

Family Meal Ideas



A booklet created for Croydon families,
providing breakfast, lunch, dinner and no-cook meal ideas,
as well as recipes and tips for keeping food costs down.
Find the handy 'meal planner template' at the back.

Breakfast Meal Ideas

Try to vary breakfast across the week to give your family different nutrients, vitamins and minerals each day.

Breakfast Ideas			
Dish	Ingredients	Instructions/Ideas	Cost per person
Porridge with fruit	Porridge oats, milk, raisins/ sultanas/apricots.	Add oats to pan and cover just over the top with milk. Heat and stir until soft. Add fruit.	15p - 40p
Overnight fruity oats	Porridge oats, natural or Greek yoghurt, frozen berries.	Add 1cm layer of oats to the bottom of a Tupperware, cover with 2cm layer of yoghurt and sprinkle frozen berries over top. Seal and place in fridge overnight. Ready in the morning.	80p
Cereal	Corn flakes, rice krispies, shredded wheat or Weetabix, milk or natural yoghurt.	The 5 cereals listed are the low sugar options. Take care with hidden sugars in many others. Jazz up your cereal with dried, chopped or tinned fruit.	20-30p
<u>On toast</u> Top your toast, bagel or crumpet with a range of toppings to add variety and nutrients.	1.Grated cheese and tomatoes	Toast the bread lightly then add sliced tomatoes and sprinkle cheese on top. Place under grill to melt.	40p
	2.Baked beans and mushrooms	Toast bread. Chop mushrooms and fry in a splash of oil. Add beans, heat, then pour on toast.	30p
	3.Mushrooms, cream cheese and black pepper	Chop handful of mushrooms and fry lightly in a pan until soft. Add 1 tsp. of cream cheese, stir and heat for 3 mins. Add pepper.	30p

Breakfast Recipe - Create your own Omelette

VEGETARIAN

Serves: 2-4 (for breakfast)
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cooking time: 10 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: 30p

Ingredients:

2 medium eggs
A splash of milk
Black pepper
Spray sunflower oil

Method

- 1.Spray the frying pan with oil and heat on medium.
- 2.Break the eggs into the bowl, add a splash of milk, a shake of pepper and mix.
- 3.Now add the vegetables of your choice to the bowl and mix (see box on right).
- 4.Pour the mix into the pan.
- 5.Allow the mix to heat and start to set (about 5 minutes).
- 6.As it sets and browns on the bottom, flip it over to cook the other side.
- 7.Allow the second side to brown (about 5 minutes).
- 8.Once cooked, serve with toast.

You will need:

Chopping board and knife
Grater
Spatula/fish slice
Jug or bowl for mixing
Whisk or fork
Medium frying pan



'Create your own' filling ideas:

Omelette 1 - add:
½ courgette grated
¼ small onion finely chopped
Tbsp. chopped coriander

Omelette 2 - add:
Tbsp. grated cheese
Sweetcorn (tinned or frozen)

Lunch or Dinner Meal Ideas

Vary lunch and dinner choices as much as possible and try to include starchy food at each meal (rice, pasta, potatoes, breads), lots of vegetables, salad or fruit and some protein (beans, eggs, meat, fish or pulses). See pg. 7 for no-cook ideas.

Lunch and Dinner Ideas			
Dish	Ingredients	Instructions/Ideas	Cost per person
Toasted tortillas (quesadillas)	Try different fillings such as chicken and pesto, mushroom and mozzarella or spinach, mushroom, cheddar.	See recipe on right hand side for instructions.	20p+
Stir Fried Noodles	Dry egg noodles, low-salt soy sauce, your choice or vegetables, chicken or fish.	Cook noodles as per instructions. In another large pan heat 1 tbsp. oil, then cook meat or fish (as per instructions) and add chopped vegetables and soy for the last 5-10 mins. Mix in noodles and serve.	50p+
<u>Pasta mixes</u> Add a range of ingredients to pasta to make different dishes.	1.Reduced fat mayonnaise, grated cheese and sweetcorn	Cook pasta (see pack) and drain. In large bowl mix mayonnaise, cheese and sweetcorn. Add pasta and mix. Serve.	40p
	2. Baked macaroni cheese	See page 4	50p
	3.Tomato sauce	See page 4	30p

