

Total Nutrition

A Week's Worth Of Tips For Empty Nesters

by Mindy Hermann, RD

(NAPSA)—My former neighbor, Mary Young, a relatively new empty nester, remarked on how free she feels with her nine kids out of the house. This feeling is common. Joy Smith, author of "The Empty Nest Cookbook," encourages people to take advantage of it:



Mindy Hermann

"For the first time in years you can cook because you want to, not because you must. You have fewer people and palates to please, so cook in ways you've never dared."

1. **Try new recipes.** A majority of empty nesters say they enjoy exploring foods that their children would not eat, according to the July 2005 Pillsbury Empty Nester Survey.

2. **Think smaller.** With just the two of you at home, there's little need for family-size packages.

3. **Buy perishables with care.** To reduce spoilage, buy only a few pieces of fruit and small amounts of vegetables at a time. Choose dairy products and fresh meats with the latest expiration date.

4. **Maximize nutrition.** Pick foods that deliver the most nutrition for the bite. For example, broccoli (vitamins A and C), legumes (fiber) and fortified whole grain cereals like Whole Grain Total®. As you get older, you need fewer calories but the same, or sometimes greater, amounts of key nutrients.

5. **Stock up on plastic containers.** Prepare recipes that serve four or six and divide up the extra into two-serving portions. Label, date and refrigerate or freeze.

6. **Swap homemade dishes with a friend.** It's a great way to add variety to your menu.

7. **Get a new gadget.** A vacuum sealer seals out air and preserves the moisture and flavor of the original dish. "I seal and freeze leftovers in one-meal portions for fresh-tasting dinners anytime," suggests Smith. "Reheat in the microwave or boil in the bag on the stovetop."

This recipe makes four servings, two for now and two for tomorrow.

Crunchy Garlic Chicken Breasts

- 1½ cups Whole Grain Total® cereal
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ cup skim milk
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh chives
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 1¼ lb)
- Cooking spray

1. Heat oven to 425°F. Spray 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray.

2. Crush cereal. In shallow dish, stir together cereal, parsley and paprika. In another shallow dish, stir together milk, chives, salt and garlic powder. Dip chicken into milk mixture, then coat lightly and evenly with cereal mixture. Place in pan. Spray top of chicken with cooking spray.

3. Bake uncovered 20 to 25 minutes or until juice of chicken is clear when center of thickest part is cut.