

LET'S GET STARTED

Now that you know that diet and health are powerfully linked and that food is your medicine, how do you keep change going? The key is identifying sources of motivation.

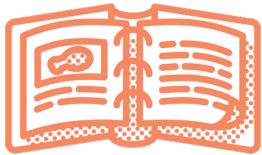
Hitch your desire to live and eat healthfully to things in your life that matter most. Maybe you want more energy to enjoy a hobby or sport or more vitality for raising your children or grandchildren. Perhaps you want to get off your blood pressure or diabetes medicines or lose weight. Whatever the reason, find your passion! Figure out what gives your life meaning and base your goals on this.

Remember that realistically, most of us can only tackle a few changes at once. Make your goals for healthy living specific, measurable, and realistic! Maybe a goal could be to pack a healthy lunch for work 4 days of the week. Or work on cooking 2 of your week night meals over the weekend. How about a weekly ritual of keeping prepared raw vegetables at eye level in your fridge for a quick and easy snack? Perhaps you want to transition to plant-based eating half the time, engage in exercise 3 days a week, or cut out that soda intake altogether. At the end of the day, you must have a PLAN. This is the most vital skill if you are going to provide yourself and your family with a health sustaining, disease-fighting diet. It IS possible to re-engineer your environment to make healthy living more automatic no matter how busy you are!

Just as in with any journey in life, support will help you to achieve your goals! Although your health destiny primarily depends on YOU and your daily eating, exercise, and self-care habits, you will be more likely to stick with your exercise and healthy eating program if you have an accountability partner. Friend power is where it's at!

Start this journey with full acceptance that changing behaviors is difficult. Change is never perfect or pretty, and it's all too easy to allow old habits to creep back in your life. But if you do stumble occasionally, don't be discouraged. Simply start anew and persist.

Enjoy this last section of the book filled with fun activities and ideas to move you toward a healthier life. We hope you continue to use this manual for years to come. Join us in cultivating the art of eating more consciously and supporting your local food system. This is essential to fighting food insecurity, improving health and helping your local economy thrive!



Analyze a Recipe

If you have been cooking for decades, you likely have cookbooks lining your kitchen shelves. Many newer cooks however, get their recipes from the millions posted on-line. Some recipes boast they are “healthy,” but how do you know if it so? Start by following these easy tips!



HEALTHY RECIPE CHECK

Either by yourself or in a group, research some online recipes that claim to be ‘healthy.’ Take time to analyze the details of a recipe before using it!

SET UP:

- Invite friends to join
- Have each person bring print outs of a recipe that sounds both healthy and delicious
- Provide paper and pens for tracking recipe changes, and begin creating healthier recipes!

GET THE FACTS

Many recipes today have nutrition information. Refresh yourself on the nutrition label facts we provided earlier in this manual. If your recipe does not have the nutrition facts calculated, there are many recipe nutrition calculator web sites where you can plug in ingredients to get the nutrition facts. Try www.verywellfit.com/recipe-nutrition-analyzer-4157076

HOW IT WORKS:

1. **Ditch ones with too many unhealthy ingredients!** Scan ingredients in the recipe to spot the unhealthy ones. If you see fatty meats, a lot of cheese, butter, whole milk products, refined flour, sugar and a lot of added salt or salty ingredients – pass on this recipe or consider doing a ‘recipe makeover’ by finding healthier substitutions.
2. **Take healthier recipes and personalize them!** Scan ingredients in the recipe to spot the healthy ones. You will create a healthy dish if recipe ingredients are whole, unprocessed foods such as vegetables, whole grains, fruits, nuts, seeds, avocado, spices, herbs and small amounts of healthy oils. If you eat meat, search out recipes with white meat poultry or fish or other lean protein, taking care to not overdo red meat. Make sure your main dish recipes are loaded with vegetables! See page 150 to find out “best” sweetener options if you are analyzing a baked good or desert.
3. **Zero in on that cooking method!** Pass on recipes that call for lots of oil for deep frying. Bake, grill, broil and sauté are the best cooking methods. If you use oil, use only a small amount or better yet, try a dry sauté or sauté in a little broth or water for the most health benefit.



