

QUICK AND EASY MEALS

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FOOD HAMPER



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About the ACT Nutrition Support Service

The ACT Nutrition Support Service (ACTNSS) has been established by Nutrition Australia ACT, a health promotion charity that aims to inspire healthy eating among all Canberrans.

With funding support from the ACT Government, the ACTNSS supports government food and drink initiatives including providing nutrition advice to schools, canteens, food businesses and the general community.

The ACTNSS website provides a wide range of easy to read nutrition fact sheets and recipes developed by a small team Accredited Practising Dietitians passionate about helping people to eat well. All the recipes have been designed to be easy, budget conscious and nourishing.

For healthy eating tips and recipes visit the website
www.actnss.org



About the Canberra Relief Network

The Canberra Relief Network (CRN) is a collaboration of community service organisations in the ACT supported by the ACT Government in response to the increasing demand for food relief and non-perishable household essential items that has occurred following the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The CRN is responsible for streamlining the sourcing and distribution of essential food and hygiene items to in-need Canberrans.

The CRN aims to ensure access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets the dietary needs of individuals and families who experienced food insecurity before the public health emergency as well as those who have been directly impacted financially by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

For more information about CRN, visit www.canberrarelief.com.au



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INTRODUCTION

All the recipes in this booklet have been specially developed using core ingredients available from the Canberra Relief Network hamper.

A small amount of additional ingredients may be needed to complete some of the recipes. These ingredients are identified with an asterisk (*). Where possible, additional ingredients to these recipes have been identified as easy to obtain from local food charities and/or are low-cost from local supermarkets.

A typical hamper includes items such as rice, pasta and noodles, breakfast cereal, oats, spreads, pasta sauce, canned fruit and vegetables. Everything in a hamper is non-perishable and does not require refrigeration.



TOP TIPS FOR EATING WELL

Tip #1: Balance your meals

Balancing your meals with a variety of foods in the right proportion will help you meet your nutrient needs.

To plate up a healthy meal every time, follow these guidelines:

Choose your carb

- This includes bread, rice, pasta, wraps, potato or corn.
- Choose wholegrain or wholemeal options where possible.
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with carbs.

Pick your protein

- This includes red meat, chicken, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, nuts, seeds and dairy such as milk, cheese and yoghurt.
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with protein.

Fill with fibre

- This includes fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits. Do your best to make it colourful.
- Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ your plate with fruits and vegetables.



Tip #2: Shop smart

When you get the chance to buy food, budget appropriately, spend wisely and choose foods that will provide maximum nutritional value.

Before you go:

- Know your food budget.
- Look in catalogues or online for specials where you shop. Compare the price of fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit and vegetables.
- After planning your meals, write a shopping list.



While you shop:

- Stick to the list and avoid browsing the other aisles.
- Buy store brands. They usually cost less and have the same nutritional value.
- When comparing products, check the unit price to see which product is better value.
- Consider the cost of convenience foods. Grated cheese tends to be more expensive than a block of cheese. Likewise, pre-cut vegetables are more expensive than whole.
- Look for clearance items that have come close to their 'use-by' or 'best before' date. Remember to always consume food before the 'use-by' date. You can still eat foods a while after the 'best before' date as they are still safe but may have lost some of their quality.

VEGETABLES

- Look for store brand frozen vegetables.
- Choose reduced salt canned varieties.
- Buy whole vegetables that are in season. Pre-chopped are much more expensive.

FRUITS

- Buy fresh fruits that are in season.
- Look for fruits canned in juice instead of sugary syrups.
- Buy bags of store brand frozen fruit.

DAIRY AND ALTERNATIVES

- Milk powders are the cheapest way to buy milk.
- Check the unit prices of long-life and fresh to see best value for money.

PROTEINS

- Consider some vegetarian proteins like eggs, tofu, nuts, beans, lentils and tempeh. These meat alternatives tend to be cheaper than meat.
- Check what meats are on sale, and choose lean varieties where possible.

GRAINS AND CEREALS

- Check the bakery for day-old bread as they are often a good deal. Store in the freezer to help it last the week.
- Buy store brand rice, pasta and cereal and store in air-tight containers to make it last.

