FUEL
Feel-Good University Eating & Living

Health Education and Promotion - SCHW
For York University students who we aim to empower and support in tackling the challenge of managing nutrition as students.
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Introduction
Fueling the student mind and body.

For many students, one of the most exciting and anticipated parts about going to university is living away from home for the first time. The rush of independence that follows the process of moving into residence or off-campus housing is very empowering. With that being said, learning to live on your own has a steep learning curve that can make routine tasks challenging.

Over the last two years, I lived in the York University Keele Campus residence buildings and absolutely adored my experience. Being on campus allows me to conveniently get to early morning classes, hold a work-study position and make great friends in the community. However, taking care of myself while living alone has been a constant struggle of mine. I vividly recall my excitement for living on campus and getting to cook for myself every day. Cooking and food are my passions, so I had no doubt that I could consistently prepare balanced meals for myself and enjoy the process.

Quickly, I realized that I underestimated how hard maintaining strong eating habits would be in a limited student kitchen. During my first year living in residence, I barely cooked and really struggled to incorporate nutritious fruits and vegetables into my diet. Essentially, my love for food disintegrated, which I never thought was possible.

When I joined the Health Education & Promotion Team as a Peer Health Educator, I knew I wanted to create a cookbook to support other students struggling with preparing meals while living alone. As a part of Student Counselling, Health and Well-being, Health Education & Promotion provides York University students with person-centred, health and well-being support through education, empowerment and access while working towards supplying students with the skills to foster balanced and sustainable choices regarding their health. Our main goal is to create proactive approaches to well-being on campus.
We wrote this cookbook exclusively for York University students to optimize its usability to our student demographic. *FUEL - Feel-Good University Eating and Living* highlights the themes of accessibility, affordability, approachability, health and well-being, and balance to align with the priorities of university students.

As you explore this cookbook, the 2022-2023 Health Education & Promotion Team hopes you discover strategies, recipes and information that can support your nutrition, health and well-being as a student. Stay fuelled, Lions!

Written by on behalf of the 2022-2023 Health Education & Promotion Team.

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Acknowledgements

The FUEL Cookbook manifested from my passion for food and my vision for more student-friendly nutrition resources for the York University community. However, FUEL would have never evolved into the book you see before you without my team of devoted and talented colleagues.

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For all of you who have been on this journey, I could have never done it without you. Thank you for believing in my vision and collaborating to bring this idea to life!

Sincerely, Ashlyn Nguyen
Myth busting: What does "healthy" mean and look like?

In the context of food, we often use the terms “healthy” and “unhealthy” to sort foods in good and bad categories. This categorization can complicate our relationship with food. Instead of a “healthy” diet, building a balanced diet better promotes health and well-being.

Commonly, “healthy” foods refer to fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meats and low-anything snacks. Although the examples discussed previously may be a part of a balanced diet, there are still many other foods that can be incorporated into a nourishing and energy-boosting diet. Let’s do some myth busting to understand how less traditional “healthy foods” are excellent components to a balanced diet.

1. Frozen fruits, vegetables, and meats – less “healthy” than fresh?

As students, frozen produce or meats are great to have on hand for convenience. A common myth is that frozen fruits and vegetables are less nutritious than fresh ones. However, frozen options are not any less nutritious than fresh options! Frozen fruits and vegetables are picked at peak ripeness, which is when they have the most nutrients and taste the best. The freezing process retains the nutritional content of the produce as well, making frozen produce an accessible, convenient and budget-friendly option. The same principles apply for frozen meats and fish.
2. **Canned foods – less “healthy” than fresh?**

Similarly to frozen foods, canned beans and vegetables are often thought to be less nutritious than fresh options. However, the canning process preserves the nutritional content of vegetables and beans much like a freezing process. Canned products can be stored for a prolonged period and are typically more affordable options than fresh vegetables or beans, making them nutritious and budget-friendly! With that being said, canned products might have add-ins like salt, sugar and juice. Make sure to read the can labels to ensure you’re buying the products of your preference.

3. **Cultural Foods – “unhealthy”?**

What do you think of when you think of “healthy” meals? Perhaps you’re thinking of a salad, a fruit smoothie, or chicken breast and broccoli? Often our ideas of feel-good foods only reflect Western cuisine. Cultural foods are rarely highlighted as nutritious and energy-boosting meals. Does that mean that cultural dishes aren’t nutritious? Absolutely not! Every cuisine has different ways of incorporating nutrients and balanced meals exist in each cuisine.

Hopefully this read was helpful in resolving misconceptions around certain foods and in broadening your options as a student when building balanced eating habits!
Section 1

8:30 AM Class Ready

Breakfast recipes to kickstart your day!
Overnight Oats

makes 1 serving  prep time 5 minutes  cook time 0 minutes

Overnight oats are such a versatile breakfast for students: it takes no cook time, can be prepared in a dorm room in five minutes and is nourishing, packable and delicious. What more can we ask for?

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup milk of choice
- 1 tbsp liquid sweetener of choice
- Optional: 1/4 cup yogurt of choice
- Optional: 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

Toppings (feel free to add a combination of the following options):

- 1/4 cup fruit of choice, fresh or frozen
- 1 tbsp jam and/or peanut butter
- 2 tbsp granola
- 1 tbsp nuts of choice
- 1 tbsp dried fruits/toppings of choice

1. Mix the rolled oats, milk, sweetener, vanilla extract (optional) and yogurt (optional) in a container (mason jar, glass container, bowl) until combined.
2. Place container in the refrigerator for 3-4 hours to overnight.
3. Remove the container from the refrigerator when ready to eat or pack and add in toppings of choice.

Make It Your Own!

Opt for any toppings of your choice!
Spinach and Egg Breakfast Wrap

Need something quick for breakfast? This spinach and egg wrap takes just 10 minutes to throw together and can even be eaten on the go! Because it only uses one pan, you won’t need much time for clean up!

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 1-2 slices protein of choice (bacon, sausage, etc.)
- 1 tbsp neutral cooking oil (olive, vegetable, avocado, etc.)
- 1/2 cup baby spinach leaves
- 1/2 tsp freeze dried garlic (or fresh)
- 1 whole wheat soft tortilla
- 2-3 tbsp shredded cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: Sriracha to taste

Make It Your Own!

Swap eggs for tofu.
Crumble extra firm tofu in a frying pan with cooking oil and season to taste. Optionally, add a splash of unsweetened plant milk at the end of the cooking process to make it creamier.

Add any vegetables of choice.

Use your cheese of choice.

Additional Notes:
The size of wrap you use is completely up to you! It all depends on what ratio of tortilla to fillings you like!

1. Preheat a small or medium frying pan over medium heat.
2. Beat two eggs in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Cook your protein of choice and set aside.
4. In the same frying pan, sauté spinach with oil and a sprinkle of salt to help draw out moisture. Towards the end of the cooking process, add garlic to avoid burning.
5. Pour beaten eggs directly on top of the spinach and scramble until cooked. Set aside.
6. Assemble your wrap. Start with a zig-zag of sriracha (optional), followed by the egg, salt and pepper, protein, and lastly the shredded cheese before wrapping it up.
7. With a small amount of oil in the pan, grill your wrap on both sides until golden brown.
8. Enjoy with a side of fresh fruit or breakfast potatoes!
Adasi

Adasi is a nutritious and classic gluten-free and vegan Iranian breakfast food. Primarily made of lentils, it’s packed with protein and fibre, giving you enough energy to tackle a day filled with classes. While it is traditionally eaten for breakfast, many Iranians have it throughout the day. It is a perfect option for meal prep or your next day’s leftover lunch.