Toasted Tortilla (Quesadillas) Recipe

VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN (if using alternative cheese)

Serves: 4

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Approx. cost per portion: 30p

You will need:

Chopping board and knife
Grater
Large grill pan or frying pan

Ingredients

4 soft flour tortilla wraps

1/2 chilli finely chopped or 1/4 tsp. chilli flakes

100g grated cheese (can be substituted for vegan cheese)

2 spring onions, finely chopped

Coriander leaves chopped

Spray sunflower oil



Method

- 1.Preheat a frying pan over medium-high heat.
- 2.Sprinkle the grated cheese, spring onions and chillies over half of each tortilla then scatter over a handful of coriander.
- 3.Carefully fold the tortilla in half to cover the toppings.
- 4.Spray the outside of the tortillas with a little oil and put them in the hot pan for 2 minutes on each side, one at a time.
- 5.Transfer to a board or plate and cut into 3 triangles to serve.

Lunch or Dinner Meal Ideas

Pasta meals are often popular with children. Try whole-wheat pasta for extra fibre and remember to add lots of vegetables, and some beans, fish or meat, if you can.

Baked Macaroni Cheese Recipe

VEGETARIAN

Serves: 4
Cooking time: 35 minutes
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: 80p-£1

Ingredients

300g macaroni pasta
50g low-fat spread
1 small onion finely chopped
50g plain flour
600ml semi-skimmed milk
100g reduced fat mature Cheddar cheese grated
1 tsp English mustard, 1 pinch black pepper
2 tomatoes sliced

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190°/fan 170°C/gas mark 5.
2. Cook the macaroni in a pan of boiling water for 8-10 mins and drain.
3. In a separate large pan, melt the spread and cook the onion for 3-4 minutes, until soft.
4. Remove pan from heat and stir in the flour, return to heat and cook for about 1 minute, stirring, until the mixture is like sand.
5. Remove from heat again and add the milk, a bit at a time, stirring well.
6. Return to heat again, stirring all the time, until the sauce is thick and smooth, then add 70g of the cheese, all the mustard and black pepper.
7. Add the cooked pasta to pan mix, stir through, then pour the whole mix into a large baking dish. Top with the sliced tomatoes and sprinkle on the left-over cheese. Bake for 20 minutes, until piping hot, then serve.

Try adding small pieces of chopped cauliflower after step 6.

You will need:

Chopping board and knife
Large bowl
Mixing spoon
Large pan
Medium pan



Easy Tomato Pasta Sauce Recipe

VEGAN

Serves: 4
Preparation time: 10-15 minutes
Cooking time: 40 minutes
Cost per portion: 15p

Ingredients

1 tbsp sunflower oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves of fresh or frozen garlic, chopped
2 large fresh tomatoes, chopped
400g tin of chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp dried mixed herbs
A few leaves of fresh basil (optional)
A pinch of sugar and salt (if necessary)

Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan then add chopped onion and garlic and stir until the onions start to go brown.
2. Stir in the fresh and canned tomatoes and keep on a low heat.
3. Add in the tomato puree and mixed herbs.
4. Stir and leave to simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Taste and add sugar and salt if required. Serve with cooked pasta.

You will need:

Medium pan
Wooden spoon
Chopping board and knife
Tablespoon
Colander



Lunch or Dinner Meal Ideas

One-pan/tray meals can be quick and easy to prepare and are a good way to get different nutrients into a dish.