Tip #3: Keep your food safe

CLEAN WELL

- Always wash your hands with soap and warm water before handling food.
- Rinse fruit and vegetables in cold water, then allow to dry.
- Make sure chopping boards and utensils are cleaned between uses, especially after being exposed to raw meat.



COOK WELL

- Make sure high-risk meats such as chicken, sausages and meat patties are cooked all the way through before serving. To check, cut through the thickest part.
- When reheating food, heat it until it is steaming all the way through.
- Do not reheat food more than once.



STORE WELL

- Cover leftovers and put in the fridge straight away. Make sure you consume your leftovers within 3 days.
- Reuse containers to reduce the need to buy cling wrap.
- Cover pantry food appropriately. Use an air-tight container so it will last longer and will not go stale quickly.
- Do not over pack the fridge, as it will struggle to keep the temperature under 5 degrees.



RECIPES



SPICY BEANS WITH NOODLES

Serves 4

Ingredients

400g tin four bean mix, drained
1 cup frozen mixed vegetables*
1 onion, diced*
3 packets Mi Goreng instant noodles
½ cup water

*Not included in hamper



Method



1. Cook noodles in a bowl of boiling water for 3 minutes and drain and set aside. Keep seasoning packets to one side.



2. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened



3. Add beans and mixed vegetables and seasonings (all except the fried onions) to the onion.



4. Add ½ cup of water and simmer for 5 minutes.



5. Plate noodles and top with bean mix. Sprinkle with fried onion seasoning.

QUICK TOMATO & TUNA PASTA

Serves 4

Ingredients

250g pasta (half a packet)
1 tablespoon oil*
1 onion, diced*
400g can diced tomatoes
185g can tuna in spring water, drained

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place pasta in a microwave safe bowl. Fill with water until pasta is covered. Place in microwave and cook for 12 minutes. Drain and set aside.



2. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened.



3. Stir in the tomatoes and tuna.



4. Simmer for 5 minutes.



5. Add the pasta to the sauce and toss through.



6. Serve.

EASY SATAY NOODLES

Serves 1

Ingredients

- 1 packet Mi Goreng instant noodles
- 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables*
- 1 heaped tablespoon peanut butter
- 3 tablespoons boiling water

*Not included in hamper



Method



1. Place noodles and vegetables in a microwave proof bowl and cover with boiling water. Microwave for 3 minutes. Drain and set aside.



2. In a small bowl, mix Mi Goreng sachets, peanut butter and 3 tablespoons of boiling water. Stir until well combined.



3. Combine peanut butter mixture with the noodles and vegetables. Serve and enjoy.

BEANY TUNA PASTA

Serves 4

Ingredients

- ½ 250g packet spaghetti
- 1 tablespoon oil*
- 1 onion, diced*
- 400g tin diced tomatoes
- 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables*
- 185g tin tuna in spring water, drained
- 400g tin four bean mix, drained
- ½ cup grated cheese* (optional)

*Not included in hamper



Method



1. Place pasta in a microwave proof bowl and cover with water. Microwave for 12 minutes. Drain and set aside.



2. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened.



3. Add tomato, mixed vegetables, tuna and beans to the pan and mix through.



4. Simmer for 10 minutes.



5. Serve with spaghetti and top with grated cheese.

BURRITOS

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon oil*
- 1 onion, diced*
- 400g diced tomatoes
- 400g tin four bean mix, drained
- 1 soft taco kit

Optional extras

- ½ cup of grated cheese*

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place rice in a microwave safe bowl and cover with water. Microwave for 10 minutes. Set aside.



2. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened.



3. Add diced tomatoes, four bean mix and taco spice mix. Stir and allow to simmer for 2 minutes.



4. Place tortilla on plate and top with rice, bean mix, salsa and cheese.



5. Fold the sides in and roll to form a burrito.

TUNA AND BEAN MORNAY

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup grated cheese*
- 400g tin four bean mix, drained
- 185g tuna in spring water, drained
- 400g tin creamed corn
- 1 tablespoon oil*
- 1 onion, diced*
- ½ cup grated cheese (extra)*
- ½ cup grated cheese*

*Not included in hamper



Method



1. In a microwave safe bowl, use a fork to mix ½ cup milk with flour. Mix through remaining milk.



2. Microwave for 3 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Once sauce thickens, stir through grated cheese.



3. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened.