**Ingredients**

- 2 cups green lentils
- 2 russet potatoes
- Garlic cloves (depends on the number of cloves you like)
- 1 medium onion
- 2 tbsp canola oil (or any neutral oil)
- 1/2 tsp of sea salt
- 1/4 tsp of pepper
- 1/4 tsp of turmeric
- 1/4 tsp of cumin
- 8 cups vegetable stock

1. Dice the potatoes, onion and garlic.
2. Wash your lentils.
3. Heat the oil in a pot over medium heat and sauté the diced onion until translucent.
4. Add the potatoes in and cook for a few minutes.
5. Season with salt, pepper, turmeric and cumin. Cook until fragrant (about 30 seconds - 1 minute).
6. Add in the washed lentils and the vegetable stock. Bring them to a boil, reduce the temperature to low, and allow to simmer with the lid on for 25-30 min.
7. Once the lentils have cooked, use a wooden spoon to smash some lentils against the side of the pot to thicken the soup.
8. Season with more salt and pepper to taste.
9. Serve with a light drizzle of olive oil and lemon juice.
Banana Fritters

MAKES 16 Fritters  PREP TIME 5 minutes  COOK TIME 10 minutes

Looking for a quick way to put those over-ripping bananas to use? This recipe is for you! It is a great breakfast option for students on the go or a quick snack when you need a boost.

Ingredients

- 3 ripe bananas
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/3 tsp nutmeg
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- Oil for frying

1. Mash bananas with a fork or potato masher in a bowl.
2. Add in vanilla extract, brown sugar, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Stir until fully combined.
3. Sift in flour and stir until fully combined.
5. Once the oil is hot, drop the batter into the oil by the spoonful. Press on each fritter to form them into circles.
6. Flip once the edges are golden and bubbles start to form.
7. Remove the fritters from the oil once both sides are golden brown and enjoy!

Additional Notes:

Depending on how ripe your bananas are, you can lessen the amount of sugar because the riper bananas will add more sweetness.

To save time in the morning, the batter can be made and refrigerated the night before so all you have to do in the morning is fry and enjoy!

Make It Your Own!

Eat your fritters plain or add some syrup and/or icing sugar on top if you'd like a sweeter treat.
Soft Cereal

It's that perfect middle between some warm oatmeal and a bowl of cereal. This tasty breakfast is quick to make, so it's a perfect start to the day for students. The delicious pairing of the warm sweet cinnamon oat clusters with your cold milk of choice may lead you to never want to return to regular cereal. Pick out some of your favorite toppings and let’s get to making this fun breakfast!

Ingredients

- 1 ripe banana
- 1 cup of rolled oats
- 1 tsp of cooking oil of choice
- 1 tbsp of maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp of cinnamon powder
- Pinch of salt
- Milk of choice
- Optional: Topping of nut butter
- Optional: Topping of fresh berries

1. Peel the banana, placing it into a bowl and mashing it with the back of a fork to create a smooth consistency.
2. Into the same bowl, add rolled oats, maple syrup, cinnamon powder and a pinch of salt.
3. Mix all your ingredients until smooth.
4. Heat up your skillet on a stove. Once the skillet has been heated, reduce to medium heat and add a teaspoon of any cooking oil onto the skillet (coconut oil is recommended).
5. Add your oat mixture onto the skillet, gradually flipping and breaking any clumps that form. Toast for 10 minutes.
6. Remove your oat clusters from the pan and place them into a bowl, pouring either dairy or non-dairy milk over top. Optionally, top with fresh berries and nut butter.

Make It Your Own!

Swap berries for fresh or dried fruit.
Avocado Toast

MAKES 1 serving  
PREP TIME 5 minutes  
COOK TIME 5 minutes

You can't go wrong with a combination of creamy avocado on toasted bread! Simple, quick, and easy for any morning. Nourish yourself with this popular breakfast option.

Ingredients

- 2 slices of thick whole grain bread (or bread of choice)
- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- Optional: 1/8 tsp red pepper flakes

1. In a small bowl, combine avocado, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Gently mash with the back of a fork.
2. Top the toasted bread with the mashed avocado mixture.
3. For a hint of spice, optionally top with red pepper flakes.

Make It Your Own!

Protein kick: Top with an egg! Scrambled or fried are great options.

Customize: Add different spices and veggies to make your toast more fun. Tomatoes, feta cheese, smoked salmon, radish, olive oil, or balsamic glaze are great options.

Additional Notes:

If you have leftover avocado and want to store it without it going brown, a tip is to store it in a tightly sealed container with the pit still inside.
Your body loves and needs carbohydrates! They are an extremely important source of energy in your body, used by vital organs and a healthy, functioning brain! The next step to creating a balanced diet is consuming protein. This macronutrient helps your body grow, heal, and build muscle. Meat sources of protein usually carry the most abundant types of proteins which include meat, fish, dairy, and poultry. However, plant-based sources of protein, while they aren’t as rich in high quality protein, include quinoa, nuts, seeds legumes, and beans. Fats are the key to a balanced diet. They can nourish the body and provide long-term sustainable energy. While you may have heard many people demonize the fat found in foods like fries and burgers, other fats like avocados, nuts, vegetable oils (olive, sunflower), and seeds are great sources of fat.

What does it mean to eat balanced?

We’ve all heard nutrition “advice” from the one friend that says they swear on, or the influencers on Instagram or TikTok promising ‘healthy’ drinks and promoting the idea of a balanced diet. Often, every person will tell you something different, which can lead to a lot of confusion as to what a “balanced” diet looks like. Let’s go back to the basics and unpack what it means to eat a balanced diet.

Macronutrient-packed meals

What are macronutrients, and why are they so important? Macro means large or big. These are the nutrients your body needs in large amounts to function sufficiently. These macronutrients make up a balanced diet and they include carbohydrates, protein, and fats.
Protein makes us feel fuller for longer because it reduces the hunger hormone ghrelin in our body. Examples of proteins you can add to your hunger crushing combo are eggs, tofu, dairy, and quinoa.

Fats are essential for promoting satiety and can be found in foods like avocados, nuts, seeds, and olives.

Fibre slows the pace of digestion which means it allows for more stable energy levels throughout the day. You can add fibre through whole grains, cereal, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables.

A balanced diet doesn’t mean restricting yourself from a certain type of food. It’s all about moderation and making sure you’re giving your body what it needs in order to function properly and optimally!

**Eat the rainbow!**

This is a catchy phrase and strategy to help you easily build a nutrient-rich diet. Different fruits and vegetables vary in their phytonutrients - this is what gives fruits and vegetables their specific colour. Eating a variety of coloured fruits and vegetables promotes a variety of nutrients in our diets. Good nutrient intake is known to boost your mood, promote disease prevention, increase overall health, and achieve a balanced diet.

**Tip: The Hunger Crushing Combo!**

If you want to incorporate these tips, like the macronutrients, in your everyday meals but don’t know how, try this formula. The goal is to create a combo that can leave you feeling physically and emotionally satisfied while listening to your body. The method behind it is making sure you add a source of protein, fibre, and fat to whatever meal you like to eat.
Between Classes
Smaller meals perfect for a re-energizing lunch!