Baked Bean and Veggie Sausage Hotpot Recipe

VEGAN/VEGETARIAN

Serves: 4 adults
Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 20 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: £1

Ingredients

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 small onion, peeled and diced
1 teaspoon garlic paste or frozen/fresh chopped garlic
1 large potato, washed and cut into small cubes
3 carrots, peeled and diced
4 vegan/vegetarian sausages, each cut into 4 pieces
1 large tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
1 large tin (400g) reduced-salt/sugar baked beans
200g frozen peas
350ml water

Method

- 1.Heat the oil in a large pan and fry the onion and garlic until the onion starts to soften.
- 2.Add the sausage pieces to the pan for a few minutes, to brown.
- 3.Add all other ingredients to the pan and stir well.
- 4.Bring to the boil and simmer gently for about 15 minutes, until the vegetables are cooked.

You will need:

Teaspoon and table-spoon
Sharp knife
Chopping board
Large pan
Wooden spoon



End of the Week Tray Bake Recipe

VEGAN

Serves: 4
Preparation time: 10-15 minutes
Cooking time: 1hr
Cost per portion: 40p+

Ingredients

1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 tsp. oregano
2 tsp. chopped garlic/frozen garlic
1 large tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp. tomato ketchup
Black pepper
Any vegetables, chopped into chunks
Large tin (400g) of kidney beans (or any other beans)

Method

- 1.Preheat oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6
- 2.Add the sunflower oil to a large baking tin.
- 3.Add in the garlic, oregano and black pepper and mix.
- 4.Now add in any chosen hard vegetables, chopped into chunks. This works well with potatoes, cauliflower, carrots, onions. Mix in the oil.
- 5.Cook for 30 minutes. Now add any softer vegetables such as courgette and peppers and cook for a further 10 minutes.
- 6.Add the tinned tomatoes, ketchup and beans and stir.
- 7.Cook for another 20 minutes and serve.

This dish also works well with uncooked chunks of any fish added at step 6, e.g. pollock or basa.

You will need:

Medium pan
Wooden spoon
Chopping board and knife
Tablespoon
Colander



Lunch or Dinner Meal Ideas

Fish and meat are a good source of protein with your main meals. Alternatives to meat include, beans, lentils, chickpeas, egg, tofu and the many different vegetarian or vegan alternatives on the market.

Jerk Style Skewers Recipe

MEAT DISH

Serves: 4

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Approx. cost per portion: 80p

Ingredients

1 clove garlic, crushed or 1 tsp. frozen garlic

1 tbsp. lemon juice

1 tbsp. sunflower/olive oil

1 ½ tsp. jerk seasoning

2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into 12 large chunks

1 red pepper, cut into 16 chunks

1 onion, quartered and separated to give 16 pieces

Method

1. Soak 4 wooden skewers in water for about 30 minutes.
2. Mix the garlic, lemon juice, jerk seasoning and oil in a large bowl.
3. Stir in the chicken chunks and leave to stand for 5-10 minutes.
4. Create your skewers by threading a piece of pepper onto a skewer, then onion, then chicken. Repeat 3-4 times.
5. Grill for 10-12 minutes, turning frequently or BBQ.

Lots of different vegetables can be used instead of the above.

You will need:

Teaspoon and table-spoon

Sharp knife

Chopping board

Large bowl

Mixing spoon

Bamboo skewers



Tuna Patties Recipe

FISH DISH

Serves: 4

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Approx. cost per portion: 75p

Ingredients

2 cans of tuna, drained

2 carrots grated

1 small onion finely chopped

100g white/wholemeal breadcrumbs**

1 egg beaten

50g reduced fat cheddar cheese grated

1 tbsp. fresh or dry parsley

1 pinch black pepper

Oil spray

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6 and spray a large baking tray with oil.
2. Put the tuna in a large bowl. Add the carrots, onions, breadcrumbs, egg, cheese, parsley, black pepper and mix.
3. Shape mixture into 6 burger shapes and place on baking tray.
4. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden brown.
5. Serve with salad or in warm pitta breads.

***You can make breadcrumbs by leaving bread rolls out over night. Then grate them the next day.*

You will need:

Chopping board and knife

Grater

Can opener

Large mixing bowl

Mixing spoon

Baking tray

Baking tray



No Cook Meal Ideas

If you are looking for meals that require no cooking, try some of these ideas with your family. Try to include as much variety as possible.