4. Add beans, tuna, creamed corn and cheese sauce.



5. Stir mixture and allow to heat through.



6. Place mixture into heatproof dish, top with cheese and microwave for 4 minutes.

FRIED RICE

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 tin spam, diced
- 1 tin baby carrots, diced
- 1 cup frozen peas*
- Mi Goreng flavour sachets
- 2 eggs* (optional)

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place rice and water in a microwave proof bowl and heat for 10 minutes. Set aside.



2. Heat fry pan and add diced spam. Cook for 5 minutes until crispy.



3. Add frozen peas and rice.



4. Stir Mi Goreng flavour sachets through the rice and evenly distribute across 4 bowls.



5. In a small bowl, beat eggs then pour onto hot frypan. Remove cooked egg and finely chop.



6. Top bowls with chopped egg and serve.

CREAMY CORN CARBONARA

Serves 4

Ingredients

250g (half a packet) of spaghetti
1 onion, diced*
1 tin spam, diced
2 tablespoons plain flour
1 cup milk
½ cup grated cheese*
400g tin creamed corn

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place pasta in a microwave proof bowl and cover with water. Microwave for 12 minutes. Drain and set aside.



2. In a microwave safe bowl, use a fork to mix half the milk with flour. Mix through the rest of the milk.



3. Microwave for 3 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Once sauce thickens, stir through grated cheese and set aside.



4. Add oil to fry pan and cook diced onion and spam and onion has softened.



5. Add creamed corn and white sauce to the pan and stir through.



6. Add drained spaghetti. Stir through and serve.

SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 250g pasta (about half a packet)
- 1 tablespoon oil*
- 1 onion, diced*
- 400g tin of brown lentils, drained*
- 700g jar of pasta sauce
- Grated cheese (optional)*

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place pasta in a microwave proof bowl and safe bowl. Fill with water. Microwave for 12 minutes. Drain and set aside.



2. Heat oil in pan. Add diced onion and cook until softened.



3. Add lentils to the pan.



4. Pour pasta sauce and stir through.



5. Simmer for 5 minutes.



6. Serve with pasta and top with grated cheese.

QUESADILLAS

Serves 1

Ingredients

2 soft tacos from taco kit

Filling options:

- Baked beans
- Creamed corn
- Grated cheese*

*Not included in hamper



Method

Baked bean and cheese:



1. Lay tortilla in the pan and cover with baked beans and cheese.



2. Lay the other tortilla on top and cook for 3 minutes.



3. Flip and cook for a further 3 minutes. Cut into quarters and serve.

Creamed corn and cheese:



1. Lay tortilla in the pan and cover with creamed corn and cheese.



2. Lay the other tortilla on top and cook for 3 minutes.



3. Flip and cook for a further 3 minutes. Cut into quarters and serve.

SWEET PEANUT BUTTER RICE

Serves 2

Ingredients

½ cup rice
1½ cups milk
3 tablespoons peanut butter
¼ cup sugar
2 tablespoons boiling water
Fruit to serve (optional)*

*Not included in hamper

Method



1. Place rice and milk in a microwave proof bowl and heat for 10 minutes, stirring every 2 minutes. Set aside.



2. In a small bowl add the peanut butter, sugar and water. Mix until well combined.



3. Add the peanut butter mixture to the rice and mix through.



4. Place rice mixture back into the microwave, covered, for 3 mins. Stir thoroughly.



5. Serve in bowl and top with desired fruit.

FRUIT CRUMBLE JUMBLE

Serves 4

Ingredients

1 cup traditional muesli
1 tablespoon oil*
400g tin of fruit, drained

*Not included in hamper



Method



1. Add oil and muesli to hot frypan and stir consistently until golden brown and toasted.



2. Add drained fruit to the pan and mix through.



3. Serve into bowls.



Nutrition Australia ACT Dietitians, Leanne Elliston and Brittany Pennay with Suzanne Orr MLA Minister for Community Services and Facilities at the Canberra Relief Network Warehouse.

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