

Weekday meals just aren't what they used to be. Quick casseroles and main dish salads now replace long-cooking stews, frozen vegetables take the place of fresh, and the la mode is served without the apple pie. For the family of the '60s, speed is essential. Thus, an organized kitchen and timesaving convenience food products are a must.

For most families, the last of keeping the kitchen organized falls to one person. If that person is you've got to think ahead to stay ahead. Plan menus for a week at a time to minimize time-grubbling trips to the supermarket. Keep weekday menus simple with just a main dish, salad or vegetable and maybe dessert. Utilize a prepared food for at least one course — ice cream or frozen yogurt for dessert. Buy a supply of staple foods such as tuna, chicken, frozen vegetables, pasta, rice and make milk takes care of the inevitable emergency meal.

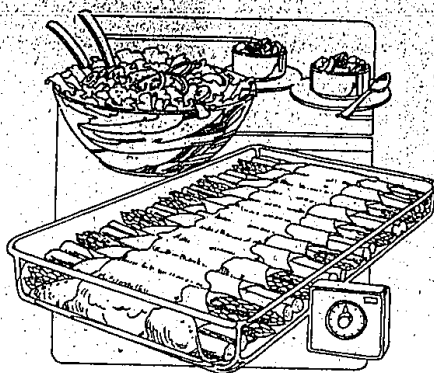
**Organize your cabinets and drawers.** You'll be amazed at how this speeds up actual food preparation. And, everyone who helps in the kitchen can take advantage of timesaving appliances. The blender, for example, does more than just make milkshakes. It can grate cheese, make bread crumbs, puree fruits and vegetables and blend soups and sauces. The old-fashioned pressure cooker currently enjoying renewed popularity cooks less tender cuts of meat in one-third the time.

**CONVENIENCE FOOD** products are timesavers, too. And if convenience products are selected carefully, they won't dent the food budget. Quick cooking rice instead of regular, bottled lemon juice instead of fresh, packaged seasoning mixes instead of individual spices, and pancake mix instead of a scratch recipe can save considerable time and effort for little or no extra cost.

Take pancake mix for example. Because original pancake mix already contains flour and leavening, a variety of breakfast foods, main dishes, even desserts are just minutes away. And most are simple enough for a beginning cook.

To prepare the crepes needed for Spring Asparagus Roll-Ups, all you need to add are eggs, milk and vegetable oil. The batter bakes up into thin, delicate pancakes which can be prepared in months in advance and then frozen. The delectable filling pairs now affordably with asparagus with cooked ham (Ham "planned over" from another meal is an economical idea.) Camped soup thinned with a little milk makes the rich and creamy cheese sauce extra easy. While the roll-ups bake, there's plenty of time to toss a salad and fix a fresh fruit cup for dessert.

**SPRING ASPARAGUS ROLL-UPS**  
1 cup milk  
¾ cup pancake and waffle mix  
3 eggs  
2 tbs. vegetable oil  
24 spears fresh asparagus, partially  
cooked



12 thin slices cooked ham  
1 11-oz. can cheddar cheese soup  
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
2 tbsp. milk

Combine milk, pancake mix, eggs and oil, mixing until smooth. Let

stand 5 minutes. Grease lightly a 6- to 7-inch crepe pan or skillet; heat over medium-high heat. For each crepe, pour about 2 tablespoons batter (one half of a ¼ cup dry measure) into hot pan; immediately tilt pan to coat bottom evenly with thin layer. Cook 45 seconds or until top

looks dry. Turn; cook about 10 seconds. Stack between sheets of wax paper. Repeat.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease 13 x 9-inch glass baking dish. Place 2 asparagus spears and 1 slice ham on each creper roll up. Place in prepared baking dish. Combine soup, cheese and milk; pour over crepes. Cover with foil; bake 25 to 30 minutes or until heated through. 6 servings.

**Note:** Crepes can be made ahead and frozen up to 2 to 3 months. Stack cooled crepes with sheet of wax paper between each crepe. Wrap securely in foil frezzer. Thaw completely for use.

A 1980s pancake supper features old-fashioned pancakes with a new twist. Instead of the usual syrup or fruit topping, these light and tender cakes come to the table stacked with chili and shredded cheddar cheese. Packaged seasoning mix and canned tomato sauce take most of the effort out of preparing the satisfying filling. Crisp raw vegetables and glasses of milk quickly round out the meal.

Brown ground beef; drain. Add tomato sauce, water and seasoning mix; simmer 10 to 15 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Hot griddle over high heat (500 degrees electric, griddle), grease lightly. Combine pancake mix, raisins, eggs and oil; mix just until large lumps disappear. (Batter will have small lumps which will disappear during baking.) Let batter stand 1 to 2 minutes to thicken. Pour ½ cup batter for each of 4 pancakes onto prepared griddle. Turn pancakes when tops are covered with bubbles and edges look cooked. Turn only once.

