

Backpack Nutrition

CENTER FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION



BAKED LENTILS CASSEROLE

Ingredients

1 cup lentils, rinsed
¾ cup water
½ tsp salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
Optional: Pepper
½ cup onion, chopped
Optional: ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
1 can tomatoes
2 carrots, thinly sliced
½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Directions

1. Combine lentils, water, seasonings, onion, and tomatoes.
2. Place in 2-quart casserole dish.
3. Cover tightly with lid or foil.
4. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and add carrots. Stir.
6. Cover and bake 30 minutes longer.
7. Remove cover and sprinkle cheese on top.
8. Bake, uncovered 5 minutes, until cheese melts.

Recipe adapted from What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl. Baked lentils casserole. Retrieved from <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/baked-lentils-casserole>



Save Money and Time with Meal Planning

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

You can save money and time by planning meals that you and your family will eat for a week. Here's how:

1. Look at your calendar for the coming week. Think about your family's schedule. Do you just need to make quick meals for the family only, or do you need to make one or two meals for company, too? Do you want to use your slow cooker? Note all this on your calendar.
2. Check what foods you have on hand in your refrigerator, freezer, and cupboards. Take special note of foods that need to be used before they spoil.
3. Think of ways you can use food items you already have at home in upcoming meals. Again, try to use the foods before they become dated or spoiled.
4. Check grocery store specials and flyers. If you don't get the grocery ads in the newspaper, you can download them from the store's website or app. As you spot items that are on sale, work them into your meals for the week.
5. Once you have added the sale items your family likes into meal plans, figure out what other ingredients you need to buy.
6. Remember to plan for leftovers, too. For example, if you are making a big pot of chili on Monday, work the leftover chili into your menu later in the week to ensure it doesn't go to waste. You can serve it over baked potatoes.
7. Look for new ways to use ingredients already at home. Go to the *What's Cooking USDA Mixing Bowl* website for recipe ideas: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>.
8. Review your meals and see if there is something from each of the food groups in most of your meals. This is a simple way to make sure your meals are healthy.
9. Stock up on specials your family will use if you have extra money available for the week.

Adapted from Iowa State University. (2017). *Menu planning*. Retrieved from <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/plan/menu-planning/>

Physical Activity Corner

Plan to Move

Make a plan to move more every day. If you usually sit in front of a screen, try standing instead. When you're standing, try marching in place or lifting your legs behind you. Move your arms and torso, too, to keep your back and neck healthy. Try arm circles, shoulder circles, and neck stretches for good posture.