



Safe Environments

Healthy Workers

USING YOUR PANTRY FOR HEALTHY RECIPES IN SOCIAL DISTANCING



BRUSHING UP ON COOKING SKILLS

Cooking can be a great way to explore creativity using whichever ingredients you have at home, especially while following physical distancing and self-isolation strategies. Pantry items usually include beans, rice, oats, grains, fruit preserves, canned fruits/vegetables, pasta and a mixture of non-perishable items which may also include frozen vegetables or fruits.

Cooking new and innovative recipes with family helps to maintain positive mental health and keep yourself busy. This includes maintaining a routine of eating at the same time every day and focusing on healthy and nutritious recipes to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Focusing on items in the pantry limits visits to the grocery stores, prevents wastage of food and saves money!

CREATE A PROCESS

When thinking about using items in the pantry, it helps to create a process and identify items by expiry dates. Using up any perishable items or those expiring earlier is one way to divide up your pantry items in which order to use them first. Use products in the order of expiry dates i.e. use early expiry date items

first, followed by those that have a longer shelf life. Additionally, use different forms of the same type of items such as frozen or canned fruits and vegetables instead of fresh items. They are still packed with nutrients and the taste is similar.

EXPLORE DIFFERENT TASTES

Based on what you have in your pantry, you will be required to get creative in the types of recipes possible. Nowadays, searching up recipes based on the ingredients you have or finding substitutes is a great way to combine different items to create a novel recipe. Following the health guidelines from your local food authority gives you an idea of how to ensure a healthy diet for example, having equal proportion of protein and carbohydrates, with a larger proportion of fiber and vegetables. You can still create a balanced diet without green salad by using up beans for protein, canned vegetables for fiber and grains for carbohydrates.

With grains and flour, try your hand at baking breads and other treats that you enjoy from your local bakery. Start in small batches so you can gain practice, but try to include family in your cooking so that it becomes a positive bonding time. Explore different tastes with the beans, pasta and other pantry items – especially those that you may never have tried before. Remember, you don't need a ton of ingredients to make healthy, tasty food!

REPLENISH YOUR PANTRY YOURSELF

You can restock your pantry to include more flavours by using up the perishable items in a timely manner. Don't judge a fresh produce by its dark, ripe colours, and instead try to use up as much ripe fruit and vegetables first as possible. If not, preserving fresh produce through freezing, roasting, making jam or sauce is also a good way to save food for later. You can also preserve vegetables with vinegar and spices to create pickles or preserve vegetables with more taste than canned vegetables. If you have more meat than needed in the next few days, freeze the meat in airtight containers or sealed bags that preserves the meat for longer.

SOME CREATIVE EXAMPLES FOR RECIPES

Food Network, Cooking from the Pantry: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/photos/cooking-from-the-pantry>

Treehugger, Pantry Basic: <https://www.treehugger.com/green-food/pandemic-pantry-basics-how-eat-well-humble-ingredients.html>

REFERENCES

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<https://www.bostonmagazine.com/health/2020/03/17/nine-pantry-friendly-recipes/>

<https://www.canadianliving.com/food/food-tips/article/the-5-best-ways-to-preserve-food>

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