Farmer's Market Fun

One of the best places to get fresh, healthy food is from a local farmer's market. Depending on where you live, these can be seasonal or year-round and take place in many different locations. Familiarizing yourself or others with the local produce and market locations in your area is a fun way to explore new foods and your town. Aside from buying fresh produce, touring the markets, meeting the farmers, and exposing children to the food is very rewarding.

ORGANIZE A MARKET TOUR

Good health and nutrition benefits everyone, so ask someone to volunteer to lead a group on a tour - this could be a friend, pastor, farmer, or anyone! Pick a day and time to visit a local market, and consider asking organizers of the market for suggestions. Publicize the opportunity to your neighbors and friends, shout it from the pulpit, send out invitations, or whatever works to get more people engaged. Tour the market and enjoy the experience!

If visiting a HEAL Market, contact the HEAL team for coupons to be used at the market and for a current market schedule. The Parkview Greenhouse Market offers a Power of Produce Program where children can earn vouchers for participating in a quick activity. If you want to engage families in the activity, choose Thursday nights at the greenhouse!



FARMER'S MARKET SCAVENGER HUNT

To make a visit more fun, or if you have kids, create a scavenger hunt! Searching for specific items or things that fill a category are a great way to learn new recipes or foods.

SET UP:

- Organize a group of people to participate.
- Create a list of items teams must buy or photograph or tasks they must accomplish. These could be ingredients for a recipe, asking a farmer for the answer to a question, or taking a picture of an item starting with a specific letter.
- Print enough copies for each team.

HOW IT WORKS:

When you arrive at the market, divide the group into teams. Give each team a list and announce a time limit. The first team to complete all of the tasks can win a prize - such as a farm-fresh fruit or vegetable of their choosing. If no team finishes in the time allowed, the team who finished the most tasks wins!



Share Some Meals

Sharing meals is a great way to learn new recipes and get outside of your comfort zone with cooking. Consider getting a group of friends together for potluck style meals! Aside from enjoying a meal and each other's company, you can also use the opportunity to learn new recipes. Use the example "supper club" and suggested variations to help you create a fun dinner group that fits your lifestyle.

SUPPER CLUB

To split the load of hosting a group for dinner, each person makes a different part of the meal for each gathering. To keep things interesting, rotate who hosts each dinner party!

SET UP:

- Invite 4 friends to join (making it a group of 5)
- Decide on 5 dates for dinner and who will host each one (try to make it a different person each time)
- Assign who brings which dish to which meal. The 5 dishes are: fun drink, appetizer/salad, protein/meat dish, side dish, and dessert. (It is easiest to have the host make the protein or meat dish.) Rotate the dishes so each person makes each dish once during the 5 meals.



HOW IT WORKS:

On the designated dinner night, each person brings their preplanned part of the meal. While enjoying the different parts of the meal, have each person give reviews of the dishes and write these down. After the meal, share the recipes and reviews to each member.

VARIATIONS

ADD MORE PEOPLE:

- Make it a couples event
- Add more people and corresponding elements of the meal

MAKE IT A COMPETITION:

- Rank each dish to pick a winner each night

GIVE IT A THEME:

- Plan the events on specific holidays (4th of July, New Years)
- Make it a specific type of cuisine (Mexican, Italian, etc.)
- Give a list of seasonal ingredients, each person must use a combination of 3 or 4.

MAKE A COOKBOOK:

- Collect all the recipes & reviews after the dinners are over and make or print a photobook for each person

HAVE A FINALE:

- Invite others to taste the best recipes from different meals



Start Moving More!

When it comes to caring for our physical and mental well-being, eating right and staying active go hand in hand. The health benefits of daily exercise can be truly life-changing; those who engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity for as little as 30 minutes a day often experience increased energy levels, improved moods, better sleep quality, a higher metabolic rate, helping with weight loss, and reduced risk of chronic disease. Establishing an exercise routine may seem daunting if you are starting from scratch, but being active does not mean you have to train like a professional athlete! Use the tips below to increase and improve your physical activity- no matter your starting point!

WALKING CHALLENGE

Walking is one of the easiest, safest ways to start exercising regularly, especially for beginners. And even just 30 minutes of walking each day can lead to improved heart health and overall fitness. One of the bonuses of walking is that it can easily be social exercise.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Step counter (pedometer, smart watch)
- Comfortable walking shoes

HOW IT WORKS:

Invite your friends or family to compete. Sign up for the same app or share your results and pick winners after a week for most steps taken and furthest distance travelled.

