

PHOENIX
WELLNESS

HEALTH COACHING

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Week 7 Meal Prep Guide
6-Week Holiday Health Warrior Challenge

Phoenix Wellness

30-Day No Excuses Challenge

Meal Prep Guide – Week 7

Hi! And welcome to week 7 of the 6-Week Holiday Health Warrior Challenge. I'm so excited that you've decided to drop your excuses and take on this fitness and nutrition challenge. There is only 1 week left, and when it's over, hopefully you'll find that you'll continue along with the healthy habits you've created during this time. So, let's get to it! First, I'll explain how the Meal Prep Guides are set up, and then we'll get to the delicious recipes.

For each Meal Prep Guide, I'll highlight a healthy breakfast, two main meals, two side dishes, and a snack. The goal here is to start making healthier choices, little by little, without feeling overwhelmed. When you're overwhelmed, you may feel like the path to getting healthier is just too daunting, and you're more likely to fall back into old, bad habits. It's not always easy, but once you see and feel the benefits of consistently nourishing your body with healthy foods, it'll be easier to continue.

Making healthier choices doesn't require throwing out all of the junk in your cupboards immediately (although you're certainly welcome to!). All it requires is making small changes. And before you know it, those small changes compounded on each other will add up to huge gains and health benefits. You'll have more energy, clearer skin, sleep better, and you'll most likely lose some weight.

One way to make sure you're ready for the hectic week that usually lies ahead is to prepare some meals ahead of time. It's easy enough to do, but it will require you to carve out an hour or two from your busy schedule. I can promise you that the benefits are worth it, though! Once you get into the habit of food prepping, you'll be lost if you skip a week. I know from personal experience that when I have healthy food ready to go, I eat better. When I haven't prepared for the week, I reach for the first thing that will only take a few minutes to heat up (usually a processed something that is high in fat and calories because I'm so hungry and just want to eat NOW), and I typically overeat. Maybe you can relate...

Remember, this challenge is about ***sticking to your healthy routines during the holiday season***. When we make the time to exercise and eat well, we feel better. When we feel better, we're in a better mood, more positive, happier, and we're more patient with those around us. Plus, when we make goals and ***don't make excuses*** for letting them slip, we actually see results. And THAT is the ultimate motivator. So take this opportunity to create some new, healthy habits and to ***stay on track during the busiest time of year***.

How to use this Meal Prep Guide:

- Choose **one** or **two** recipes (or all of them) that you'd like to try out – even having one thing prepped will save you time, and you'll have at least one healthy thing on hand for when you get hungry!
- Make sure you have all the ingredients.
- PLAN a time that you will prep the meals. Write it in your calendar if you need to!
- Portion the foods in individual containers so that they're ready to grab and go. Even portioning snacks ahead of time helps you keep track of how much you're eating, as well as makes it easy to grab them when you're in a rush.

- If you don't like a particular ingredient, swap it out for something else. The recipes I use are very versatile so that you can make them to your liking. **Ask if you need help with any substitutions!** (Really, I'm not just saying that. I'd love to help.)
- Each week, decide which recipes you'll make before you go shopping. It saves on time and money when you know exactly what you need to get and have a plan of attack for the grocery store. You also won't waste money on perishable items that you probably won't use.
- If you have extra greens, freeze them! You won't waste them, and they'll be ready for the blender.

And now, what you've all been waiting for...the recipes!

- **Sausage Pizza Egg Muffins**
- **Crock Pot Hamburger Soup**
- **Buffalo Chicken Stuffed Spaghetti Squash**
- **Roasted Broccoli**
- **Roasted Carrot Fries**
- **No-bake Apple Pie Bars**

Breakfast

These are just delicious. Absolutely delicious. And they were approved by the entire family. They really do taste like pizza. The sun dried tomatoes make it taste like there's sauce in the eggs, and the sausage is, well, sausage. They cooked up quickly and really didn't take much time. You can bake these for a breakfast or brunch party, and they travel easily, so go ahead and make them and take them wherever you need to go. They'll heat up in just a few seconds in the microwave, too, so it's an easy breakfast for those hectic mornings.

Sausage Pizza Egg Muffins (Adapted from the "Paleo Running Momma" blog)

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. pork sausage, casings removed if necessary
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2/3 c. sundried tomatoes, chopped
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning blend
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 9 large eggs
- ¼ tsp. fine grain sea salt



Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and grease a 12 cup muffin tin well with oil.
2. Heat a medium or large skillet over medium heat and add in pork sausage. Break up lumps with a wooden spoon. Add garlic to pan when sausage is half cooked.
3. Continue to cook and stir. Once sausage is almost entirely browned, add chopped sundried tomatoes and stir into the sausage. Cook another minute, then remove from heat.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, onion powder, salt and Italian seasoning.
5. Spoon the sausage mixture evenly between the 12 muffin cups. Pour equal amounts of the egg mixture on top of the sausage mixture in the cups.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes or until the eggs are set and the muffins begin to brown.
7. Remove from oven and let cool a few minutes before serving. You can refrigerate them in a sealed container for up to 5 days.

