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Meal Planning, Shopping, Preparation, and Storage



1. Explain how to prepare a basic food plan and list food shipping guidelines

An HHA should consider these factors when planning a client's weekly meal plan:

- Dietary restrictions
- Food preferences
- Number of persons at meals
- Client's budget

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Remember:

A meal plan should include snacks, not just meals.

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Examples of nutritious snacks:

- Low-salt pretzels and low-sodium tomato juice
- Celery with peanut butter and milk
- Graham crackers and milk
- Rice cakes with peanut butter and milk
- Cereal and milk
- Yogurt
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa
- Carrot or celery sticks with hummus

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Examples of nutritious snacks (cont'd):

- Crackers and cheese
- Gelatin with fruit
- Bran muffin and milk
- Raisins, dates, figs, prunes, or dried apricots
- Trail mix
- Smoothies made with yogurt, milk, and fruit blended together
- Fresh fruit
- Apple with peanut butter
- Apple with cheese

Key Material 23-1: Sample Meal Plan

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Breakfast					
Snack					
Lunch					
Snack					
Dinner					
Snack					

1. Explain how to prepare a basic food plan and list food shopping guidelines

HHAs can use these ideas to find the best food prices:

- Use coupons
- Read the unit price tags
- Buy foods in season
- Buy in quantity
- Shop from list
- Avoid processed, ready-made foods
- Buy cheaper brands
- Read the labels
- Estimate cost before buying
- Consider the waste in bones and fat



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When deciding what to buy, it is important to understand these four factors:

- Nutritional value
- Quality
- Price
- Preference

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Critical Thinking: Conversation Starter

- Which food groups are the most expensive?
- How much do the price of the food and the financial status of the client and family affect the meal plan?
- Is eating in restaurants more or less expensive?
- Is having meals delivered from restaurants more or less expensive? When would this be an appropriate option?

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Organic, local, and sustainably-produced foods are gaining in popularity:

- More and more people are trying to include as much organic, local, and sustainably-produced food as possible in their diets, and this may be important to some of your clients
- Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides, synthetic ingredients, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation
- Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones
- For foods to be labeled organic they must meet certain legal standards

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Organic, local, and sustainably-produced foods (cont'd):

- Local foods are grown and produced as close to home as possible. Local foods are not necessarily organic, although they may be
- One environmental benefit of buying food locally is that it is transported shorter distances, which may reduce the pollution associated with getting food to customers
- Local foods may not require as much packaging or processing as foods that are shipped long distances, and may result in environmental benefits as well

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Organic, local, and sustainably-produced foods (cont'd):

- Sustainably-produced foods cause minimal or no harm to the environment or to those involved in the work of producing the food. The farming community is supported. Its workers are treated well, and the animals are treated humanely
- Organic, local, and sustainably-produced foods will almost always be more expensive than other options and may not always be available, so be sure to make choices that reflect your client's wishes

2. List guidelines for safe food preparation

Remember:

Food-borne illnesses affect up to 100 million people each year. Elderly people are at increased risk partly because they may not see, smell, or taste that food is spoiled. They also may not have the energy to prepare and store food safely. For people who have weakened immune systems because of AIDS or cancer, a food-borne illness can be deadly

Key Material 23-2: Safe Food Preparation

- Wash hands frequently.
- Keep your hair tied back or covered.
- Wear clean clothes or clean apron.
- Wear gloves if you have any cuts on your hands. Depending upon a client's illness, you may always have to wear gloves when preparing food. You may also have to wear a mask. Follow instructions in the care plan.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing, and wash hands immediately if you cough or sneeze.
- Keep countertops and surfaces clean/disinfected.
- Handle raw meat, poultry, fish, and eggs carefully
- Once you have used a knife or cutting board to cut fresh meat, do not use it for anything else until it has been washed in hot, soapy water, rinsed in clear water, and allowed to air dry. Use separate cutting boards for produce and bread and raw meat, poultry, and seafood.

Key Material 23-2: Safe Food Preparation (cont'd)

- Use hot, soapy water to wash utensils.
- Change dishcloths, sponges, and towels often. Wash sponges in the dishwasher.
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly.
- Cook meats, poultry, and fish thoroughly.
- Do not use cracked eggs or serve raw eggs.
- Do not taste and stir with the same utensil.

3. Identify methods of food preparation

Define the following term:

basted

coated with juices or other liquid while cooking.

3. Identify methods of food preparation

HHAs should understand the following methods of preparing food:

- Boiling
- Steaming
- Poaching
- Roasting
- Braising
- Baking
- Broiling
- Sautéing
- Microwaving
- Frying

3. Identify methods of food preparation

Remember:

Uncooked fruits and vegetables should be washed well and are more difficult to digest and chew. Because of this they may be less appropriate for some clients.

3. Identify methods of food preparation

Guidelines for preparing mechanically altered diets are as follows:

- Use a sharp knife and clean cutting board
- Keep equipment clean to prevent infection. Wash each piece of equipment in warm soapy water and rinse thoroughly
- Season food to the client's preference
- Talk about the food being served in a positive way
- Follow directions exactly

3. Identify methods of food preparation

When assisting with nutritional supplements

- Mix with a liquid as ordered in the care plan
- Make sure the supplement is mixed thoroughly
- Make sure client takes it at the ordered time
- Be patient and encouraging
- Do not insist a client drink the nutritional supplement, but do report if she does not

4. Identify four methods of low-fat food preparation

These tips can help with low-fat food preparation:

- Cook lean
- Drain fat
- Plan lean
- Substitute or cut out fat
- For vegans or those who only need to lower their saturated fat intake, nut-based foods can be substituted for cheese and cream and olive oil can replace butter.

5. List four guidelines for safe food storage

Define the following term:

compost

a mixture of decaying food and garden waste that is used to improve and fertilize soil.

Key Material 23-3: Safe Food Storage

- Buy cold food last; get it home fast
- Keep it safe; refrigerate
- Use small containers that seal tightly
- When in doubt, throw it out

5. List four guidelines for safe food storage

Remember:

Some elderly people who are on tight budgets or who are forgetful do not throw away old foods

5. List four guidelines for safe food storage

Which foods can be composted?

Which foods cannot be composted?

Do you compost or know anyone who composts? Discuss the process and how the composted mixture is used.

Critical Thinking: Case Study

Your client only eats beans and rice because that is her favorite meal. Her physician has ordered more fruits and vegetables in her diet.

- How would you approach her with new foods, and which ones would you offer first?
- How would you prepare these foods, and what questions could the family answer to assist you with the meal planning and menu?
- Why do you think this client has not changed her menu in years? Would you need to know the answer to better understand her food preferences?



Hartman