible to infections while undergoing cancer treatment. Make sure to follow these food safety tips when preparing food at home.



- Keep foods at appropriate temperatures. Hot foods should stay hot, and cold foods should stay cold. Put any leftovers in the refrigerator immediately.
- Wash all raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Scrub them with a vegetable brush to ensure they are clean. Avoid foods that cannot be washed well, like raspberries. Scrub produce with inedible surfaces, like pumpkins or melons, too.
- Wash countertops, knives, cutting boards, and hands well before preparing foods. This is especially important when handling raw meat, poultry, and fish.
- Use separate cutting boards for meats and produce.
- Thaw raw meat, poultry, and fish in the refrigerator or under cold running water. Do not thaw at room temperature.
- Avoid raw fish and shellfish including sushi and uncooked oysters.
- Do not drink unpasteurized juices, dairy products, and honey.
- Do not use food items that are past their 'best by' date.



- Do not eat foods with mold, including foods that are inherently moldy like bleu cheese and Roquefort cheese.
- Do not buy food from bulk bins.
- Do not eat at salad bars, buffets, or self-service restaurants.
- Do not microwave foods from Meals 4 Health and Healing and never microwave plastic. Heat food on the stove or in the oven.
- Cook meat, poultry, fish, and eggs thoroughly. Eggs should not have a runny center. Invest in a meat thermometer to make sure all proteins are cooked to adequate doneness. See chart on following page.



Safe Minimum Cooking Temperatures

| Category | Food | Temperature (°F) | Rest Time |
|--|------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Ground Meat & Meat Mixtures | Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb | 160 | None |
| | Turkey, Chicken | 165 | None |
| Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb | Steaks, roasts, chops | 145 | 3 minutes |
| Poultry | Chicken & Turkey, whole | 165 | None |
| | Poultry breasts, roasts | 165 | None |
| | Poultry thighs, legs, wings | 165 | None |
| | Duck & Goose | 165 | None |
| | Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird) | 165 | None |
| Pork and Ham | Fresh pork | 145 | 3 minutes |
| | Fresh ham (raw) | 145 | 3 minutes |
| | Precooked ham (to reheat) | 140 | None |
| Eggs & Egg Dishes | Eggs | Cook until yolk and white are firm | None |
| | Egg dishes | 160 | None |
| Leftovers & Casseroles | Leftovers | 165 | None |
| | Casseroles | 165 | None |
| Seafood | Fin Fish | 145 or cook until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork. | None |
| | Shrimp, lobster, and crabs | Cook until flesh is pearly and opaque. | None |
| | Clams, oysters, and mussels | Cook until shells open during cooking. | None |
| | Scallops | Cook until flesh is milky white or opaque and firm. | None |

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO BE A PARTICIPANT IN OUR MEALS 4 HEALTH AND HEALING COMMUNITY

Visit our website www.hfmeals.org and follow us on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn) for our recent recipes, nutrition education, and upcoming events. If you have any questions regarding nutrition, please feel free to reach out to our nutrition educator at nutrition@hfmeals.org



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At Meals 4 Health and
Healing we prepare only
the freshest, most nutritious
food for you!
Enjoy! ♥



ed
Organic Lemon Herb Braised Chicken & r
Organic Spinach & Blueberry Salad w/Bals

Great
anti-

Rich
omega-
work to p