



COOK ONCE, EAT TWICE

Cooking can be overwhelming when you have a busy schedule. By using a base ingredient that can be used two or three different ways during the week, we can make meal time a bit less stressful without eating the same thing over and over!

This handout will offer you ideas of how to incorporate base ingredients into meals and also gives three weeks of sample meal ideas.

Tips for Decreasing Stress around Meals

Meal planning and prepping can feel overwhelming when first starting out, so remember that it's a skill that can take time and practice. These tools are meant to be helpful for decreasing stress and managing a budget.

1. Set aside weekly or bi-weekly time to meal plan and make a grocery list
2. Create a weekly or bi-weekly meal plan using ideas from this handout
3. Write down a grocery list based on what is needed for your planned meals and any other necessities
4. Look into using ClickList through Kroger to make it easier to see what your total spend is on groceries and to save time of shopping
5. If you have time, consider doing some prep like cutting up vegetables to help save time when cooking later

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Shredded Chicken

Make a batch of plain shredded chicken that can be used for different meals by changing up a sauce or adding additional seasoning. Shredded chicken keeps in the fridge for about 4 days, so if you won't use it within that time frame, shredded chicken can be kept in the freezer for 3-4 months.

Ideas for using shredded chicken:

- Add barbecue sauce to make BBQ chicken sandwiches – pair with slaw or salad
- Add taco seasoning to the shredded chicken for chicken tacos, burrito bowl, or quesadilla
- Add chicken to a salad with your favorite dressing and toppings
- Add to microwave ramen for additional protein
- Make [white chicken chili](#)
- Add to mac & cheese or other pasta dish

To make shredded chicken breasts, check out these different methods:

- [Oven](#)
- [Instant Pot](#)
- [Stovetop](#)
- [Slow Cooker](#)

Alternatively, whole rotisserie chickens are relatively inexpensive and make an easy option for making shredded chicken. After purchasing at the store, take the meat off the bones and store in the fridge for about 4 days.

Eggs

Make hardboiled eggs and use on a salad, make egg salad, or eat as a quick breakfast or snack. Additionally, you can bake a dish of eggs with sauteed veggies and use for breakfast sandwiches:

1. Grease an 8x8 pan with cooking spray.
2. Beat 6-8 eggs in a bowl.
3. Sauté some veggies like onion, spinach, and zucchini. Let cool then add to the eggs.
 - a. 1-2 cups fresh spinach, 1 zucchini (diced or shredded), and half a onion, diced.
 - b. Alternatively, simply tear up fresh spinach and add to eggs.
4. Add ½ to 1 tsp of salt and 1/4 tsp pepper to the mix. For spice, add a bit of cayenne pepper.
 - a. Feta or shredded cheese are other optional add-ins.
5. Bake for 30-40 minutes at 325. Set a timer for 25 minutes and keep checking it every few minutes for doneness. The eggs should be set. Cut into 4 squares.
6. Refrigerate and eat within 4 days. Heat and eat by itself or add a slice of cheese before heating, then put between two slices of toasted bread.

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Ground Meat (Beef, Turkey or Chicken)

Brown ground meat to use in a few different ways. Cooked ground meat keeps in the fridge for 3-4 days and can be used in several dishes with different flavor profiles.

Ideas for ground meat:

- Tacos, burrito bowls, or quesadillas
 - If using leftover ground meat, put in a pan with 2-3 tablespoons of water and [taco seasoning](#), to taste. Heat until the water has evaporated.
- Add to marinara sauce and serve with pasta
- Add to chili
- [Thai basil beef](#) (start at step 3 of the recipe) – you can also use ground turkey or chicken
- [Soboro Donburi](#) (Ginger ground beef)
- [Chicken lettuce wraps](#)

Shredded Pork

Similar to shredded chicken, pulled pork is also versatile and can be used in a number of ways. Shredded pork is easily made in a slow cooker or instant pot, and it keeps in the fridge for 3-4 days. It is easily frozen as well, which is helpful because pork shoulders can be pretty large.

Ideas for shredded pork:

- Add barbecue sauce to make BBQ pork sandwiches – pair with slaw or salad
- Add taco seasoning to the shredded pork for tacos, burrito bowl, or quesadilla
- Add to microwave ramen for additional protein
- Add to mac & cheese with BBQ sauce or hot sauce

Learn how to make pulled pork in a [slow cooker](#) or [instant pot](#).

Rice

Rice is easy to batch cook and use as a base to a variety of meals. Rice keeps in the fridge for about 4 days and can easily be frozen if needed.

Ideas for leftover rice:

- Burrito bowl with beans, shredded cheese, avocado, and salsa/hot sauce
- [Fried rice](#)
- [Chicken & broccoli rice casserole](#) (use shredded chicken from above!)
- Stir fry
- [Thai crispy rice](#)
- [Emily Mariko's Salmon Rice](#)

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Tofu

Tofu is a great vegetarian/vegan option for protein. Marinating tofu is the best way to put in a lot of flavor into the tofu. Try marinating a block of tofu ([recipe here](#)), then cut into cubes and cook. You can either bake the tofu (dust with corn starch or tapioca starch to add crunch) or cook in oil on the stovetop. You can then use the tofu in two different dishes during the week.

Ideas for tofu:

- Add to stir fry or noodle dish ([check out these different sauces](#))
- Add to a salad
- Make a [tofu bowl](#) with rice, cabbage, carrot, and peanut sauce
- [Crumbled Tofu Tacos](#)
- [Tofu scrambled "eggs"](#)

Sample Weekly Meal Plans

Below are three sample weekly meal plans that use some of the base ingredients in this handout. These are not meant to be taken as nutrition advice or guidance.

Meal 1: Fried Rice with Fried Eggs & Veggies

Meal 2: Shredded Chicken Tacos with avocado/guacamole and [yogurt lime slaw](#)

Meal 3: Chicken & Broccoli Rice Casserole

Meal 4: BBQ Chicken Sandwich with Slaw

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Meal 1: Vegetarian Chili with Black Beans

Meal 2: Chicken Lettuce Wraps + Cilantro Lime Rice

Meal 3: Burrito bowl with Rice & Black Beans

Meal 4: Ground Chicken in Marina Sauce with Pasta + Salad

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Meal 1: White Chicken Chili

Meal 2: Tofu Stir Fry with Veggies

Meal 3: Boxed Mac & Cheese with Shredded Chicken, Spinach & Avocado

Meal 3: Crumbled Tofu Tacos

For more help with meal planning, grocery shopping, or any other health and wellbeing needs, please contact Kaity Rowe, TriHealth Wellbeing Coach: rowek3@xavier.edu