

Total Nutrition

Enjoying Family Meals...With Or Without Kids

by *Mindy Hermann, R.D.*

(NAPSA)—I grew up eating meals with my family, and my teenage sons are growing up with the same tradition. Granted, my husband and I don't always enjoy eating breakfast at 6:30 a.m. or waiting until 9:00 p.m. for dinner, but we feel that eating as a family is extremely important. Family meals are essential even for adults



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with active teens or grown children.

1. Enjoy fruits, vegetables and milk at most meals. When one parent eats them, chances

are that the other parent, as well as children, will eat them also. Set a good example, especially for teens—parents influence teen food choices more than friends do.

2. By planning meals in advance, and turning off the television, family members are apt to eat more fruits and vegetables and less fat.

3. Include grandparents and older relatives and friends. Family-style meals may help improve their quality of life.

4. Think breakfast the night before. Mornings can be less hectic when breakfast is ready. Take favorite cereals such as Whole Grain Total® out of the cupboard, take muffins or slices of breakfast bread out of the freezer and set the table.

5. Schedule one meal a day with your spouse. "Maintain a ritual of getting together and making time for each other over food," suggests Miriam Weinstein, author of "The Surprising Power of Family Meals" (Steerforth, 2006). "Now that the kids are gone, the two of you are a

family. So enjoy cooking different foods, eating at a different time and spending time with each other during this new phase of your lives."

Apple-Cinnamon Breakfast Bread

Bake ahead in a loaf pan or muffin tin, wrap well, label and freeze.

- 2 cups Total® cereal**
- 1 cup apple juice or apple cider**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla**
- 1 cup each whole wheat, all-purpose flours**
- ¾ cup sugar**
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons canola oil**
- 1 egg**
- 1 medium unpeeled apple, chopped (1 cup)**

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Grease bottom only of 9x5-inch loaf pan with shortening or cooking spray. Place cereal in resealable food-storage plastic bag; crush with rolling pin. In large bowl, mix crushed cereal, apple juice and vanilla; let stand 10 minutes.

2. Stir remaining ingredients except apple into cereal mixture. Stir in apple. Pour into pan.

3. Bake 50 to 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes. Loosen sides of loaf from pan; remove from pan to cooling rack. Cool completely before slicing, at least 1 hour.