Health & Education Promotion
Vegetarian Burrito Bowl

MAKES 4 servings  PREP TIME 30 minutes  COOK TIME 40 minutes

This vegetarian-friendly burrito bowl recipe is a spin-off from the traditional Mexican burrito dish. Instead of wrapping yummy fillings into a flour tortilla, we will toss them in a bowl... hence the name burrito bowl! This recipe uses accessible ingredients and only requires minimal time, a few cooking utensils and beginner-level cooking skills. In other words, it is very student-friendly. Give it a try, it might just become your new go-to!

Ingredients

- 1 cup dry brown rice
- 3 cups spinach
- 3/4 cup canned black beans
- 3/4 cup canned corn
- 9 halved cherry tomatoes
- 3 tbsp diced red onion
- 1 tbsp sliced bell peppers
- 1 tbsp dressing of choice (e.g., guacamole, hummus, sour cream, shredded cheese)

1. Rinse the dry rice. Add rice and 2 cups of water to a medium saucepan. Bring the water to a boil, then reduce to low heat.
2. Cover the saucepan and simmer the rice for about 40 minutes. Remove the saucepan off heat once all the water has been absorbed.
3. Rinse the black beans with water until the water runs clear.
4. Prepare all vegetable toppings (onions, tomatoes, corn and spinach) by washing and cutting as specified.
5. Assemble your burrito bowl. Place cooked rice at the bottom of the bowl and add spinach and beans. Top it off with the diced onions, sliced pepper, halved tomatoes and a sprinkle of canned corn.
6. Optionally, add a dressing to your bowl. Some options include guacamole, hummus, sour cream or even a sprinkle of shredded cheese!

Make It Your Own!

Swap brown rice for white rice/quinoa.

Swap black beans for white bean/red lentils/any protein of choice.

Swap spinach for lettuce.

Swap the topping vegetables for any vegetables of choice (olives, carrots, avocado).

Additional Notes:

Feel free to meal prep this recipe ahead of time and store the burrito bowls in airtight containers in the fridge.
Tuna Balanced Bowl

This balanced tuna bowl has all the macronutrients you need to feel full during lunch time! This recipe uses two key ingredients, tuna and quinoa, that will fill you up with nourishing sources of omega-3 fatty acids, protein and fiber. All these nutrients contribute to making you feel fuller for longer so that you can go on with your day filled with energy.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup quinoa
- 1 cucumber
- 1 green onion
- 1 can of tuna
- 1/2 cup canned chickpeas
- 1 avocado
- Leafy greens of choice (e.g., lettuce, spinach, kale, arugula)
- 2 radishes
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- Feta cheese to taste

Dressing:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp white rice vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 juiced lemon

1. Rinse the quinoa.
2. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil and add in the quinoa to cook at medium heat for 5-10 minutes. Turn off the heat once the water has been mostly absorbed by the quinoa, even if it has not fully cooked yet. Once you turn off the heat, put a lid on the pot and let it sit for 5 minutes.
3. Take off the lid and fluff the quinoa with a fork.
4. Rinse and cut up all the veggies and place them in the bowl.
5. Use a strainer to rinse off the canned chickpeas. Add the rinsed chickpeas in the bowl with the veggies.
6. Add in the canned tuna and cooled quinoa in the bowl.
7. Crumble feta cheese (to your preference) in the bowl.
8. Mix all dressing ingredients in a separate bowl. Drizzle the dressing over the balanced bowl and toss. Enjoy!

Make It Your Own!

Swap quinoa for brown rice/couscous.
Swap tuna for chicken/ tofu.

Additional Notes:

Feel free to get creative and use whatever ingredients you have in your fridge. The ingredients in this recipe are more of a suggestion/guideline for you to personalize to your liking. The more colours you can include in your balanced bowl, the more nutrients you will get!

Prep a bowl of quinoa on the weekend and place it in the fridge for quick recipes during the week.
Kale Chickpea Salad

Kale is demonized as one of the worst tasting vegetables, but this recipe will completely change your mind! Sometimes, kale tastes bitter and unenjoyable because it is not dressed properly, which is exactly why this recipe includes a delicious salad dressing that will have you going back for seconds. Kale is great source of vitamin A, vitamin B and antioxidants which promote good health. Hopefully you're convinced to try this delicious salad!

Ingredients

- 1/2 can of chickpeas
- 2 green onions
- 1 bunch of kale
- 1 bunch of lettuce
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1/3 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/2 cup quinoa
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 juiced lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard

Dressing:

1. Rinse the quinoa.
2. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil and add in the quinoa to cook at medium heat for 5-10 minutes. Turn off the heat once the water has been mostly absorbed by the quinoa, even if it has not fully cooked yet. Once you turn off the heat, put a lid on the pot and let it sit for 5 minutes.
3. Take off the lid and fluff the quinoa with a fork.
4. Wash and chop the kale, cherry tomatoes, green onions, and lettuce. For the kale, make sure to chop off the stems and only use the leaves in your salad.
5. Transfer the kale into the salad bowl first. Drizzle half of the olive oil onto it and massage the leaves until they are fully coated. You will notice the leaves soften a bit.
6. Add in the rest of the produce into the bowl along with the pumpkin seeds, cranberries, and quinoa.
7. Mince the garlic and place it in a small separate bowl. Add in the rest of the dressing ingredients. Mix up the dressing and add it to your salad bowl.
8. Finally, mix and enjoy!

Make It Your Own!

Swap kale for other leafy greens (parsley or spinach).

Swap chickpeas for kidney beans.

Additional Notes:

Prep a bowl of quinoa on the weekend and place it in the fridge for quick recipes during the week.
Mediterranean Pasta Salad

**MAKES** 2 servings  |  **PREP TIME** 12 minutes  |  **COOK TIME** 10 minutes

This Mediterranean Pasta Salad recipe is easy to make and tossed with a yummy lemon-herb vinaigrette. This picnic-perfect pasta salad comes together in no time, while being full of fresh ingredients and packing a flavorful punch. It's a great recipe to make ahead and meal prep for lunch!

### Ingredients

- 2 cups uncooked fusilli pasta
- 1 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup cooked chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cups arugula
- 1 cup Persian cucumbers, sliced into quarters
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 chopped bell pepper
- 1/2 cup of black (or kalamata) olives
- Optional: 1 cup basil leaves, torn
- Optional: 1/2 cup minced parsley
- Optional: 1/2 cup chopped mint

**Dressing:**
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp dried Italian seasoning
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
- 3/4 tsp sea salt
- 3/4 tsp black pepper

### Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare the pasta according to the package or until slightly past al dente.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, mustard, garlic, black pepper, red pepper flakes, and salt. (Note: The dressing will have a strong flavor, but it'll mellow out once it coats all of the pasta salad ingredients).
3. Drain the pasta and toss it with a little olive oil (so that it doesn’t stick together). Let your pasta cool completely before tossing it with the other ingredients.
4. Transfer to a large bowl with the tomatoes, chickpeas, arugula, cucumbers, feta cheese, olives and bell pepper.
5. Pour the dressing and toss to coat. Season to taste with more lemon, salt, pepper, and/or a drizzle of olive oil, if desired, and serve.

### Make It Your Own!

*Make it vegan! Swap feta for olives/sun-dried tomatoes.*

*Add protein! This dish goes great with grilled chicken.*

### Additional Notes:

*Cook your pasta a little longer than normal. It should be just a tad past al dente (but not mushy) so that the pasta stays soft when it cools.*

*Dress your pasta twice! When pasta salad is prepped ahead of time, the pasta tends to absorb the dressing causing the flavors to get muted over time. To solve this issue, use half of your dressing after its made and the rest right before you serve!*
The World's Easiest Chili

MAKES 6 servings  PREP TIME 35 minutes  COOK TIME 10 hours

Got a taste for all things spicy? Want a beginner-friendly recipe? Then look no further for the easiest chili recipe! If you’re meal prepping for the entire week, this is a perfect dish!