VARIATIONS:

- Make the timeframe one or more month(s)
- Challenge each other to stairs climbed

MAKE IT FUN

Finding the motivation to exercise at least 5 days a week is easier when you can find something you actually enjoy doing. Fortunately, many recreational activities are great exercise! Playing sports, dancing, doing yoga, swimming, hiking, biking, kayaking and gardening are just a few options of ways to get active.



EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Comfortable workout clothes
- Swimsuit (optional)
- Yoga mat (optional)
- Bike (optional)
- Kayak (optional)

HOW IT WORKS:

Identify activities you enjoy and find classes or locations where you can go. Local parks and community centers are great places to start looking!

SIGN UP FOR A RACE

Maintaining an exercise routine is easier when you have an end goal. For some it could be weight loss, but another way to stay motivated is by signing up for a race (5K, marathon, triathlon, bike race, obstacle course).



EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Comfortable workout clothes
- Swimsuit (optional)
- Bike (optional)
- Computer
- Some fees may apply

HOW IT WORKS:

Look online for a local or nearby race. You can also find out about events through local gyms or fitness stores. Sign-up and set up a training plan with a trainer, friends, or family to prepare for the big day!

WORKOUT LIKE A MILLENNIAL

If constructing an exercise plan seems daunting, never fear! There are loads of free fitness apps geared toward different fitness levels that provide daily workout plans that you can do at home. Other free, ready-made workouts (from dance to kickboxing) can be found on YouTube.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Comfortable workout shoes
- Breathable exercise clothes
- Hand weights (optional)
- Yoga mat (optional)
- Resistance bands (optional)

HOW IT WORKS:

Download a fitness app or follow a Youtube channel and challenge yourself to 3 workouts each week.

VARIATIONS:

- Try different types of videos or workouts to find what you like
- Invite friends to join
- Create a workout for commercial breaks or during tv shows

MIX IT UP

Not only is it more fun and interesting to vary your exercise routine, but it's also more beneficial to your health. Ideally, you should be changing up both the intensity and type of physical activity from day to day. Regardless of the type of exercise you are doing, keep in mind that the most benefits come from increasing intensity (rather than length) of the workout.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Comfortable workout shoes
- Breathable exercise clothes

VARIATIONS:

- Use training plans found online to help build workouts
- Join fitness classes and alternate activities during the week
- Workout with friends to try new exercises

HOW IT WORKS:

Plan your workouts ahead of time by designating days for cardio and others for strength or resistance. On cardio days, focus on running, biking, swimming, and other aerobic exercises. For resistance training, use hand weights, resistance bands, weight machines, or your body weight (think squats, crunches, pushups, etc.) to build muscle and increase strength.





Get Growing!

Starting your own vegetable or herb garden is a great motivator for adding more produce to your diet. When you have fresh, delicious ingredients readily available at home, you won't be able to resist throwing some into tonight's dinner!

Not only does home-grown produce that is picked at its prime have maximal nutritional value and flavor, but you can also avoid potentially harmful pesticides that are used on commercial crops. Additionally, gardening is a great way to get outdoors and get active! Though starting and maintaining a garden may seem intimidating for beginners, there are loads of great online resources for any questions you may have. Here are just a few beginner tips to get you growing!

10 Gardening Tips for Beginners

1. START SMALL

If this is your first attempt at growing a vegetable garden, starting small makes the process more manageable. By using space wisely, you may be able to grow what you want with just a few containers or a small raised bed. Raised beds and containers also tend to require less overall maintenance. As your interest and experience grows over the years, you can always expand your growing space!

2. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GARDENING RESOURCES

Throughout the planning, planting, and growing process, you can learn much more by asking questions! University agricultural extension websites are a great option. For Indiana gardeners, the Purdue Extension website covers a myriad of gardening topics, and even has extension agents in nearly every county that can personally answer your questions. Seed websites such as Burpee.com also have very helpful planting and seed starting calendars, tools for planning your garden, planting and care instructions, and more.