No - Cook Meal Ideas			
Dish	Ingredients	Instructions/Ideas	Cost per person
Wraps	Wraps can be filled with many fillings and are quick and easy.	See page 8 for bean burritos recipe.	20p+
Couscous (needs a kettle)	Couscous, boiling water, stock cube. Different toppings.	Add stock cube to boiling water (as per instruction) and stir. Add couscous (see packaging), cover and stand for 5 minutes. Add a range of vegetables or salad. Recipe provided on right for carrot couscous.	20p+
Tinned potato salad	1 tin potatoes, mayonnaise, mustard, tuna, 1/2 cup sweetcorn, cucumber chunks, black pepper.	Add 1 tbsp. of mayonnaise and a small squeeze of mustard to a bowl and mix. Add in chopped potatoes, drained tuna, sweetcorn, cucumber and black pepper. Mix.	80p
Filled pitta breads	Pitta breads, natural yoghurt, your choice of fillings.	Toast lightly and then slice open one side. Spread yoghurt inside and then fill with fillings of your choice.	25p+

Carrot Couscous Recipe

VEGETARIAN

Serves: 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Approx. cost per portion: 20p

Ingredients:

1 reduced-salt vegetable stock cube

200ml boiling water

150g couscous

2 carrots

50g raisins

1 orange

Method

1. Add 200ml boiling water to the measuring jug, crumble in the stock cube and stir to dissolve.
2. Put the couscous in a bowl, cover with the stock water and leave to soak. (It will say on the packet how long to soak for).
3. Wash, top and tail, then grate the carrots.
4. Add the grated carrot and raisins to the couscous. Stir well.
5. Halve the orange and squeeze out the juice. Stir the orange juice into the couscous.
6. Serve or keep in the fridge for up to 3 days.

You will need:

Weighing scales

Kettle

Mixing bowl

Measuring jug

Sharp knife

Chopping board

Peeler

Grater

Clingfilm



No Cook Meal Ideas

Bean Burritos Recipe VEGETARIAN

Makes: 8 burritos
Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 1-2 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: 35p

Ingredients

4 large tomatoes, chopped
4 spring onions, chopped
2 peppers, chopped
2 tbsp. chopped fresh coriander
1 tin (400g) kidney or pinto beans, rinsed
1/2 tsp. chili powder and 1 tsp. cumin
2 handfuls low fat grated cheddar cheese
8 tortilla wraps

Method

1. Mash beans with chili powder and cumin in a large bowl, with a fork or potato masher until almost smooth.
2. Add the chopped tomatoes, spring onions, peppers, coriander and cheese, stirring until all is combined.
3. Share out the filling, spreading along the bottom part of each tortilla wrap.
4. Roll each tortilla wrap snugly, tucking in the ends and then rolling tightly.
5. Eat or wrap in foil and freeze for up to 3 months.

You will need:

Teaspoon and tablespoon
Sharp knife
Chopping board
Grater
Fork or masher
Large bowl



Mackerel Pate Recipe FISH DISH

Serves: 4
Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: no cooking
Approx. cost per portion: 80p

Ingredients

200g (1 small packet) smoked mackerel
125g low-fat cream cheese
Juice of half a lemon or jiffy lemon juice
Ground black pepper

Method

1. Open the packet of smoked mackerel, and separate the fish into flakes in a mixing bowl – remove any skin or bones.
2. Use a fork to finely mash the fish.
3. Add the cream cheese to the fish and mash into a paste.
4. Slice the lemon in half and squeeze the juice into the pâté (or squeeze in the jiffy lemon juice), add a few shakes of black pepper and stir well.
5. Serve with toast triangles, pitta slices, sliced carrots, cucumber sticks or sliced peppers.

You will need:

Chopping board and knife
Large mixing bowl
Fork
Small bowl and large plate for serving



Home-made dips are good recipes for involving younger children in cooking.