Ingredients

- 1 and 1/2 pounds of lean ground beef
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 chopped green bell pepper (small)
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 2 (16-ounce) red kidney beans cans
- 2 (14.5-ounce) diced tomatoes cans
- 2 tbsp of chili powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin

1. Place beef, onion, bell pepper, and garlic clove in a skillet and cook over medium heat.
2. Stir until the beef is no longer pink.
3. Drain the excess water from the skillet.
4. Take the beef mixture and place it in the slow cooker.
5. In the slow cooker, stir in the red kidney beans.
6. In the slow cooker, add in the tomatoes, chili powder, salt, pepper, and ground cumin.
7. Let the chili cook at HIGH for 3 hours and LOW for 5 hours.
Ever said or heard the term ‘hangry?’ Or how about those times when you’re feeling tired, irritable, or unhappy because of an empty stomach? These feelings can be tied to the gut-brain axis that connects our guts to our brains. So, it’s no surprise that how (or what) we’re eating dramatically shifts our mood.

The gut-brain axis means that our brain and gut response to specific neurotransmitters is the same. What does this mean? Essentially, neurotransmitters determine our mood as they are in charge of sending signals via nerves—like hunger—across the body! That’s why it’s essential to strive for a healthy gut environment. This allows our brain to function even better because of that healthy gut-brain axis. So, if you want to do well on that big upcoming exam, make sure you take care of your gut-brain axis!

What are some ways we can manage our mood through eating and regulating our gut-brain axis? The best thing we can do is to eat regularly.

That’s right, no more skipping breakfast or any other meals! Building a regular routine of eating helps maintain and sustain concentration in and out of the classroom. This helps us as students because when our bodies don’t receive enough food for a long period of time, blood sugar levels drop. If this happens, students can become really tired, irritable, or sad. That's the last thing we want if we have work to complete!
Here are some tips to help build that routine and make sure we never get hangry:

- **Schedule mealtimes around your schedule:** Take account of when you have class, work, or any other commitments and schedule in mealtimes around your commitments. That can mean eating breakfast or lunch later or earlier in the day. The important thing to remember is having and accommodating a flexible schedule is completely okay!

- **Keep snacks on hand:** When rushing from one place to another, snacks will be your best friend. It’s quick, it’s easy to eat, so even if you only have 10 minutes between classes, snacks will give you sufficient energy to refuel. Remember: when it’s been more than 4-5 hours since your last meal, grab an energy-boosting snack that will fuel your brain like fruit, granola, hummus, or the Banana Muffins from this book!

- **Plan ahead:** Meal planning has been shown to promote healthy eating behaviours. It sounds a little exhaustive, so it’s a good idea to plan out not only when but also what you will eat throughout the day. That takes away a lot of the decision-making fatigue that comes with eating.

Following these tips will help fuel our mind and bodies for academic success!
Feeling Fuelled

Larger meals to make as a nourishing dinner after a long day of classes and studying.
Quick Quesadillas

MAKES 1 quesadilla  PREP TIME 5 minutes  COOK TIME 5 minutes

Getting hungry? What can be better than a cheesy-gooey-delicious, and quick quesadilla? Like many of the recipes in this cookbook, this recipe is convenient and super customizable. Start with a tortilla, some cheese and a few beans, and you got yourself a meal!

Ingredients

- 1 flour tortilla
- 1/2 cup of grated cheese of choice (e.g. cheddar, mozzarella, Monterey Jack, dairy-free cheese)
- 1/4 cup canned cooked black beans or pinto beans, rinsed, and drained

Select a few of the following as fillings:
- 2 tbsp of diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp of sliced olives
- 2 tbsp of fresh or canned corn
- 2 tbsp of diced onion
- 2 tbsp of diced bell peppers
- 1 tsp of oil, butter or non-stick spray

1. Heat a medium-sized skillet to medium heat with some oil, butter or non-stick cooking spray.
2. Place a tortilla flat on the skillet to warm up. Flip after 30 seconds to warm up the other side.
3. Sprinkle half of the grated cheese on one half other tortilla. Then, add the rest of your fillings evenly on top of the tortilla half with the sprinkled cheese.
4. Sprinkle the rest of the grated cheese on top of the fillings and fold the empty half on top of fillings to seal.
5. Flip the quesadilla and let it crisp up, about 1-2 minutes.
6. Flip the quesadilla again and let the other side crisp up, another 1-2 minutes.
7. Remove the quesadilla from the skillet and place on a plate or cutting board. Let it cool slightly and cut into wedges.

Make It Your Own!

Feel free to mix up the fillings and introduce ingredients that were not listed here!
Spicy Tomato and Basil Pasta

This saucy tomato pasta is the perfect lunch or dinner option for a busy weeknight, when you are tight on time, on-the-go and need a quick but hearty meal. Using everyday ingredients, canned tomatoes, and basic spices, this dish comes together super quickly and will leave you feeling full and satisfied.

Ingredients

- 200 g pasta of your choice (penne or fusilli work well)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 small onion, or shallot, finely diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 can of crushed tomatoes
- Handful of fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 tsp red chili flakes
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Optional: Grated parmesan cheese
- Optional: Cherry tomatoes

1. Cook your pasta in a pot of salted boiling water and stir periodically until al dente, around 7 minutes.
2. In a non-stick pan, heat the olive oil on medium heat. Once oil is hot, add and sauté garlic for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.
3. Add in the diced onion and cook until translucent, for around 3-4 minutes.
4. Next, add in the crushed tomatoes, along with all the dried herbs and spices. Simmer on low heat for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Optional: Add in fresh cherry tomatoes for an exciting bite.
6. Add in the cooked pasta into the pan along with a couple tablespoons of the pasta water. Toss gently to combine.
7. Finally, add in chopped basil, toss again, and serve with cheese of your choice.

Make It Your Own!

Consider adding a protein of your choice (e.g., chicken, tofu) to make this meal more filling!

Additional Notes:

This recipe can be stored in the fridge for up to 3 days.
Maple Hoisin Tofu

This tasty, protein-filled, vegan dish is great for those nights you just want something quick and easy. Sweet, salty, and a little spicy, this dish is fantastic with rice, noodles, in a lettuce wrap, or just on its own as a side dish!

**MAKES** 3 servings  **PREP TIME** 10 minutes  **COOK TIME** 15 minutes

Ingredients

**Tofu:**
- 1 block extra firm tofu (optionally pressed)
- 1/2-1 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp neutral cooking oil (olive, vegetable, avocado, etc.)

**Sauce:**
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1-2 minced garlic cloves
- 2 tsp sriracha, sambal, or other hot sauce

**Make It Your Own!**

Swap maple syrup for any sweetener (agave, honey, brown sugar).

Swap soy sauce for low sodium soy sauce, tamari, or liquid aminos.

Swap tofu for tempeh, chicken, or other protein source.

Swap minced garlic for 1-2 tsp of freeze-dried garlic or garlic powder.

