



American Heart Association.  
Healthy for Good™

# EAT SMART

Enjoy family meals for health and well-being



## 2021 Planning Guide

[heart.org/HealthyforGood](https://heart.org/HealthyforGood)

#HEALTHYFORGOOD

EAT SMART

MOVE MORE

BE WELL



# OVERVIEW



Let’s bring health and well-being into everyone’s homes this fall. Owning your moment can be as simple as enjoying a family meal together.

**Eat smart. Move more. Be well.**

Simple, right? By encouraging easy steps like that, we can inspire others to live healthier and create lasting change, one small step at a time. That’s what **Healthy For Good™** is all about.

Let’s remind people that they have the power to shape their moments. They can make healthier choices — it’s easy, in fact.

And a great place to start is mealtime. Study after study has shown the varied, lifelong benefits of family meals. So grab a plate and pull up a chair. It’s time to get folks educated and motivated. Dig in!

**THE GUIDE INCLUDES INFORMATION ON:**

- **Top 10 Tools**..... 4-5
- **Communications**....6-7
- **Resources**..... 8



# SERVE YOURSELF: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROMOTE HEALTHY FAMILY MEALS



## 1. Access tools you need to promote family meals. (Everything but the dishes and silverware.)

- **Webpages.** Be sure to visit heart.org pages like [this one](#). You'll find more sites highlighted in the following pages.
- **Videos.** There are some great videos, like [this one](#) on YouTube. Find more links in the following pages. Look for new recipe videos coming soon on [heart.org/recipes](https://heart.org/recipes)!
- **Fall Recipe Booklet.** Check out these easy recipes to make your family meals healthy and yummy. [Find the recipe booklet here](#).
- **Conversation-starters.** OK, phones down. Download ways to start fun [family meal conversations](#), or see [page 4](#).



## 2. Share on social media. (Use #EatSmart and #HealthyforGood.)

- Be sure to follow (and like) the Healthy for Good [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) channels.
- Family meals nourish the health, brain and spirit of everyone. So let's fill our channels with pictures and videos of you and your family in action at the grocery store, preparing food or enjoying a meal together. Get creative!



## 3. Look for the Heart-Check mark when shopping.

- Do your health — and your family's health — a favor, and look for products featuring the American Heart Association Heart-Check mark. [Learn more](#).
- The Heart-Check mark lets you know that the product is aligned with the American Heart Association's recommendations for an overall healthy eating pattern. Stumped for a social post? Spread the news about Heart-Check!



## TOP 10 TOOLS

The secret ingredient is family. When families eat together, amazing things happen. Here are some key tools:

1

### Take advantage of resources.

This info can help make family meals affordable, easy and fun.

- [Meal Planning: Benefits & How-To's of Family Dinners](#)
- [Make Family Meals Easier: Double Up to Save Time and Money](#)
- [9 Grocery Shopping Tips](#)
- [Meal Planning: How to Plan a Healthy School Lunch](#)
- [Daily Tips to Help Your Family Eat Better](#)
- [How to Eat More Fruit and Vegetables](#)
- [5 Tips to Deal with Picky Eaters \(Both Kids & Adults\)](#)

2

### Mix up the recipes for variety.

Add some new, healthy dishes to your family meal rotation. [Check out our easy, delicious recipes.](#)

3

### Enjoy the fall colors — on your plate.

So many delicious and nutritious fruits and vegetables are in season. Make the most of autumn with our new [fall recipe booklet.](#)

4

### Let the results tell the story.

Studies consistently show the benefits of eating family meals together.

- Children who grow up sharing family meals are more likely to exhibit prosocial behavior as adults, such as sharing, fairness and respect.
- Adults and children who eat at home more regularly are less likely to suffer from obesity.
- Increased family meals are associated with greater intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Regular family meals are linked to higher grades and self-esteem.

5

### Watch and learn.

These videos, produced in collaboration with Kroger, are must-see TV:

- [Eating As A Family](#)
- [Stocking Your Pantry](#)

6

### Spark a conversation.

Remember, family meals should be fun. [These conversation-starters](#) can get the ball rolling. You'll find fun icebreakers such as:

- Name a song that makes you get up and dance, no matter what!
- If your pet could speak, what would he or she say?
- What's the funniest story you have about the person sitting next to you?
- What is your favorite thing to do outside? Why?
- What is your favorite holiday? Why?
- What is your favorite meal? Why?



7

### Give yourself a break.

“Family meal” doesn’t mean an elegant, candlelit affair. Instead, strive for simple, healthy meals with heart — and even those meals don’t have to be perfect.

The point is to nourish the souls of those you love with the shared gift of time spent together. That doesn’t require a white tablecloth.

As you encourage others to commit to family meals, remind them that simple, healthy, easy-to-prepare meals are all it takes to claim the many demonstrated benefits of eating together.

8

### Check for the Heart-Check mark.

The Heart-Check mark is your secret weapon at the grocery store. When you choose a Heart-Check certified product at the grocery store, you can feel confident that what you’re serving your family is healthy.

This [helpful infographic](#) tells the story. Download and share.

9

### Take back what’s important.

Coming together as a family. Enjoying a meal and conversation. Taking a few minutes to relax and regain perspective. It’s all related — and it’s all important.