Homemade Tortillas and Guacamole Dip Recipe

VEGAN

Serves: 4 as a snack
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 5 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: 40p

Ingredients

Spray oil
2 ready-made flour tortillas
2 cloves garlic, chopped
½ tsp dried chilli flakes
½ tsp lemon juice
1 ripe avocado
2 tomatoes chopped into small pieces
2 tablespoons of chopped fresh coriander
Freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6.
2. Spray both sides of the flour tortillas, lightly with oil.
3. Using scissors, cut each tortilla across the middle, into 8 triangles.
4. Place the tortillas on an oven tray and bake in the oven for five minutes, or until the tortilla chips are crisp.
5. Place the garlic, chilli flakes, lemon juice and avocado in a bowl and mash using a potato masher, then season with black pepper and mix until smooth.
6. Mix in the chopped tomatoes and coriander and serve with your home-made tortilla chips.

Replace the tortillas for sliced pitta bread, for a no-cook recipe.

You will need:
Chopping board and knife
Scissors
Oven tray
Medium bowl
Potato masher
Mixing spoon
Small bowl to serve



Tips for keeping food costs down and reducing waste

- Plan all meals in advance, to minimise waste. Try the weekly meal planner on page 11.

Family meal planner							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast:							
Lunch:							
Dinner:							

- Buy tinned or frozen fruit and vegetables as these can be cheaper and keep longer.



- Buy supermarket/value branded produce, where possible.

- Batch cook and freeze dishes for another day.



- Buy some fresh herbs and then freeze in a Tupperware. Cut off chunks and add them to dishes, as and when you need them.

- Bulk out dishes with beans, lentils or chickpeas and reduce meat content.



- Cook an end of the week tray bake with any left over veg and fridge foods (see page 5).

pudding Recipe Ideas

Muffin Recipe VEGETARIAN

Makes: 7-9 muffins
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Cooking time: 15-18 minutes
Approx. cost per portion: 25p+

Ingredients

90g low fat sunflower spread
85g caster sugar
2 eggs
110g self-raising flour
1 tsp. baking powder (can be made without this)

Method

- 1.Pre-heat oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6.
- 2.In a bowl, mix together spread and sugar until creamy.
- 3.Add in eggs, flour and baking powder and mix.
- 4.Add additional flavours/fillings, if required - see below**
- 5.Place muffin cases into muffin tray and spoon the mix into cases.
- 6.Bake in oven for approx. 15-18 mins, until slightly golden and springing back when you press the tops.

**Flavour your muffins with some of the following ideas:

- Idea 1 - Add handful blueberries (will need an extra 3-5 mins cooking time).
Idea 2 - Add 25g cocoa powder (also reduce flour by 15g).
Idea 3 - Add zest of 1 lemon (grated lemon skin).

You will need:

Muffin tray
Muffin cases
Large bowl
Mixing spoon



Jelly Fruits Recipe

Serves: 6
Approx. cost per portion: 15p+

Ingredients

Your favourite chopped fruit
Sugar-free jelly (veg/vegan can be bought)
Boiling water

Method

- 1.Add fruit to your jelly moulds or glasses.
- 2.In a jug, mix boiling water with jelly (see packet) and stir until dissolved.
- 3.Let the jelly cool slightly then pour over fruit in each mould.
- 4.Set in fridge overnight then tip out and eat.



You will need:

Jelly moulds or a few small glasses
Chopping board, knife
Large jug and kettle

Fruit Crumble Recipe

Serves: 6 people
Prep:15 mins, cook: 20-25 mins.
Approx. cost per portion: 35p

Ingredients

400g tin peach slices in fruit juice
400g tin pineapple chunks in fruit juice
100g of plain flour
25g porridge oats
40g sunflower margarine
20g caster sugar

Method

- 1.Preheat oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6.
- 2.Drain tinned peaches and pineapples and place in large oven-proof dish.
- 3.In a mixing bowl, rub flour and margarine together until like breadcrumbs.
- 4.Add sugar and porridge oats into bowl and mix.
- 5.Spoon the mixture over the fruit and level it out.
- 6.Oven for 20-25 minutes, until a golden colour on top. Serve with custard.



Family Meal Planner

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							

Use this planner each week to help save time, money and food waste.

For more tips and recipes visit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>
or www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes