Simple Dinner Ideas

What's For Dinner?
It can be challenging to come home from either school or work and think of something to make after a long day. Here are some simple ideas that can be modified based on what you have in your kitchen or pantry.

Fast Skillet Meals: Mix it all up in a skillet for a super-fast meal
- Mexican skillet dinner: ground beef, salsa, Mexican spice blend, cooked brown or white rice, shredded cheese. Add some avocado, tomatoes, corn or bell peppers for some added fiber and color.
- Tacos: ground skinless chicken and black beans sautéed with salsa as the filling, top soft or hard tacos with Greek yogurt, shredded cheese, salsa and diced green onions.
- Turkey hash: Ground turkey, diced sweet potato, onions, kale with rosemary and garlic.
- Stir fry: diced skinless chicken or tofu, olive oil, minced garlic, a bag of frozen Asian veggies and teriyaki sauce or soy sauce; serve with cooked brown or white rice.
  - Add ginger, powder or fresh
  - Mix soy sauce with corn starch to make a thick sauce. Add in peanut butter for a creamy and flavorful peanut sauce.

Enhanced Frozen Foods
- Frozen pizza with a bagged salad
- Frozen pre-cooked chicken strips with a vacuum sealed pouch of precooked brown rice, quinoa or kasha (get from Trader Joe’s) and a bag of frozen mixed vegetables
- Frozen burrito with salsa and sautéed zucchini and bell pepper strips (or a salad)
- Frozen chicken nuggets or tenders on top of spinach salad with honey mustard dressing and a side of whole wheat toast
- Frozen salmon or cod air fried along with steamed jasmine rice and sautéed green beans

Grilled or Baked Items
- Shish Kebobs (meat/chicken and vegetables, marinated in lemon juice, olive oil, and garlic), served over brown rice
- Cover skinless chicken breasts with barbeque sauce, grill and serve with frozen green peas and a sweet potato “baked” in the microwave
- Grilled pork chops with apple sauce, cooked frozen or fresh broccoli and frozen oven fries (or make your own by cubing white or sweet potato, toss with olive oil and bake at 450 until soft)
- Chicken, turkey or salmon burger grilled and served with fresh or frozen corn on the cob, coleslaw (from a bag) and watermelon

Canned Foods
- Tuna or salmon mixed with white beans, olive oil, minced garlic, and Italian spice blend on top of salad greens with 100% whole grain crackers
- Tuna or salmon mixed into cooked quinoa or brown rice pilaf made with diced celery and carrots, almonds, raisins and olive oil
- Chicken salad made with mayonnaise, mustard, diced celery and walnuts and served on top of salad greens with 100% whole grain crackers
- Chickpeas made with avocado, mustard, diced pickles, carrots on top of toasted whole wheat bread with a side of cucumbers

Balanced Pasta and Potato Meals
- 100% whole wheat or gluten free pasta, diced chicken sausage, frozen veggies, olive oil and minced garlic (throw veggies into the boiling water for 3 minutes; use jarred minced garlic)
- Small shell pasta tossed with canned lentils, jarred tomato sauce, frozen spinach and minced garlic

For appointments, call: 520-621-9202
www.health.arizona.edu/nutrition
Simple Dinner Ideas

- Loaded potato: “bake” a potato in the microwave, top with cottage cheese and broccoli, or tuna, olive oil and oregano, or cheese, salsa and Greek yogurt; serve with a salad

Soups and Stews
- A carton of chicken broth, a bag of frozen bell pepper strips, a can of black beans, a jar of salsa and your favorite spice blend
- In the Crock Pot place diced chicken, a bag of frozen broccoli, a can of white beans and a can of diced tomatoes; cover with vegetable or chicken broth

Fancy Salads
- Spinach with toasted almonds or sunflower seeds, fresh or frozen strawberries, canned wild salmon and raspberry vinaigrette
- Mixed greens with diced cooked chicken (leftovers or canned) with orange segments, pumpkin seeds, cucumber slices and honey mustard dressing
- Romaine lettuce with canned black beans, salsa, shredded cheese, olives, avocado and tortilla chips
- Mixed greens with sliced deli turkey, a hardboiled egg, avocado and ranch dressing with 100% whole grain crackers