Tofu:
1. Optionally, press your tofu for 15-20 minutes or overnight.
2. Cut or tear tofu into desired shape and size. Place in medium container.
3. Sprinkle cornstarch to the tofu, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper over the tofu, place the lid on your container and shake to coat.
4. Pour neutral oil over tofu and shake again.
5. Cook tofu in a 400°F air fryer for 10-12 minutes or until crispy. Remember to flip halfway through.

Sauce:
1. While the tofu cooks, combine all sauce ingredients in a bowl, mix, and set aside until the tofu is cooked through.
2. Pour the sauce into a medium frying pan and heat over medium heat until it has thickened slightly.
3. Once the desired consistency has been reached, toss the cooked tofu into the pan and coat with the sauce.
4. Serve over rice with broccoli, in lettuce wraps, or on its own.

Additional Notes:

This recipe uses an air fryer to cook the tofu, but an oven or frying pan could also be used.

Oven instructions: Place tofu in preheated, 400°F oven on a lined baking sheet for 25-30 minutes or until crispy.

Pan instructions: Preheat pan to medium heat and fry tofu in oil until crispy.
The Perfect Rice

Makes: 6 servings  Prep time: 10 minutes  Cook time: 30 minutes

Ever made rice and it turns out too soggy or dry? Well, no more of that! This cheat sheet to create the perfect, fluffy rice will be your best friend! It's easy, simple, and fool-proof! The star of the show here is your oven!

2 tsp olive oil
1 cup uncooked jasmine rice
2 tbsp unsalted butter
1 tsp salt
1 and 3/4 cups unsalted chicken broth

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F or 190°C.
2. Coat the bottom of the 2-quart baking dish and its sides with olive oil.
3. In the baking dish, pour in the rice. Add the butter and salt.
4. Pour the measured chicken broth into a cup and microwave it for 3 minutes.
5. Take the broth and pour it over the rice in the baking dish. Stir until combined.
6. Take aluminum foil, and cover the top of the baking dish. (Make sure there is no part of the baking dish left exposed!)
7. Put the rice in the preheated oven. Let it cook in this oven for 27 minutes.
8. Take out the rice, uncover the aluminum foil and let it sit for 3 minutes.

Additional Notes:
If you don’t have a 2-quart baking dish, don’t worry! Any baking dish (that can hold rice) will work.

This recipe requires access to an oven.

This recipe uses aluminum foil.
### Maple Glazed Chicken With Bok Choy and Rice

**MAKES** 2 servings  
**PREP TIME** 10 minutes  
**COOK TIME** 20 minutes

If you are craving some flavor-filled Chinese food for dinner, this is a quick and easy option. Chicken is a rich source of protein while rice serves as a source of carbs to keep you satiated. Bok choy is a Chinese white cabbage that is a staple in many Asian dishes. When cooked, its leaves taste like spinach while its white stems have a spongy texture.

#### Ingredients

- 6 baby bok choy
- 1 cup of white rice
- 2 chicken breasts
- 4 garlic cloves
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 4 tbsp soy sauce
- Butter
- Sesame seeds
- 2 green onions

#### Instructions

1. Use a colander to rinse and drain the rice.
2. Add 2 cups of water into a pot and bring to boil over high heat. Then, add in the rice and turn it to low heat. Cook the rice until the liquid is fully absorbed which will take around 15-18 minutes. Once done, turn off the heat and cover the pot. Let it sit for 5 minutes.
3. Wash the chicken breast and dice into 1-inch cubes.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together 2 minced garlic cloves, 3 tbsp of soy sauce, 2 tbsp of pure maple syrup, and 1 tbsp of rice vinegar. Set aside for later.
5. Coat the bottom of a saucepan with butter and bring it to medium-high heat. Add the chicken pieces and cook undisturbed until the bottoms are opaque with golden brown patches (10 minutes). Halfway through the chicken cooking, add in the whisked sauce. Stir frequently until the sauce thickens. Flip and cook for an additional 3 minutes.
6. Wash the baby bok choy. Transfer the cooked chicken to a plate. Coat the pan with butter and add in 2 minced garlic cloves and the bok choy. Cover the pan with a lid and let it cook for 2-3 minutes on medium heat, tossing occasionally.
7. Add in 1 tbsp of soy sauce and 1 tbsp of maple syrup, letting it cook for another 1-2 minutes.
8. Once done, serve the rice, chicken and bok choy in a bowl and top it off with sliced green onion and sesame seeds.

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**Make It Your Own!**

*Swap chicken for tofu.*

*Swap bok choy for spinach.*
Roasted Chickpea Veggie Bowl

This one-pan recipe is a simple way to whip up a cozy and nutritious dinner. It includes budget-friendly accessible ingredients and is great for beginners!

**Ingredients**

- 1 can of chickpeas (15 oz)
- 2 medium carrots
- 4 medium potatoes
- Half a head of cauliflower
- 1 small head of broccoli
- 1 small onion
- 1 and 1/2 cups of mushrooms
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tsp dried basil
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp salt

**Preparation**

1. Preheat oven to 425°F or 218°C.
2. Prepare vegetables: Drain and rinse chickpeas. Chop broccoli and cauliflower into bite sized pieces. Peel and dice carrots. Slice onion into half rings. Peel potatoes and cut them into 1-inch cubes. Slice mushrooms into quarters.
3. Lay out all ingredients onto sheet pan, evenly sprinkling the ingredients with minced garlic, dried basil and salt. Drizzle olive oil over top and toss all the ingredients together.
4. Once all ingredients have been laid out flat along the sheet pan, place the sheet pan into the preheated oven.
5. Bake sheet pan for 45 minutes, flipping the ingredients to the other side at the 25-minute mark.
6. Serve the roasted chickpeas and veggies in a bowl.

**Make It Your Own!**

*Swap yellow potatoes for sweet potatoes.*

*Swap dried basil for smoked paprika.*

*Swap carrots for bell peppers.*

*Swap broccoli for brussels sprouts.*

*Swap cauliflower for zucchini.*
Meal planning is a great strategy to save time for students with busy schedules! Not only that, but meal planning can also result in fewer trips to the grocery store or restaurants and help us stay within our budgets.

Meal planning doesn’t mean eating the exact same thing for an entire week, or something that is exhaustive and extremely time-consuming. Quite the opposite! Here are some tips that cover the basics of meal planning:

1. **You don’t need to plan every meal for the entire week at once.**

   If you do, chances are you’re going to feel overwhelmed at all the work that needs to be done, or waste food if you get tired of eating the same thing easily. Remember that it's okay to prep meals a few times a week. This might mean having to schedule another trip to the store in your week, but it's worthwhile if you're first getting started.

2. **Schedule a time to meal prep.**

   Every week, set time aside to look at your weekly schedule and plan for when you will have time to do things such as grocery shopping and meal prep. Use this time to see which days will be busier and which days you'll have more time to make more laborious meals.

3. **Make a menu (or list) of items needed before going grocery shopping.**

   Knowing what to buy prevents wasting excess time wandering down the aisles. Try having staple foods included on your menu, like for breakfast, buying oats and cereal, which will help make grocery shopping (and meal planning) easier.
4. Purchase in-season groceries.

Out-of-season produce tends to be imported from warmer climates which is why things such as berries are more expensive in the winter. If you buy local produce, you are not only saving money but also supporting local farmers. If you are unsure how to find out what is in season in Ontario, check out Foodland Ontario’s Availability Guide.

5. Calling all meat-eaters: animal-based protein is likely to be the most expensive thing on your list.

Try including meatless meals at least one day of the week to save money! You can also use this as a chance to try out new recipes or work with different kinds of proteins such as nut butter, lentils and beans.