Main Meal #1

A few months ago, I had a hankering for cheeseburger soup. So I made it...cheese, lots of meat, (some) veggies, and lots of heavy cream. Maybe not the healthiest, but the boys (all three of them – Dave included) loved it. So I ventured to find a healthier version. And here we are. Now, of course, my youngest saw the soup and said, “Uh, what is that?” I told him it was the hamburger soup and he said that it looked totally different from the other one. I said, “I know. This one is healthier.” And he rolled his eyes with disgust. Fast forward an hour. I sat down to have some and said how it was really good. I added a sprinkle of cheese to the top, and Jason was intrigued. I had him try a bite. And then he asked for his own bowl. #winning

Oh, and did I mention that it was made in the crock pot?

Oh, yeah, one more thing...I found out the hard way that my crock pot is not 7 quarts. When I put the ground beef in, I wasn't able to put the lid on anymore. So I had to bust out my second crock pot. I divided the mixture between the two and cooked it for the last hour that way.

Crock Pot Hamburger Soup (From the blog “Food, Faith, Fitness”)

Ingredients

- 1 ½ lbs. sweet potatoes, cut into ½ in. cubes
- 1 large onion, diced
- 4 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 5-6 cups beef broth
- (2) 14.5 oz. cans fire roasted diced tomatoes
- ¼ c. tomato paste
- 1 tbsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. ground black pepper
- 1 lb. ground beef

Optional:

- ½ c. fresh chopped parsley
- Shredded cheese



Directions:

1. In a 7-quart slow cooker, add all of the ingredients up to the ground beef.
2. Cover slow cooker, and cook on high for 3 hours.*
3. Once the soup has cooked for 3 hours, heat a large non-stick fry pan over medium heat and cook the beef until it's no longer pink. Drain the excess fat and add it to the slow cooker.
4. Cover and cook an additional 30 minutes – 1 hour.
5. Serve with parsley and shredded cheese, if using.

*Note: I actually had to cook the soup for a longer period of time. The sweet potatoes and the carrots weren't done at the allotted time, so I left in in for longer. It may be because my crock pot was not quite 7 quarts and there was just too much in there until I divided the soup into two crocks for the remainder of the cook time. It was still delish.

Main Meal #2

I love anything Buffalo chicken related. And this is no exception. It tastes delicious, and has a lot of veggies in it. My boys (who aren't fond of spaghetti squash) really liked it. It has some spice that you can make even spicier by adding cayenne to the hot sauce or some red pepper flakes to the mixture. There's really nothing too calorie dense, but this has a lot of veggies, fiber and protein with the chicken. I also made a homemade ranch dressing to go along with it, and YUM!! It was delicious. Great flavor combination.

Buffalo Chicken Stuffed Spaghetti Squash (Adapted from "The Real Food Dieticians" blog)

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ lbs. chicken breast, cooked and shredded
- 1 medium spaghetti squash, halved
- 2 ribs celery, sliced
- 1 bunch green onions, white and green parts sliced thinly
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- ½ c. hot sauce or Buffalo sauce

Optional:

- Ranch dressing
- Blue Cheese dressing
- Shredded cheese



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Slice stem end of squash off. Cut squash in half, lengthwise. Using a spoon, scoop out the seeds and stringy insides. Discard.
3. Place squash, cut side down on a baking sheet. Bake 30-40 minutes, until squash is tender. Baking time will depend on squash, so check it every five minutes after the 30-minute mark.
4. When squash is done, allow to cool for a few minutes, then using a fork, scrape the insides into a large bowl. Reserve the squash shells.
5. **To bake chicken in the crock pot:** put chicken breasts in the crock pot and turn on. Bake for 2 hours, shred and take out of the crock pot. **To bake chicken in the oven:** Place chicken on a baking sheet. Place in a 350°F oven for about 20 minutes. Flip halfway through. Take out of the oven and shred with 2 forks.
6. **To assemble:** Add shredded chicken, bell pepper, celery, green onions and hot sauce to the large bowl with the spaghetti squash. Mix thoroughly. Add the insides back into the squash shells. Return the stuffed shells back into the oven for 10-15 minutes or until heated through.
7. Serve with dressing and/or cheese, if using.

