



The University of Texas at Austin  
**UT Health Austin**

## Easy Meal Options

After COVID-19, your energy levels to cook may be low, so having easy meal options can be helpful in maintaining a balanced diet. Here are some guidelines for making simple, yet healthy meals.

### Energy Saving Tips

- Use frozen vegetables or pre-cut/ pre-washed produce to cut on prep time
- Use healthy pre-prepared items like microwavable rice/quinoa, rotisserie chicken, or low sodium canned goods
- Split up prep on different days – do chopping/washing on one day and cook the next day
- Cook enough to have leftovers for another day
- If there's a shortcut, take it!

### As a general guideline, include the following 4 items to build a balanced meal:

1. **Protein:** fish, chicken, turkey, egg, beans, lentils, tofu, tempeh, edamame
2. **High fiber carbohydrates:** brown rice, whole wheat pasta, quinoa, corn tortillas
3. **Vegetables:** asparagus, broccoli, carrots, cucumber, tomato, zucchini, etc.
4. **Healthy fats:** olive oil, nuts/seeds, avocado

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## Try these easy meal options that require minimal prep:

- Chicken tacos
  - Rotisserie chicken
  - Sautéed frozen bell pepper and onion mix (sprinkle with chili powder, paprika, onion powder, and black pepper)
  - Corn tortillas
  - Store bought fresh guacamole
- Black bean burger and salad
  - Burger: frozen black bean patty, whole wheat bun, avocado, sliced tomato, mustard
  - Side salad: cucumber, bagged matchstick carrots, bagged spring mix, with olive oil and vinegar dressing
- Tex-Mex bowl
  - Rotisserie chicken
  - Low sodium canned pinto beans and corn
  - Bagged lettuce
  - Store bought fresh guacamole and pico de gallo
- Pesto pasta
  - Chickpea pasta with jarred pesto and grated parmesan
  - Frozen vegetable medley
- Stir fried rice
  - Frozen edamame
  - Scrambled egg
  - Frozen stir fry veggie mix sautéed with sesame seed oil
  - Shelf stable microwaveable brown rice with low sodium soy sauce
- Greek salad
  - Canned low sodium chickpeas
  - Canned olives (rinsed and drained)
  - Cucumber and grape tomatoes
  - Feta cheese
  - Dressing: olive oil, vinegar, black pepper, dried oregano, garlic powder
- Salad with tuna
  - Bagged spring mix
  - Grape tomatoes, bagged matchstick carrots, pre-sliced mushrooms, avocado
  - Low sodium canned tuna
  - Pumpkin seeds
  - Bottled vinaigrette dressing

## Feeling a bit more adventurous?

### Check out these websites for quick recipe ideas

- 15 minute dinner recipes: <https://www.eatingwell.com/gallery/12319/15-healthy-meals-you-can-make-in-15-minutes/>
- Easy dinner ideas: <https://www.loveandlemons.com/easy-dinner-ideas/>
- 30 minute dinners: <https://www.jaroflemons.com/50-quick-healthy-dinners-30-minutes-or-less/>
- Sheet pan dinners: <https://thegirlonbloor.com/25-super-easy-sheet-pan-dinners/>