3. LOCATION IS KEY

Your first consideration should be to find where plants would get full sun exposure 6-8 hours a day. Ideally, the spot should also be close to a water source, to make watering quick and easy! Finally, if planting in the ground, avoid nearby trees and shrubs and choose a more elevated area that will drain well.

4. TRY GROWING FROM SEED

From one seed packet, which generally costs around \$3, you can grow many plants, so this is a much cheaper option requiring minimal extra work. However, some tropical plants such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant cannot be planted outside until late Spring (if you live in a cooler climate), providing them with insufficient time to grow. Therefore, you will need to either start the seeds indoors in Spring (following seed packet instructions) or purchase seedlings and transplant them to your garden when temperatures are warm enough.

CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

CONTAINER GARDENS are the most convenient way to begin growing. All you need are containers and potting soil to begin planting! Many types of containers can be used, though bigger tends to be better. Generally, containers should be at least 12 inches in depth, and at least 12 inches in diameter at the top to support productive vegetables. They also need several holes at the bottom for good drainage. Planting in containers eliminates the need for weeding, though they do require more frequent watering.



RAISED BEDS enable you to grow more with less space since crops can be grown closer together. They also allow you to control soil conditions, which is ideal if you have unproductive soil or poor drainage. The frames should be no more than 4 feet wide so that you can work the bed without ever having to step in it. Pre-made frames can be purchased or frames can be made inexpensively using rot-resistant lumber or cinder blocks. Ideally, frames should be placed on even, cleared land (though some place on existing lawn). Once placed, line the bottom with a few layers of newspaper and then fill in with 2 parts top soil and two parts organic matter (ideally 1 part compost or manure and 1 part peat moss).

IN-GROUND GARDENS can be prepared as smaller beds (no more than 4 feet wide) or planted in rows in a large plot. Traditional row planting requires considerably more space, since there must be at least 18 inches between rows to allow space for walking. Beds make better use of space since crops can be planted closely together. With in-ground gardens, you will need to till and make additions (such as plenty of organic matter) to existing soil. Test soil each year; it may take a few seasons to get the soil to optimal conditions.



5. PLAN BEFORE YOU PLANT

When choosing what to plant, consider what you will actually want to eat, what you will have space for, and when to plant. Seed catalogs (often available at garden stores or for free online) show you the details of all sorts of varieties. Once you decide on the types of vegetables to grow, choose 2 or 3 varieties, so if one is less successful, you will have another to make up for it. You can grow the most fruitful variety and choose another to try next year.

To make full use of your space, keep in mind that some types of vegetables can be grown close together. For example, consider planting longer season crops such as peppers or tomatoes beside faster growing crops such as lettuces. Some vegetables are competitors while other plants make good companions. Basil, for example, improves tomatoes' flavor, and inhibits pests. Do a little research and try to group companion plants together. Additionally, if space is limited, remember to grow upward- tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, and beans all grow better and use less space with the support of trellises, fences or wire cages. Always label what you plant!

6. WATER WELL

How much you water and with what frequency will depend on your climate, but most plants in the ground require about an inch of water per week. Containers and raised beds will require more watering (sometimes even daily). If you put your finger down about an inch in the soil, and find it is dry, it's time to water! Ideally, you should water deeply and close to the roots to avoid wetting the plant leaves (which can lead to disease). If you can't avoid wetting leaves, water early in the morning so the plants will dry quickly.



7. KEEP PESTS AT BAY

With a small garden, pest control is possible without chemical pesticides. Keep an eye out for leaf-munching insects and diseased leaves and pull them off by hand. If you notice a larger infestation, whip up a batch of natural insecticide by mixing 1 cup vegetable oil with 1 Tbsp. liquid dish soap. Add 1 Tbsp. of this solution to 2 cups warm water and thoroughly spray affected plants. Planting herbs helps repel pests, and nasturtiums, poppies, and marigolds also attract "good" insects that eat the "bad" ones. The most important thing you can do to prevent disease is to keep plants healthy and keep the garden area clean, so be sure to harvest vegetables on time and remove dead and diseased plants. Finally, keep an eye out for weeds and pull them early; never let them go to seed!



