

Eat to Compete - Batch Cooking For Busy Families

One of the biggest concerns for busy families is finding the time to make a meal when everyone in the house is going in different directions at different times. We all know the advantages of home cooking – meals are lower in fat and salt, higher in veggies and fruit, and full of flavour. But slicing, dicing and cooking take time, and that's on top of the time it takes to eat the meal you've just made.

If you could only spend less time preparing the meal, your family might just have enough time to eat at home instead of grabbing fast food on the way to practice or competition.

There is a solution. It's called batch cooking and it cuts down preparation and cooking time on those days when you don't have time to spare. It can work in a couple of ways.

The simplest form of batch cooking is taking a recipe and doubling, tripling or quadrupling it so you have enough for multiple meals. Soups, stews, chili and casseroles are perfect for batch cooking. Set aside some time every couple of weeks to make big batches of family favourites. It doesn't take much more time to slice and dice enough for two or three times a recipes, and the cooking time doesn't usually change at all. Divide the batch into individual, or family size, portions and freeze them for quick meals. Reheat in the microwave and you can have a delicious home cooked meal ready in less than 15 minutes.

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Manitoba Chicken Producers represents 143 farm families raising chickens that are free-run, grain-fed and free of added hormones. For more information on buying locally grown chicken, visit the Buying Guide at www.chicken.mb.ca