Side Dish #1

Broccoli has to be one of my favorite veggies. Seriously. It's delicious. My husband loves it too, and he raved about this! He couldn't stop eating it...and neither could I. It's super simple – it only took a few minutes to prepare, which is what I look for in a good side dish. The coconut oil really gave it a good flavor, too. Of course, if you don't have coconut oil, you can use some olive oil or even some melted butter. This bad boy gets two thumbs up.

Garlic Roasted Broccoli

Ingredients:

- 2 heads broccoli, cut into florets
- 3 tbsp. coconut oil, melted
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper



Directions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 400°F.
2. In a large bowl, toss the broccoli with melted coconut oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Spread broccoli in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet.
3. Bake until florets are tender enough to pierce with a fork and the edges are browning, about 20 minutes, flipping after 10 minutes. Remove from oven and serve.

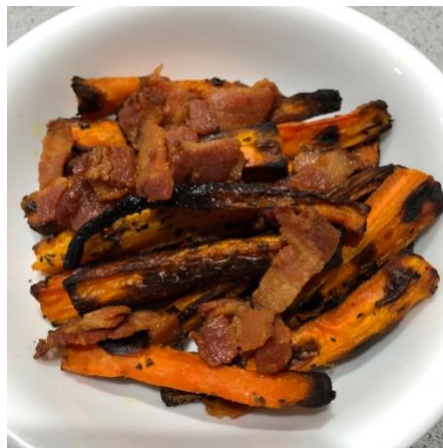
Side Dish #2

I'd never had carrot fries before this, and I have to tell you, this will be in regular rotation at my house. These look a lot like sweet potato fries, but they taste different. Because they're carrots, duh. They're really delicious. And quite frankly, the next time I make them, I'll be leaving the bacon out. There's really no reason for it in my opinion, and I do think bacon makes everything taste better! (Although if it helps your spouse or kids eat the carrot fries to have the bacon on them, by all means, go for it! And this is just another sneaky way to get the family to eat veggies.)But the carrots were so good where they really didn't need that extra bacon taste. Anyway, I served it with some homemade ranch dressing (there's something so great about knowing exactly what's in the dressing you're eating, and knowing that you made it yourself.).

Carrot Fries with Rosemary and Bacon (Adapted from the "Paleo Running Momma" blog)

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. carrots
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 2 tbsp. fresh rosemary
- 6 slices bacon



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Peel and cut your carrots into a fry shape, ½ in. thick.
3. Place carrots, olive oil, salt, pepper, onion powder and fresh rosemary in a mixing bowl and toss thoroughly to combine.
4. Arrange carrots in a single layer on a baking sheet, with none touching. You may have to use 2 baking sheets.
5. Roast for 15 minutes, then turn over the carrots, and bake another 15 minutes until they are browned and toasty.
6. While the carrots are roasting, cook the bacon. Cut the bacon into bite-sized pieces and add to a skillet over medium-high heat. Stir to evenly brown. Once the bacon is cooked, remove with a slotted spoon to a paper towel lined plate. Add the crumbled bacon to the baking sheet for the last three minutes of the carrots baking.
7. Remove from oven and transfer to a serving dish. Serve immediately with your favorite dressing or dip.

Dessert

I really like bars of all sorts. They're so convenient. You can carry them anywhere, but I don't usually make my own. I've never made ones like these...until now. And they're delicious. They were really easy to make, despite the fact that I had to use the food processor. I thought it was going to be a pain in the rear, but it was really bing, bang, boom. Done. I was pleasantly surprised. And clean up was a breeze. Oh, and I have to tell you...if you haven't tried dried apples before, look out. They are scrumptious. I will be buying them for a snack from now on. Only ingredient: dried apple slices. What could be better? They kinda taste like a healthy fruit roll up.

No Bake Apple Pie Bars (Adapted from the "Officially Gluten Free" Blog)

Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. crushed almonds
- 1 c. pitted dates
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. dried apples
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. walnuts
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cinnamon



Directions:

1. In a food processor, finely grind the almonds. Add them to a large mixing bowl. Then, in the food processor, grind down the dates into a paste-like mixture. Add the date mixture to the bowl and mix with the almonds until they are completely combined. I used my hands to mix, squishing it between my fingers.
2. Grind up the dried apple very finely in the food processor and add it to the bowl. Coarsely grind the walnuts and add them in too. Add the cinnamon. Mix until fully combined.
3. Spread mixture evenly into a small 8x6 dish and press down until the mixture is evenly spread throughout the dish.
4. Place in the fridge for 1 hour. Cut into bars.