Remember to choose your “me” moments to decompress. (Even time spent cooking and conversing can count.)

The fact is, managing stress is managing health. Learn more at [heart.org/stress](http://heart.org/stress).

10

### Download and share this family meal infographic.

Find the infographic [here](#).



For more promotional resources, including flyers, banners and other promotional materials, go to [Eat Smart](#) to download.



## COMMUNICATIONS

Use these messages to promote **Eat Smart** in general and family meals together in particular. Customize them to fit your needs and add a personal touch when possible.

### Support/Endorsement Request to Your Company's HR Department or Executive Leadership

I am seeking your approval to promote a healthier way of living for our employees by celebrating Healthy for Good's Eat Smart effort.

The American Heart Association's Healthy for Good™ initiative inspires people to live healthier and create lasting change. It's simple: Making small changes in our lifestyle can create big differences in our health.

In particular, healthy eating can help people live longer and healthier. And sharing family meals together is a big part of that. In fact, studies have shown adults and children both benefit, in far-ranging and surprising ways, when they share meals together.

We'll get free resources and support to help us get on a healthier path. So I'd like your support for our participation in the American Heart Association's Eat Smart effort.

Yours in health,

### Initial Messaging to Staff and/or Participants

Improving our health and well-being requires less effort than you may think! Even taking small steps each day — changing how we eat and moving more — can make a big difference.

Through its Healthy for Good™ outreach, the American Heart Association is encouraging us to eat smart and gain the many demonstrated benefits of enjoying family meals together.

When families eat together, both children and adults are more likely to eat fruits and veggies. Plus, family meals can help defuse conflicts with kids, ease their stress and depression, improve their grades and boost parents' mental well-being, too. Consider taking these steps:

1. In the next few months, **pledge to add one more family meal each week**. Not sure the conversation will flow once the phones are put away? Download these fun [conversation-starters](#).
2. **Follow (and like) the Healthy for Good Facebook and Twitter**. Share your own healthy recipes and tips. Let's learn from each other.
3. **Join Healthy for Good and receive a FREE fall recipe booklet** (brought to you by the American Heart Association and Kroger, a proud national sponsor of the AHA's Healthy for Good initiative). You'll also receive tips throughout the year on how to eat smart, move more and be well.

Can I count you in?



## Follow-Up Messaging

Through its Healthy for Good™ outreach, the American Heart Association is encouraging us to eat smart and gain the many demonstrated benefits of enjoying family meals together. (Some may surprise you. Did you know that better grades have been associated with family meals?) Being part of it is as easy as 1-2-3!

Pull up a chair and join us as we embrace family meals:

1. In the next few months, **pledge to add one more family meal each week**. Not sure the conversation will flow once the phones are put away? Download these fun [conversation-starters](#).
2. **Follow and like the Healthy for Good on Facebook and Twitter**. Share your own healthy recipes and tips. Let's learn from each other.
3. **Join Healthy for Good and receive a FREE fall recipe booklet** (brought to you by the American Heart Association and Kroger, a proud national sponsor of the AHA's Healthy for Good initiative). You'll also receive tips throughout the year on how to eat smart, move more and be well.

Watch for more healthy tips and life hacks. Not only can eating healthy family meals together have numerous benefits but they also can be easy and fun to prepare!

## Heart-Check Messaging

Healthy eating starts at the grocery store. But what to choose for your family in a vast sea of foods?

Fortunately, the American Heart Association evaluates many foods and beverages. Only those with good nutritional value and high standards for overall health carry the Heart-Check certified mark.

Look for this mark where you shop. When you choose a product that is Heart-Check certified, you can be sure that you're serving your family food that is good for them.

That goes a long way toward healthy family meals. Now all you have to do is get the family together. (Yes, that can be tricky with everyone's schedules — but the health benefits for everyone are worth it!)

Wondering what you'll talk about over dinner? Break the ice with these fun [conversation-starters](#).

Here's one as an appetizer: "Say family ... did you know it's scientifically proven that both kids and adults are more likely to eat fruits and veggies when families eat together?" (Cue the eye rolls from your children — as they eat their carrots.)

Happy Eating!



## RESOURCES

The American Heart Association has many resources to help people eat and live healthier. Visit [heart.org/HealthyforGood](https://heart.org/HealthyforGood) or these specific sites:

### Recipes

Discover how easy, budget-friendly and delicious healthy cooking can be. Great family meals start here.

### Heart-Check Certification

Get cart smart: Learn how our Heart-Check mark on food packaging helps people find healthy foods and beverages at the grocery store.

### School Events

Get kids moving! Find information about offering the Kids Heart Challenge/American Heart Challenge in your school.

### CPR

Get information on CPR and First Aid training, including programs for schools and workplaces.

### Move More Together

Being active is a great way to maintain physical and mental health. Let's celebrate physical activity and encourage people to make "me time" to exercise.

### Heart Walk

Get moving and save lives. Find out how to get involved in your local Heart Walk.

### CycleNation

Use road bikes, stationary bikes, spin classes and more to get heart and brain healthy — all while helping to prevent heart disease and stroke.

**Connect with Healthy for Good on Facebook and Twitter.**  
**Sign up to receive Healthy for Good tips, tools and more in your inbox.**