


 **Use the slow cooker.** Use time to your advantage! It only takes a few minutes to assemble most slow cooker recipes. The meal will cook during the day and be ready at dinnertime.

 **Plan ahead for the week's meals.** Buy and prep meals once a week on your least busy day. This allows you to portion foods and save money by buying in bulk.

 **Make a shopping list** that includes everything needed for the upcoming week. This ensures you have everything on hand when it is time to get cooking, and will eliminate trips to the grocery store mid-week.




 **Avoid fast food restaurants.** If you know you're going out, look at the menu options that are marked healthier choices, smaller sandwiches, salads, and limit fried foods.




 **Keep the pantry well stocked** with healthy choices for the week.

 **Chop fruits and veggies ahead of time** and serve with low fat dressings or dips.

 **Cook in large batches and freeze.** Cook more than needed for one meal and freeze the leftovers in single serving size containers.

 **Stash snacks.** Keep a supply of healthy snacks in your desk drawer, in the car, and at work.

 When time is tight, **consider pre-cooked protein options** like a rotisserie chicken, canned tuna or chicken, or pre-cooked shrimp. For a quicker cooking option, try fresh fish filets that are on the thinner side (like tilapia) and vegetarian protein foods like tofu and canned beans.




Website sources:


<http://www.diabetes.org/mfa-recipes/tips/2014-09/15-ways-to-eat-healthy-in-a.html>

<http://consumer.healthday.com/encyclopedia/food-and-nutrition-21/food-and-nutrition-news-316/eating-healthy-in-a-hurry-648424.html>


http://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/health_and_fitness/speaking-of-health-healthy-eating-even-when-you-re-in/article_edf5d7cc-e637-11e4-bb35-e339ff29a252.html




 **Buy store brands.** You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.


 **Make a shopping list and stick to it.** Make sure it includes everything needed for the upcoming week.





 **Don't shop when you're hungry.** You'll be more tempted by snack foods.




 **Buy in-season produce,** which is often easier to find, more flavorful, and less expensive. If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.

 **Prepare yourself rather than buy ready-to-eat.** Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.

 **Buy canned or frozen fruits and vegetables.** For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.

 **Buy in bulk.** It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of frozen vegetables. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.



 When time is tight, **consider making large batches** of your favorite recipes (by doubling or tripling the recipe). Freeze in individual containers. Use them throughout the week and you won't have to spend money on take-out meals.

Website sources:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/budgetosemyplate.gov/budget>

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/USDAFoodPlansCostofFood>