To serve, place on pancakes on serving plate. Top with about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chili, sprinkle with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the cheese. Repeat twice more, top with remaining pancake. Dollop with sour cream; cut into wedges, 4 servings.

Encourage each cook to simplify the next day's meal preparation by double batching. Chop onion and green pepper in large quantities and freeze in recipe-size portions. Ditto for nuts, bread crumbs and shredded cheese. Ground beef can be shaped into meatballs or patties, before freezing, while budget stretching, casseroles and soups have more quickly when frozen in individual servings.

Last but not least, encourage everyone to use as few utensils as possible to minimise dishwashing chores. Casseroles often can be mixed in their baking dishes while the same saucepan can be used for mixing and cooking.

1-lb. ground beef  
1 8-oz. can tomato sauce  
1/4 cup water  
1 1/2-cup. pkg. chili seasoning mix  
1 cup pancake and waffle mix  
1 cup milk  
1 egg  
1 tbs. vegetable oil  
1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
Sour cream (optional)

# Americans eat too much salt, expert say

Salt is second only to sugar as an additive in the American diet. As a consequence, medical scientists find we ingest 10 to 20 times the sodium our body needs or can eliminate. Most dietary sodium comes in the form of sodium chloride, commonly called table salt. This is 40-percent sodium and 60-percent chloride. One teaspoon of salt contains 2 grams (2 grams) of sodium.

2,000 mg (2 grams) of sodium.

A number of recent studies have indicated that over-consumption of sodium is linked to hypertension (high blood pressure) which is, in turn, cited as a major cause of heart and kidney disease, stroke and death.

Behavioral scientists tell us that our early vegetarian ancestors ate very little salt, probably less than 500 mg a day. Even today, it is agreed that physiologically we need less than 1,000 mg (1 gm) of salt in our daily diet. In spite of this, we are eating as much as 35,000 mg to 35,000 mg a day. Because early man used little salt our bodies board sodium and excrete potassium. This creates the problems with our bodies.

The introduction of excessive amounts of highly salted foods into the diet of our young has resulted in a population which averages five to ten teaspoons (2,000 mg per teaspoon) of salt per day in its diet, although the body needs only a fraction of that amount. The result is 50-million persons in the United States suffering from high blood pressure.

**IN MANY** foods salt is added by manufacturers to heighten the flavor. Bakers use salt to help control yeast actions and reduce water absorption to make better dough. Saltier crust also has a more attractive color.

Sodium is added to butter and dairy products as a preservative. When vegetables and other products are canned, the makers add large amounts of sodium. For instance, fresh garden peas contain only 3 mg of sodium per five-ounce serving, while canned peas, at the same serving, contain 350 mg. Over 100

• A nutrition task force of the non-profit Consumer Education Research Center has studied this situation and compiled a book to help break the salt habit. It lists the salt content of over 800 foods, liquors and medicines. The book "Salt and Your Health" is available for \$5 (including postage) from CERC-Salt Project, P.O. Box 236, South Orange, N.J. 07079.

Even pets are given diets extremely high in salt content. The makers say that this is necessary to encourage the animals to eat the products. However, meat-eating wild animals eat no salt except that found in the other animals they eat. Thus we subject the pets we love to the same diseases that we cause in ourselves.

According to Robert L. Berko, executive director of the Center, there are many ways to season foods without salt. For instance, he says, the flavor of asparagus can be enhanced by using garlic, lemon juice, vinegar or onion. For beef, Berko suggests using bay leaf, dry mustard powder, green peppers, marjoram, fresh mushrooms, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage or thyme. The book lists alternate seasonings for meats, fish, poultry, vegetables and some-

**THE CONSUMER:** leader cautions against the excessive use of salt substitutes since they use potassium in place of sodium and can result in problems associated with too much potassium.

"For those who require more specific ways to avoid sodium, we have included low-salt recipes and sources where other recipes can be found," said Berko.

"We think we can tell what foods are salty. And many times we are right. Obviously smetana, pickles, potato chips and herring are salty. But did you know that two slices of Pepperidge Farm White Bread (32g) contains more sodium than a

potato chips or that ½ cup of Jell-O Chocolate Instant Pudding and Pie Filling (404 mg) gives you more sodium than three slices of Coney Island Hamburger.

The Center's study suggests that we immediately cut down to half the salt we normally use in our cooking and reduce gradually from there. Don't add salt before testing foods.



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