

Eliminate Mealtime Stress

(NAPSA)—If you're too busy to plan family meals, you could probably use a hand.

Lauren Groveman, author of "The I Love to Cook Book" and host of PBS show "Home Cooking with Lauren Groveman," offers 10 cooking and cleaning shortcuts that you can easily fit into your daily routine to make your kitchen and family mealtimes more enjoyable:

1. Wash your produce immediately after taking it out of the grocery bag. This will save you time throughout the week.

2. Involve the family. Let your children make salad dressing or mashed potatoes.

3. Give each family member a role in the cleanup process. If you wash the dishes, let the children dry them, while your spouse cleans the counter space.

4. Use large bowls or containers. Add water and a squirt of dishwashing liquid to a bowl. Soak your measuring cups, bowls, plates, etc. so food particles don't have a chance to settle.

5. Fill another large bowl with food scraps, wrappers and other garbage while cooking. Your trash will be in one place and you won't have to keep walking around the kitchen or bending over to throw things away.

6. Think ahead. If you're making chicken breasts on Sunday, make a few extra pieces for chicken salad or slice and use in fajitas for dinner later in the week.

7. Prepare double the ingredients. When you bake cookies, measure out double the amount of the dry ingredients and store the extras in labeled plastic bags. Put the bags away for another day.

8. Slice and chop the fruits and veggies you like to eat as snacks. If the watermelon is pre-cut or celery is already in sticks, you'll be more



Boost cleaning speed by using a dishwashing liquid with an invigorating citrus scent.

apt to choose these healthy snacks.

9. Wash your dishes with a dishwashing liquid that has an invigorating scent to boost your mood and your cleaning speed. Joy® dishwashing liquid's new collection with natural citrus extracts comes in four scents, including: Glistening Pink Grapefruit™, Twist of Lime™, Refreshing Lemon™ and Mandarin Orange Splash™.

10. After zesting and juicing an orange, lemon or lime, grind the remains in your garbage disposal for their refreshing scent.

"The kitchen should be a fun family hub, not a mealtime stress center," says Groveman. "By planning ahead and getting family members involved, you can free up more time to do the things you love and spend time with the people you care about."

For other ways to add fun to the kitchen and additional cooking and cleaning tips from Lauren Groveman and her helper, Droppy, visit www.joydroppy.com.