



Cooking for One or Two People: Ready-Made Meals

Meals can be quick and easy if you start with a ready-made food item from the grocery store. The cost may be worth the convenience on days when you just don't feel like cooking. Selection is increasing as grocers and food producers cater to people looking for nourishing and convenient foods. You'll find items in all areas of the store, from the freezer section to the deli and canned good aisles.

Use a ready-made food item as the basis of your meal, adding from other food groups to make the meal nutritionally complete. For example, to a meat entrée add milk, a whole-grain bun and vegetable or fruit. Try to have at least three out of the four food groups at every meal. Use *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* to learn more about the four food groups. To obtain a copy of the guide, call 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) or visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide.

Other places to find prepared food

You can also find ready-made foods and meals at specialty frozen food stores, restaurants (take out, eat in or delivery), Meals on Wheels and various community meal programs. Contact your local senior centres for more information on meal programs in your area.

Choosing healthier packaged and ready-made food

Packaged foods may be very convenient, but some also have too much added salt, fat or sugar. Use the Nutrition Facts table to help you choose healthier foods that are low in trans fat, saturated fat, sodium and sugar and higher in fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals. Use the %Daily Value column to help you compare the nutrient content of different foods. You want to see high percentages (more than 20%) for

healthy nutrients like fibre and vitamin C, and lower percentages (less than 5%) for salt and saturated+trans fat. Finally, look for foods that say "low in sodium," "no trans fat" or "high in fibre." To learn more about reading food labels, visit www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 125 mL (87 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 80	
Fat 0.5 g	
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g	1 % 0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 18 g	6 %
Fibre 2 g	8 %
Sugars 2 g	
Protein 3 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 10 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 2 %



Ready-made fresh

(in the produce or deli section):

These items may be more expensive than preparing the raw ingredients from scratch, but they are convenient and easy.

- Pre-packed fresh lettuce, carrots, broccoli, stir-fry medley, etc.
- Whole roasted chicken.
- Salad bar items such as tossed greens, mixed vegetables, bean salad, potato salad, marinated vegetables, pasta salad, etc.
- Ready-made sandwiches.
- Pre-cut fruit and vegetable platters.
- Ready-made whole dinners with meat/poultry, vegetables and grains.
- Sliced cheese, turkey, chicken and roast beef.
- Prepared pasta like lasagna, cannelloni, tortellini, etc.



Ready-made frozen:

- Hamburger, chicken burger or veggie burger patties.
- Meat pies such as chicken pot pie or shepherd's pie.
- Pasta – lasagna, spaghetti and meat balls, ravioli, macaroni and cheese, etc.
- Seasoned chicken breasts.
- Fish fillets; fish cakes and patties.
- Frozen all-in-one dinners.
- Pizza – whole pizzas, mini-pizzas, pizza pockets.
- Pancakes and waffles.
- Vegetables and fruit.

Ready-made canned:

- Soup
- Baked beans
- Stew
- Chili
- Pasta
- Fish
- Vegetables and fruit.

Adapted from Calgary Regional Health Authority.

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information you can trust. Find a dietitian in your area at www.dietitians.ca/find or call 1-888-901-7776.



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