8. KEEP PRODUCE COMING

Succession planting allows you to have produce throughout the season, rather than having a concentrated harvest, so try to plant a row or a new container every 1 to 2 weeks. For example, you can have a continual supply of salad greens available for cutting if you sow a handful of seeds each week! Additionally, you can start the growing season with planting cool-weather crops for Spring, follow up with your warm weather crops to be harvested in late Summer, and finish with planting more cool-weather crops for the Fall. This is most effective if you have seedlings ready to transplant right after you harvest or if you plant seeds that are faster growing (to identify cold and warm weather crops and plant on the ideal date for your region, go to www.burpee.com/growingcalendar).

9. HARVESTING TIME

Daily garden visits will enable you to pick produce when it is at its peak. This also prevents fruit from over-ripening on the plant and attracting insects and animals. If you harvest when vegetables are just ripe, it will encourage the plant to keep producing. Always be sure to wash produce well, especially root vegetables and ground crops such as greens.

10. KEEP A RECORD

Keeping a little garden journal is immensely beneficial if you want to continue improving your garden each year. Map out where you planted different vegetables, and rotate their locations the next year. To prevent disease and have better yields, you should only plant the same vegetable in the same spot every 3 years. You should also record which varieties were most successful or if any had major problems with pests or disease. Just a little time and effort will make your planning for next year much simpler!

Activities to Start Gardening

If you already have a garden, there are so many ways you can use it to engage and educate your family or community! Here are a few activities to get others involved in parts of the gardening process!



SEED STARTING PARTY

Get excited for the growing season by getting a group together in early Spring to start seedlings. Have each person bring a package of seeds of a warm weather vegetable (such as tomatoes) that they want to grow. Someone will also need to provide potting soil meant for seedlings. Share seeds and follow seed packet instructions to plant seeds in divided planters, egg cartons, small cups, etc. With proper care, your seedlings will be ready to transplant outside after the last frost.

HOST A HARVEST DINNER

If you have more vegetables in the garden than you know what to do with, invite friends and neighbors to help you harvest. In exchange, use what you picked to prepare a garden-fresh meal to share. If you still have more, send everyone home with a variety pack of produce.

COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

If you have a community garden, you can also have a community compost heap or bin. Discuss the merits of organic gardening with those involved in the garden, and encourage them to save their fruit and vegetable scraps in the freezer and to bring them to compost each week. If you properly maintain it, you will have free, natural fertilizer ready for your garden in a few months.

SALAD SCAVENGER HUNT

Break off into teams and make your own salad recipe using only produce harvested from the garden. Top off your creation with one of the homemade dressing recipes from Lesson 1. Finally, everyone should sample each other's salads and decide which combinations they'd like to make again.

HIGHLIGHT A SEASONAL VEGETABLE

Choose a vegetable that is in season right now, and make it the star of a recipe you are making in class or at home. Ideally, choose produce that you can harvest together from your garden and prepare. Taste the locally grown vegetable, and discuss how it compares to the same vegetable when it is purchased out of season in the supermarket. Explain the nutritional value and health benefits of that vegetable and local eating in general.



Purdue Extension
FoodLinkSM
www.purdue.edu/FoodLink

FoodLink

Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM helps you select fresh fruits and vegetables.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone, and:

- Get fast, reliable **Purdue Extension expertise**.
- Learn how to select the **best fresh produce**.
- **Browse flavorful recipes** for healthy meals for each fruit or vegetable.

Use your smart phone's QR code reader app, and scan the code for information that's fast, fresh, and flavorful.

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Seasonal Chart for Indiana Fresh Produce

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
VEGETABLES												
asparagus												
beet												
broccoli												
Brussel sprouts												
cabbage												
carrot												
cauliflower												
cucumber												
eggplant												
green pea												
kale, collard greens												
kohlrabi												
lettuce (leaf)												
onion (bulb)												
onion (green)												
peppers (hot and sweet)												
potato												
pumpkin												
radish												
snap bean												
spinach												
summer squash												
sweet corn												
sweet potato												
tomato												
turnip and turnip greens												
winter squash												
FRUIT												
apple												
blackberry												
blueberry												
cherry												
grape												
melons (cantaloupe, watermelon)												
peach												
pear												
raspberry												
strawberry												

■ harvest season
 ■ extended season
 ■ storage season

Purdue University is an equal access/equal opportunity institution.