6. Space out meals so that you’re not eating the same thing two nights in a row.

If you meal prep three different dishes, rotate between them throughout the week, so you don't get sick of it or bored! This makes every meal more exciting.

7. Planning leftovers diligently saves time and money.

You can use them for a busy day of the week or on a day when you don't feel like cooking. Reusable containers are great to have around so you can portion servings out for meals through the week.

8. Get bored easily? Go on Pinterest or YouTube for recipe inspiration.

Seeing how aesthetic something looks can inspire you to make and recreate the meal. It's a great way to come up with new, creative ideas. Plus, this can help you decide on what to cook during the week if you are feeling indecisive!
Study Snacks
Looking for a post-class pick-me-up?

health
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Crispy Air Fryer Potatoes

Makes: 2-3 servings  Prep Time: 10 minutes  Cook Time: 15 minutes

One of our favourite side dishes to go with any meal! They can act like breakfast potatoes to go with eggs, a nice starch to bump up your dinner meal, or just as a quick snack.

Ingredients

- 1 large russet/red/yellow potato
- 1 tbsp neutral oil (olive, avocado, etc.)
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 and 1/2 tsp corn starch

Make It Your Own!

Use your favourite spices and seasoning blends.

Optionally, chop up a clove of garlic and mix it in with the potatoes.

1. Wash your potato and cut into cubes of your preferred size.
2. Rinse cubed potatoes in a colander under cold water for a minute. Washing off the potato starch on the outside helps the potatoes get crispier when cooking. Optionally, allow your diced potatoes to soak in ice cold water for around 30 minutes before cooking for maximum crisp!
3. Pat potatoes to dry well with a paper towel.
4. In a medium bowl, toss the potatoes in neutral oil, followed by seasonings (garlic powder, onion powder, Italian, smoked paprika, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper).
5. Sprinkle corn starch over the potatoes and toss to coat. Make sure the corn starch is fully incorporated; you shouldn’t be able to see any powder.
6. Roast the potatoes at 400°F in an air fryer for 13-15 minutes. Shake them a few times during the cooking process. Remove when crispy and golden brown.
7. Season to taste and serve!

Additional Notes:

For more portions, this recipe can easily be double or tripled if you’d like. Make sure to give the potatoes enough room when they are in the air fryer. Overcrowding will lead to less crispy potatoes.

Fry shapes or wedges also work with this recipe. If the pieces are larger, the cooking time may need to be adjusted. Add time as needed.
Fattoush Salad

MASSES 4 servings  PREP TIME 10 minutes  COOK TIME 20 minutes

This crunchy, delicious salad can be paired with any meal to make it that much yummier! This is a staple that acts as a perfect and easy side dish to impress your friends and family.

Ingredients

- 1 head of romaine lettuce
- 4-5 baby radishes
- 1 long bell pepper (preferably green)
- 3-4 baby cucumbers
- 1/2 tsp dry mint
- 1/2 tsp sumac
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- 1/2-1 lime

1. Wash all vegetables (lettuce, radishes, bell pepper, cucumbers) and leave to dry.
2. Once dry, dice all vegetables into small cubes. Set aside.
3. In a smaller bowl, prepare the vinaigrette by mixing olive oil, vinegar, sumac, and dry mint.
4. Pour the vinaigrette over the diced vegetables and mix well.
5. Cut and squeeze the lime over the salad and mix once more.

Make It Your Own!

Swap romaine lettuce for iceberg lettuce.

Optionally add 1 cup of spinach.

Optionally add 1/2 cup of green onions to add a sweeter flavour.
Apple Cinnamon Bake

Similar to the ever-popular cinnamon bun, with a hollowed out apple replacing the pastry, this dessert is sure to satisfy the sweetest of sweet-tooth. Top with a scoop of your favourite ice cream when cooled to achieve flavours similar to apple pie.

Ingredients

- 4 apples of choice
- 4 tbsp crushed walnuts
- 4 tbsp brown sugar or coconut sugar
- Cinnamon to taste
- Honey to taste
- 4 tsp butter or coconut oil
- Ice cream to serve

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cut off the top of each apple. Each apple should have a flat top and be free of the stem.
3. Hollow out each apple using a teaspoon or small knife, leaving about 1 cm of apple wall and base. This can take a few minutes but will be absolutely worth the work!
4. Place all apples on a baking sheet.
5. Fill each apple with 1 tbsp of crushed walnuts, 1 tbsp of brown sugar, a dash on cinnamon and a drizzle of honey.
6. Top each with a tsp of butter (or coconut oil).
7. Bake for 30-45 minute or until soft to the touch.
8. Serve with your favourite ice cream and enjoy!

Make It Your Own!

Swap butter for coconut oil.

Swap brown sugar for coconut sugar.

Use almonds, peanuts, cashews or any other nut instead of walnuts.

Additional Notes:
Alternatively, you can "bake" your apples in the microwave for 4-10 minutes if you are short on time.
Banana Muffins

These muffins are super easy to whip up when you have some overripe bananas to use! It is great as a snack or something to pack for later when you’re on the go. They may be vegan, but anyone can enjoy this fantastic snack!

**Ingredients**

- 1 and 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (around 2 large or 3 small)
- 1/2 cup neutral oil (canola, vegetable, avocado)
- 1/2 cup plant milk (almond, oat, cashew, dairy milk if not vegan)
- Optional: Mix-ins (e.g. 1/2 cup chopped apples, 1/2 cup vegan chocolate chips, 1/4 cup nuts, etc.)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Lightly grease muffin pans and line with cupcake liners.
3. In a large bowl, mix flour, white sugar, brown sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
4. In a separate bowl, combine mashed bananas, oil, and milk.
5. Mix the bananas into the flour mixture until just combined.
6. Optionally, fold in any desired mix-ins.
7. Fill muffin cups with the batter (a little more than halfway full to give room to rise) and bake for 20-25 minutes. To check if they’re done, stick a toothpick in the centre of the muffin. If it comes out clean, they’re done!
8. Allow to cool for 10-20 minutes and enjoy!

**Additional Notes:**

This recipe can also be made into banana bread. If using a large loaf pan, up the time to around 30-35 minutes or more if needed.

These muffins keep well in the freezer for a few months. Just wrap tightly in saran wrap or tin foil and freeze in an airtight freezer bag. Allow to thaw at room temperature before enjoying.

For a heartier muffin, try using whole wheat flour instead of all-purpose.

Want to cut back on the oil?
Substitute some of it for applesauce. Use at least 1/4 cup oil to prevent the muffins from sticking to the tin.
Chocolate Raspberry Bites

This easy-to-make recipe is the perfect pick-me-up treat for those with a sweet tooth. Packed with energy boosting ingredients such as iron-rich dark chocolate and antioxidant-filled raspberries, this snack will surely become one of your favourites!

Ingredients

- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tbsp honey
- 5 oz. dark chocolate
- 1 tsp coconut oil

1. Wash raspberries thoroughly. Place raspberries in a bowl and mash with a fork until they are broken down.
2. Add chia seeds and honey and stir until well combined. Let this sit on the counter for 5-10 minutes to thicken.
3. Line a quarter sheet pan with parchment paper and set aside. Scoop small dollops (around 1 tbsp) of the raspberry-chia mixture onto the prepared baking sheet. This should result into 8-10 pieces depending on size.
4. Place dollops in the freezer for one hour or until set through.
5. Place the chocolate in a bowl and melt in the microwave for 30-60 seconds. stir after the first 30 seconds.
6. Mix the coconut oil into the melted chocolate until combined.
7. Dip the frozen raspberry-chia bites into the chocolate until coated and place back on the prepared baking sheet.
8. Place the chocolate-dipped raspberry bites back into the freezer for another hour or until set. Enjoy!

Make It Your Own!

Add a pinch of sea salt over the chocolate before freezing to enhance the flavour.

Use the chocolate (semi-sweet, milk, white) or berry of your choice!

Additional Notes:

Once frozen, transfer to an airtight container and store in the freezer for up to three months. When ready to eat, allow the frozen raspberry bites to soften at room temperature for 1-2 minutes.
Chocolate Mug Cake

Get ready for this Chocolate Mug Cake to become your favourite late-night snack! It is super quick and easy to make and will satisfy your hankering for some chocolate - take it from someone with a major sweet tooth!

**Ingredients**

- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- Pinch of salt
- 3 tbsp milk of choice
- 1 tbsp canola oil (or melted butter)
- 1/8 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp chocolate chips (or your favourite flavour of baking chips)

1. Spray the bottom of your mug with cooking spray.
2. Add in the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, and salt. Stir together until well combined.
3. Add in the milk, canola oil, and vanilla extract and stir until combined, making sure to scrape the bottom of the mug. The consistency of the mixture should be smooth.
4. Stir in the chocolate chips or sprinkle them on top (or both!)
5. Place cake in the microwave. Bake for 70 seconds. Wait one minute and then see if the cake has set. It should be shiny on top. Heat for an additional 15-25 seconds if needed.

**Make It Your Own!**

Swap canola oil for applesauce or coconut oil.

Swap white flour for whole wheat flour.

Add other mix-ins like nutella, peanut butter, nuts, or cinnamon.

**Additional Notes:**

To make this recipe dairy-free, you can use a milk alternative, a dairy-free butter, and dairy-free chocolate/baking chips.
Peanut Butter Blueberry Apple Bites

**MAKES** 1 serving  **PREP TIME** 15 minutes  **COOK TIME** 0 minutes

You have been studying for that midterm and the time has come to refuel your body and recharge your brain! This quick, easy, and tasty power snack is great for those super focused study sessions. These crisp apple bites have healthy fat, protein and fibre, and provides that sweet kick needed to keep up your study mood.

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**Ingredients**

- 1 apple
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 blueberries

**Instructions**

1. Slice apple into thin circles
2. Carefully cut out the core of each apple slice
3. Spread peanut butter onto each apple bite
4. Sprinkle blueberries onto each apple bite and serve!

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**Make It Your Own!**

*Swap peanut butter for almond butter, tahini or any nut-free butter.*

*Swap blueberries for raisins or dried cranberries.*

*Add some sweetness by drizzling honey on top.*
How to spice up simple student meals

It’s not a secret that many of us have little to no time to think about food when we’re too busy thinking about next week’s assignment or tomorrow’s exam. Since we barely have any time to prepare delicious meals, we end up eating and ordering the same boring bland food every day. Thankfully, you have access to this amazing e-book that assures you can make your own creative, delicious and simple meals while on a busy schedule!

1. Try some new recipes!

Most of us tend to avoid trying new recipes because we assume that it will take longer to make, but that’s far from the truth. A new recipe doesn’t have to be an exotic or fancy dish, it can be easy, quick and simple.

Get some inspiration by scrolling through Pinterest or Instagram. Apps like Mealime and Cookpad are great options that make recipe finding so much easier. YouTube is filled with millions of options to get inspiration from. For example, Gordan Ramsey’s video series, Ramsey in 10, has great examples of quick meals! And of course, this cookbook is the perfect place to go for new recipes that are centred around student budget and life! One thing to remember when looking for new recipes to cook is that you DO NOT have to follow the book. Always feel free to substitute, add, take away or adjust. If there’s a recipe that requires an ingredient you don’t have, just exclude it from the dish. But don’t pass on an amazing opportunity to try out a new recipe because of one simple ingredient.
2. Remake dishes from your favourite restaurants.

Sometimes when you’re cooking the same boring dish five nights in a row, you suddenly get this intense craving for that dish from your favorite restaurant. All you have to do to make that craving go away is recreate it yourself! The best part is that you can save a few bucks while eating your favorite dish.

3. Use pre-made sauces and add flavour with spices.

The ultimate lazy person’s guide to creating a delicious meal are pre-made sauces! Don’t shy away from exploring the sauces aisle in your supermarket. In general, the more spices you use, the taster the dish gets! Feel free to play around with new spices you never tried before. Costco offer a wonderful selection of spices that you can buy in bulk to save time and money.
Celebrating Cultures

Embrace the diversity of the York University community with these recipes!

Section 5
Okra Curry

MAKES 2-3 servings  PREP TIME 10 minutes  COOK TIME 15 minutes

A taste from Pakistan, this easy and quick-to-make dish is filled with flavour and will wow your family and friends! Best served with roti (or naan)!

Ingredients

- 1 lb okra
- 4 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 medium white onions
- 2 medium tomatoes (of your choice)
- 1 tsp hot chili powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp dry cilantro
- 1 tsp salt

1. Dice okra into cubes, leaving out the head of the okra.
   Throw out the okra heads and put the diced okra in a bowl.
2. Pour oil into a pan, place it on the medium-heated stove and add in the diced okra.
3. Let the okra fry for 2-3 minutes. Set aside.
4. Dice onions and tomatoes and place in a bowl.
5. Using the same pan, put the diced tomatoes and onions.
   Add in the spices (hot chilli powder, turmeric, and salt). Stir until a gravy-like consistency is achieved.
6. In this pan, add the fried okra back in. Add the dry cilantro.
   Cover the pan with a lid. Turn to low heat for 2 minutes.
7. Take the pan off the stove. Stir the curry again. Pour desired amounts into bowls and serve with roti or naan!

Make It Your Own!

Swap vegetable oil for olive oil.

Buy frozen naans and roti at your local grocery store. You can eat with this dish with regular bread.
Egyptian Koshari

Koshari is one of the most famous and authentic dishes in Egyptian cuisine. This dish is easy to prepare and incorporates pasta, rice, lentils and very flavourful ingredients. Koshari is popular for being inexpensive and filling while being packed with flavour!

Ingredients

**For tomato sauce:**
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 can (28 oz tomato sauce
- 1 tbsp white vinegar

**For Koshari:**
- 1/2 cup brown lentils
- 1/2 cup rice
- Salt
- 1/2 cup elbow pasta

**For Baharat spice:**
- 2 tsp black pepper
- 4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp paprika
- 2 tsp coriander
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp cumin
- 2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp cardamom

1. Make rice: Rinse and drain the rice. Bring 1/3 cup of water to a boil on medium-high heat. Add in some salt and the rice. Stir and cover until cooked (10 minutes).
2. Make pasta: Bring 1 and 1/2 cups of water to a boil at medium-high heat. Add in salt and the elbow macaroni. Stir occasionally until it has cooked (10 minutes). Once done, drain it and set it aside.
3. Make Baharat spice: Mix all spices in a bowl and set aside.
4. Make lentils: Bring 2 cups of water to a boil at medium-high heat, then add in salt and half of the Baharat spice. Leave until fully cooked (10 minutes).
5. Make tomato sauce: Add oil to a sauce pan on medium-high heat. Sauté the finely chopped garlic and chopped onion for 1 minute. Add in the tomato sauce and the remaining half of the Baharat spice. Once it begins to boil, turn the heat to low and let it simmer for 10 minutes and add in the vinegar.
6. To assemble: Add in the cooked rice, then the lentils, and lastly the macaroni. Drizzle the tomato sauce on top.

