

## Ask the Expert: Energy-Saving Cooking in Winter

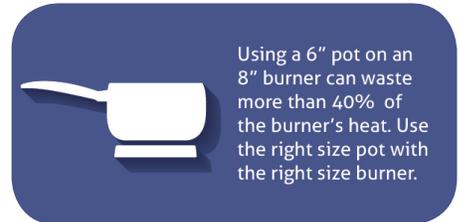
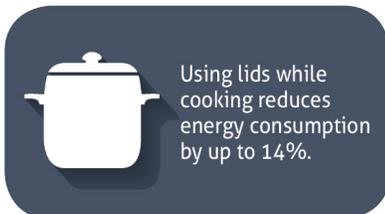
Written by Han Chen, Undergraduate Student in the Department of Food Science, Purdue University

As we get closer to the holiday season, families will be planning and preparing delicious meals for family reunions. You may notice that your electric bill rises quickly during this time. Although the heating system plays an important role in the rise, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, 4.5% of total energy is used in cooking. Do you know using your kitchenware properly can help you save money as well as energy? Here are some useful tips for you.

When using the oven, do not open it frequently to check your food. Each time you open the oven, the temperature inside will decrease. This means more energy is needed to heat it up again. Besides, cooking different foods at the same time in the oven is also an energy efficient way. Don't forget to turn the power off early because the residual heat can help you finish your cooking.

When using the stovetop, match the pan to the burner. It is a waste of energy if you use a small pan on a big burner. Additionally, pans come in different materials with different conductivity. Compared to regular pans, copper bottom pans can be heated up faster, saving your time and energy in cooking.

Consider using microwave ovens if you can afford one. The California Energy Commission said using microwave ovens can save 50% of energy compared to using conventional ovens. If you want to finish some leftover foods, do not hesitate to use your microwave oven, as it is fast and efficient for small portions!



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Sources: <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/cooking-some-energy-saving-tips>;  
<http://energy.gov/articles/how-be-energy-efficient-your-kitchen-thanksgiving>; <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/tips/holiday.html>; <http://www.energy.gov.on.ca/en/saving-energy-for-home/winter-energy-saving-tips/>

## Food Safety: To What Extent Do Hand Sanitizers Work?

Written by Christina Wilder, Undergraduate Student in Department of Pre-Pharmacy, Purdue University

**Spreading germs is OUT.  
Handwashing is IN!**



Handwashing is one of the most important things we can do to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.



With colder weather creeping in, so are the germs! How do we take precautions against getting sick? Usually we think using lots of hand sanitizers during winter months is enough, but to what extent do hand sanitizers really work?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, washing hands with soap and water is the best way to kill bacteria on the skin surface. Only when water and soap are not easily accessible, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can be used. Most alcohol-based sanitizers contain either ethanol or isopropanol, or a possible combination of the two. The alcohol in sanitizers works immediately to kill most bacteria on our skin due to its ability to alter proteins in the microorganisms. But it is important to remember that sanitizers do not necessarily eliminate all germs or harmful substances.

Hand sanitizers cannot remove chemicals like pesticides or heavy metals that accumulate on the skin. They are also not effective at removing organic matter from hands, such as dirt, food, and dust. Proteins and fats from food make it harder for the alcohol to break down bacteria and viruses. The purpose of hand sanitizers is not to rid your hands of the dust and dirt that potentially harbor chemicals. All ingredients of hand sanitizers plus the dust and dirt on the surface are left to absorb into the skin.

Sanitizers strip away the outer layer of oil on the skin so any superficial microorganisms will be destroyed. To maximize the effect of a hand sanitizer, you should rub a dime-size dollop should be rubbed on your hands for about 30 seconds. If hands are dry after 10-15 seconds, not enough hand sanitizer was used and its effectiveness would be greatly reduced.

Since washing hands with soap and water is the best option, let's see how to wash your hands properly:

- Rub hands together vigorously with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Scrub all surfaces including the backs of your hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails
- Rinse very well
- Dry hands with a clean or disposable towel
- Use a towel or your elbow to turn off the faucet if possible

Other tips for staying healthy this winter:

- Get vaccinated against the flu
- Stay hydrated and well-rested
- Stay active and exercise regularly

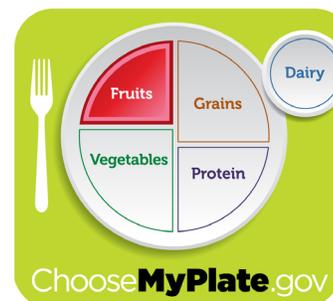


# Breakfast for Kids that Fits MyPlate Guidance

Written by Kristen Herrera, Undergraduate Student in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Purdue University

Breakfast is regarded as an important meal to start the day. Children who eat breakfast have better test scores, attention and focus, and problem solving skills. Not only does breakfast improve kids' academic performance, it also boosts their health and wellness, and lowers the likelihood of obesity and other associated health complications.

It's just as important to make healthy choices for your kids' breakfast. MyPlate is an available resource published by the U.S Department of Agriculture that provides useful tips and suggestions for eating a balanced meal that includes variety of foods from the five food groups: dairy, fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins.



Here are some simple ideas for a nutritious breakfast that does not take long to make. Try to opt out of sugar-filled cereals. Instead, spread peanut butter, a good protein source, on a slice of whole-grain toast, or try a bowl of oatmeal topped with fresh berries. Add a lean cut of ham and a slice of cheese to a whole wheat bagel to build a breakfast sandwich. Create a parfait layered with low-fat yogurt, granola, and fruits of choice. Complete the meal with a serving of low-fat milk. There are plenty other options. Be creative with what you have on hand for a healthy, active start every day!

Sources: <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/eat-right-at-school/when-packing-the-school-lunches-dont-forget-breakfast>; <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlate>; <https://www.rush.edu/health-wellness/discover-health/why-you-should-eat-breakfast>; <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/skipping-breakfast-may-increase-coronary-heart-disease-risk/>

## Roasted Sweet Potato with Cranberries

### Ingredients (4-6 servings)

**3 large sweet potatoes, 1 cup fresh or dried cranberries, 1-2 tbsp olive oil, ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp pepper 1 tsp garlic powder**  
**Optional: ½ tsp cinnamon, ½ tsp nutmeg, 2 tbsp honey**

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F
2. Peel sweet potato and cut into 1-inch cubes.
3. Coat bottom of casserole dish or baking sheet with olive oil.
4. Spread sweet potato evenly on pan.
5. Sprinkle salt, pepper and garlic powder over sweet potatoes, lightly drizzle olive oil over entire dish.
6. Roast at 400° F for 25 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.
7. Remove from oven, add cranberries and rotate pan.
8. Cook for an additional 15-20 minutes, the cranberries should burst.
9. Remove from oven and enjoy!

\*If you wish to make this a sweeter dish, follow the next step:

10. Remove from oven, sprinkle cinnamon and nutmeg, and drizzle honey over the dish, toss to coat all potatoes in honey, and serve warm.

### Notes:

If using dried cranberries, rehydrate them slightly by soaking them in hot water for ten minutes before adding to the potatoes.



## Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie

### Ingredients (4-6 servings)

#### Lentils:

**2 cups uncooked lentils, rinsed well;**  
**1 tbsp canola or olive oil**  
**1 yellow or white onion**  
**4 cloves garlic**  
**4 cups broth or water**  
**1 tsp dried thyme or marjoram**  
**1 tsp tomato paste (optional)**  
**salt and pepper to taste**  
**2 cups variety of vegetables (chopped carrots, peas and corn)**

#### Mashed potatoes:

**2 pounds russet potatoes (6 medium sized)**  
**4 tbsp (1/2 stick) unsalted butter**  
**1 tsp ground black pepper (or to taste)**  
**1 tsp salt (or to taste)**  
**½ -1 cup milk**

### Directions:

1. Chop the potatoes into 1 ½ inch cubes. Place in large pot with water. Cover pot and bring to a boil for 20-30 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.
2. Once cooked drain the potatoes and return to pot. Let potatoes sit for ten minutes so any residual water evaporates.
3. While the potatoes are cooking saute the onions and garlic in saucepan over medium heat in 1 tbsp oil until tender, 3-5 minutes.
4. Add tomato paste (optional).
5. Add broth, dried herbs, pepper and lentils to pan. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to simmer for 30 minutes. Add salt once lentils are cooked and tender.
6. Chop vegetables, or use canned or frozen options, and add them to the lentil pan., Cook for an additional 10 minutes.
7. Preheat oven to 425° F
8. Add butter, ½ cup of milk and seasoning to the potatoes. Mash with a pastry cutter, large fork or use an electric mixture until the potatoes reach your desired consistency. A, add more milk if needed.
9. Pour lentils into a casserole dish in an even layer. Cover with a layer of mashed potatoes.
10. Place the casserole dish in the hot oven for 20 minutes. The mashed potatoes should brown a bit.
11. Remove from oven and serve warm.



Recipe Sources: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>;  
<https://fnic.nal.usda.gov/food-composition/usda-nutrient-data-laboratory>

**Underlining denotes a TEFAP commodity ingredient**

### Roasted Sweet Potato with Cranberries

Per serving: 405 Calories, 5g Total Protein, 68g Total Carbohydrate, 13g Total Dietary Fiber, 15g Total Sugars, 14.0g Total Fat, 2.0g Total Saturated Fat, 2473mg Sodium

### Vegetarian Shepherd's

Per serving: 3070 Calories, 139g Total Protein, 493g Total Carbohydrate, 127g Total Dietary Fiber, 47g Total Sugars, 70g Total Fat, 35g Total Saturated Fat, 4090mg Sodium

Picture: <http://www.gptx.org/Home/Components/News/News/7632/2326>; <http://recipes.vegsoc.org/recipe.aspx?cld=624>



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This newsletter is edited by Quynh Nguyen, Yibin Liu, PhD and Heather A. Eicher-Miller, PhD and is created by the Eicher-Miller Lab in the Department of Nutrition Science at Purdue University. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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IN THE NEWS

## Please Welcome our New IEFRN Newsletter Editor

Written by Quynh Nguyen, Undergraduate Student in the Department of Pre-Pharmacy, Purdue University

We are pleased to introduce Quynh Nguyen as the new editor of Indiana Emergency Food Resource Network (IEFRN) newsletter starting September 2016. Quynh is a sophomore in Pre-pharmacy in the College of Pharmacy, Purdue University.

She has volunteered at Food Finders- Food Bank in Lafayette during summer 2016, and recently published an article on her experience with Food Finders in the Purdue Journal of Service Learning and International Engagement this October. With an increased interest in food insecurity through her service, Quynh has started her own independent project on food insecurity education with a senior in Environmental and Ecological Engineering since April 2016.

As the IEFRN newsletter editor, she is looking forward to fine-tuning her writing skills and effective communication through the new position. Don't hesitate to reach out to Quynh via email: [qpnguyen@purdue.edu](mailto:qpnguyen@purdue.edu) if you have any questions about the newsletter.