Purdue Extension has loads of great resources and information not only for gardening but also for preparing and eating fresh food. Use their FoodLink site to find recipes and preparation methods for all types of produce. Their seasonal produce chart for Indiana tells you which crops are available locally at different times throughout the year. Remember: eating seasonally helps you get the best produce available, and usually at a lower price!

Practice Mindfulness

By: Dave Johnson PhD, RN, LMFT

One of the most vital self-care practices for enhancing one's sense of well-being is mindfulness. Mindfulness means bringing one's complete attention to the present experience on a moment-to-moment basis. It means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.

But how often do we think about slowing down to put our best self forward rather than speeding up to fit everything in? The velocity of life change (there has been more global change in the past 10 years than in the previous 50) and the pressure to adapt, activates the fight or flight response of the body, often elevating inflammatory responses and increasing our vulnerability to health issues and disease. The fact is, the physical, emotional and spiritual response of overwhelming stress must be addressed.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE RUSH? The negative side of a hurried lifestyle is the loss of time to pause and think about your intentions. If you slow down to smell the coffee, you give yourself the gift of time – time to think about choices and interactions with others, rather than flying by impulsivity and knee-jerk reactions. Have you ever sent an email or response to someone, pushed send and then immediately regretted your message? By choosing not to rush, you are present for individuals that matter to you (family, friends, coworkers, and God). The flashy, frenzied, rushed lifestyle does nothing but trigger your fight, flight or freeze autonomic nervous system response. This creates a physiological cascade of effects, with the release of adrenaline-like substances throughout the body, ultimately undermining your health, work performance and relationships.

TAKING THE WHEEL: One common and dangerous byproduct of our noisy minds is the tendency to go on "autopilot". When habits become second nature and we neglect to pause and engage in the present, we lose the ability to halt and redirect a negative behavior. For example, if I eat on autopilot, I might turn to food when I am angry, tired, bored, lonely, fearful, etc. to ease my feelings. Or, I might go for a second plate of food because I didn't take time to taste the first plate. If hunger is not the issue, food is not the solution. Being mindful gives me awareness as to what I need. Perhaps I need to run, exercise, call a friend, pray, meditate or journal, rather than defaulting to autopilot and eating.

CREATING CALM: One simple mechanism for combating stress is mindfulness and the power of pause. Just breathing and applying sensory awareness techniques can manufacture calm. Cardiopulmonary patients, for example, find benefit in inhaling through the nose and exhaling through pursed lips. Not only is this beneficial to their condition, it also reconnects their breath with their spirit, which is helpful for everyone, even those not suffering from a cardiopulmonary issue.

PRESSING PAUSE: As a personal practice, pause and reflect in the moment ... the now. Re-center yourself to be present to the moment. Intentionally come out of your overthinking (and often stressed) minds and use your senses (hear, see, smell, touch, taste). Practicing this type of pause with mindfulness aids your overthinking, multitasking brain and allows it to truly be present to listen to those you are called to serve. Find a moment to insert a thoughtful pause into your day and simply observe your body and your surroundings. It's a strong first step toward mindfulness and a great ally in your fight against stress.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction practice has been extensively researched and proven helpful for coping with stress and change, grief, healthy eating patterns, pain, anxiety, depression and many other chronic disease and autoimmune disorders. Find an "MBSR" program in your area and practice it daily.



Make It a Game

After learning all this information about healthy eating, nutrition, and cooking, take time to test yourself in a fun way - with games! Either with your Our HEALing Kitchen class or a group of friends, playing games can help you recall what you learned in a different way. It also will reinforce skills you may not feel 100% confident in yet.

TOP OUR HEALING KITCHEN CHEFS

Create teams to go head to head in a cook-off! The object of the game is to create tasty dishes with random ingredients without a recipe. Make sure to go to a location with multiple cook stations or a big enough kitchen to provide teams the space to make their creative dishes.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 10+ people
- Equiped kitchen space
- Large baskets or boxes
- Variety of foods (for mystery boxes and general pantry)
- Scorecards & pens
- Tables
- Chairs
- Aprons

SET UP:

1. Choose two or more teams from your group to compete.
2. Judges will select the main ingredients for the challenge and place in large basket or box hiding the contents. It can be called the “Our HEALing Kitchen Mystery Box.”
3. Make sure you have basics such as oils, seasonings, vinegar, baking supplies, and cooking supplies available for contestants.
4. Choose unbiased judges to taste the finished products. Have a scoring system that includes taste, presentation, and overall quality. Healthier foods should receive higher points.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each team a box and start the competition by having them open the box. Allow at least 60-90 minutes for the event.
2. Provide assistant chefs to the teams to assist with ideas, preparation, and guidance.
3. Assign a timekeeper to warn teams of how much time is left and when it is time to “plate” the food for the judges.
4. Judges will taste the food and score per the agreed upon scorecard and announce a winner.
5. All will eat and enjoy the mystery meals.



BEST PIZZA POTLUCK

The only thing better than a pizza is multiple pizzas! A pizza potluck brings new topping ideas and good food together to make for a fun event.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 5+ people
- Scorecards & pens
- Tables
- Chairs
- Plates
- Napkins

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Point each guest to their spot at the serving tables.
2. Hand out scorecards to all and review with them how the scoring works.
3. Make sure the pizzas have enough slices for each judge.
4. Once everyone has tried and ranked the pizzas, review the scorecards.
5. Award a prize to the winner! (Suggestions for a prize include a pizza pan, pizza cutter, dough mix, or other related items).

SET UP:

1. Invite people to bring their favorite healthier pizza to share.
2. Create a scorecard that ranks the different pizzas (bonus points should be given for the healthiest and most unique ingredients).
3. Have all in attendance act as judges.
4. Set up tables and signs for the pizzas to be placed by a specific number when arriving.



INGREDIENT GAME

Understanding how much processing goes into different food is an important way to make sure you eat healthfully. This game tests your knowledge of different foods people associate with eating a healthy diet.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 6+ people
- Multiple food items (ex: oatmeal, pop tarts, cereals, granola bars, spaghetti sauce, salad dressing)
- Table

SET UP:

1. Purchase various food items at the grocery store. Choose items that have 4 or fewer ingredients on the label or 5 or more ingredients on the label (*Make sure you have enough items so that everyone gets to participate.)
2. Set all the items on a table or surface.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pick one item and ask the group whether it has 4 or less, or 5 or more ingredients on the label.
2. Choose a member of the group to read the ingredients on the label and reveal the correct answer.
3. Small prizes can be given to those that choose correctly. Or a tally of points can be given to each person as they get answers correct, then the winner gets a prize.

PASS THE SPATULA

Sharing recipes and meals is a great way to build friendships and get new ideas. This game brings people together to share their favorite meals and experiences in the kitchen.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 6+ people
- Spatula or wooden spoon
- Chairs

SET UP:

1. Set the room in a way that players can easily see each other.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ask players to think about a special meal or dish that they remember eating when they were younger.
2. Ask for volunteers to describe the meal/dish they thought of and why they remember it. Hand the spatula to the volunteer to use as a microphone.
3. Facilitate the conversations with tips for making traditional dishes healthier. You can also discuss making memories, and the role food plays in family gatherings.

SPICE GAME

Spices are a great and simple way to add flavor to a meal. To better learn the different spices, try this game to test your senses!

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- 5+ people
- 6+ different spices
- Paper & pens
- Plastic cups/bowls
- Plastic spoons
- Bandanas
- Tables
- Chairs

SET UP:

1. Place a small amount of each spice in separate cups.
2. Label each cup with a number. *Make an answer key.*
3. Have participants number 3 pieces of paper.
4. Create lists of random orders for the cups to use in rounds 2&3.
5. Decide on a prize, such as a combination of spices.

INSTRUCTIONS:

ROUND 1 - Sight

1. Have participants look at each cup and write down what spice they believe is in each cup.
2. Check answers and give scores.

ROUND 2 - Smell

3. Blindfold the player and designate someone to write their guesses.
4. Have player smell each cup in a preset random order and record their answer.
5. Repeat with all players.
6. Check answers and give scores.

ROUND 3 - Taste

7. Blindfold the player and designate someone to write their guesses.
8. Have player try a tiny taste of each spice in a preset random order and record their answer.
9. Repeat with all players.
10. Check answers and give scores.
11. After all rounds, the player(s) with the highest score get a prize.