Make It Your Own!

*Swap elbow macaroni for any other small pasta shape.*

*Swap brown lentils for green lentils.*
Vietnamese Spring Rolls

Makes: 6 rolls  Prep Time: 15 minutes  Cook Time: 10 minutes

Vietnamese spring rolls are a wonderful way to make an easy, filling and fresh meal. These rolls are perfect for the summer because they are served cold and are packed full of cooling vegetables. The best part? You can add just about anything into a spring roll!

### Ingredients
- 1/4 lb of your choice of protein cooked to your preference
- 6 rice paper sheets
- 1 mini cucumber or ¼ of an English cucumber, thinly sliced in long slices
- 4 oz of thin vermicelli noodles, boiled for 2-3 minutes or according to package instructions
- 1 small package or head of lettuce
- 1 carrot and/or 1 bell pepper

### Preparing Fillings:
1. Prepare 1/4 lb of your protein(s) of choice. Traditionally, boiled pork belly or shrimp are used.
2. Break lettuce leaves into smaller pieces to fit within size of the rice paper, about two inches in length.
3. Boil 4 oz of vermicelli noodles according to the package or for 2-3 minutes.
4. Thinly slice the cucumber, carrot and/or bell pepper into thin matchsticks. Set aside.

### Preparing Rolls:
1. Fill a bowl with cool water. One at a time, dip rice paper sheets into the water to get the surface wet. Place the wet rice paper on a flat plate or cutting board.
2. Begin to add your ingredients to the centre of the rice paper. Feel free to get creative with how you lay down the ingredients – ingredients that directly contact the rice paper will be seen on the outside of the rolls!
3. Once the rice paper is tacky, wrap one side of the rice paper over the ingredients and tuck the edge underneath them. Then, fold the side edges into the center of the roll. Roll to seal the last edge to form a cylindrical spring roll shape.
4. Repeat until you make your desired amount of rolls or until the ingredients are all used up. Place extra rolls (if any) in the refrigerator. Rolls will keep in the fridge for 1-2 days.

Make It Your Own!
Swap cucumbers, carrots and/or bell peppers for any crunchy vegetable.
Ukrainian Syrniki (Cheese Pancakes)

Syrniki are a very popular Ukrainian breakfast dish. These sweet cottage cheese-based pancakes are protein-rich and filling. Syrniki can be served both warm or cold and are commonly topped with sour cream, berries and fruits.

Ingredients

- 400 g (1.7 cups) cottage cheese
- 1 large egg
- 3 tbsp flour
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 3-4 tbsp cooking oil for frying
- Optional: Sour cream to serve
- Optional: Berries for topping

1. Finely crumble the 400 grams of cottage cheese into a large bowl. Add a pinch of salt to the cottage cheese.
2. Into the bowl, add a cracked egg, sugar and vanilla. Use a spoon or fork to mix all the ingredients until well combined.
3. Add flour and give it a final mix.
4. Sprinkle some extra flour onto a cutting board (you will use this flour to coat the pancakes).
5. Wet your hands with a bit of cooking oil to create mini patties with the batter. Then, roll them into the flour, making tiny pancake shapes. You can use a butter knife to flatten down the shape. Dust off any excess flour.
6. Warm up your skillet to high heat. Once the skillet heats up, lower to medium heat and add oil into the skillet.
7. Once the oil has heated up, add the pancakes to the skillet and fry them for about 2-3 minutes on each side. Keep an eye on them to make sure that they do not burn.
8. Once the pancakes are cooked, place them on paper towels to remove any access oil.
9. Plate the pancakes with sour cream and berries or jam.

Make It Your Own!

*Raisins can be mixed into the batter.*

*Add a drizzle honey/sprinkle sugar.*
Sosis Bandari

Sosis Bandari is a famous street food found all over Iran, originating from the south of the country. “Sosis” means sausage, and “bandari” hints at the ports in the south of Iran. It’s versatile and can either be made as a sandwich or eaten on its own. Feel free to make it as spicy as you like. This quick meal works well in both summer and winter. In just under 30 minutes, you can have the perfect afternoon pick-me-up!

### Ingredients

- 1 lb beef sausage
- 1 large potato
- 2-3 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 large yellow onion
- 1/2 green bell pepper
- Optional: 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp turmeric
- 2 tbsp canola oil (or any neutral oil)

### Ingredients to serve:

- Baguette (or your preferred bread)
- Pickles
- Tomatoes
- Parsley

1. Chop your sausage, bell pepper and onions. Be careful not to cut your sausage too thin since it’ll burn easily. Set aside.
2. Slice your potato into small cubes. Boil them and set aside.
3. Heat 1 tbsp of canola oil in a different pan. Once heated, sauté the onions and add the turmeric. After a minute, add in the sausage and sauté for 10 minutes.
4. Add your tomato paste and 2 tbsp of water. Mix well.
5. Add in the salt, pepper, chopped bell pepper, and cayenne pepper. Mix well.
6. Add in cooked potato cubes and mix again.
7. Turn off the heat. Prepare your sandwich toppings.
Becoming a grocery shopping pro!

Ever feel overwhelmed by the endless grocery aisles filled to the brim with potential ingredients and delicious foods? Or, those times when you swear you’re going into the store just to get that one thing you really need, but somehow end up exiting the store with bags of food in hand? We’ve all been there. Luckily, there are strategies we can use to help avoid this from happening frequently.

Here are some tips to stay on track while grocery shopping:

1. **Going back to basics: make a list of items you plan on purchasing.**

By creating a list, it gives priority to those most needed items and in a way, stops us from buying random items. However, there are moments when we branch out from our list and that’s okay too!

2. **Check store coupons, flyers, and deals before heading to the grocery store.**

Most stores have a flyer online or at the front of the store with their sales listed, which can be another way to maximize savings. Make sure to check what items might be on sale on your list before purchasing. You can even try downloading the app “FLIPP.” By entering your postal code and any food item you want in the search bar, it’ll do the work for you! It will look through all the different grocery stores near your location and tell you if there are any sales or deals on those items.
3. Keep a calculator on hand while shopping.

For most of us, this means the calculator app in our phones. When you calculate the price of each product, it gives you a good idea of how much your total might be. This can help give you a sense of if you are within your budget.

4. While grocery shopping, look at the high, medium and low sections of a shelf.

This is because most of the time, grocery stores put the most expensive foods on the shelves that are easily visible: the medium sections which are at eye level. By looking at all the products in all section levels (high and low), you might find a better deal for the product you plan on purchasing.

5. Where you can, shop in bulk.

Things in bulk tend to be cheaper. Many grocery stores have bulk shopping sections where you can weigh out the desired amount for dry goods, like flour, oats, candies, etc. This is a great way to save on ingredients like spices since they are far less expensive in bulk. Plus, this way you can still add great flavours to a simple dish!

6. Avoid long in-store lines.

Try shopping during the off hours like midday, early morning or late evening, or shopping on weekdays rather than weekends if you are able to. These hours tend to be less crowded and have shorter wait lines so you can get in and out of the store faster, without spending too much time in the grocery store.

Grocery shopping can be an intimidating task, especially for those of us now living on our own for the first time! However, following these tips can help make this job that much more manageable and fun!
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