

## *Week One*

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# welcome to *Begin with Christ*

Congratulations! And welcome to the First Place 4 Health *Begin with Christ* Bible study. We are so glad you have chosen to join us on this lifelong journey to health, wholeness and a balanced lifestyle that honors God.

At your first group meeting for this session of First Place 4 Health, you will meet your fellow members, get an overview of your materials and find out what you can expect at weekly meetings. The majority of your class time will be spent learning about the four-sided person concept, the Live It Food Plan, and how change begins from the inside out. You will also have a chance to ask any questions about how to get the most out of First Place 4 Health. If possible, complete the Member Survey on page 205 before your first group meeting. The information you give will help your leader tailor the next 12 weeks to the needs of the whole group.

Each weekly meeting begins with a weigh-in for members. This will allow you to track your progress over the 12-week session. Your Week One weigh-in/measurement will establish a baseline of comparison so that you can set healthy goals for this session. If you are apprehensive about weighing in every week, talk with your group leader about your concerns. He or she will have some options for you to consider that will make the weigh-in activity encouraging rather than stressful.

The day after your first meeting, begin Week Two of this Bible study. This session, you and your group will explore the importance of centering your goals for a healthy life on Jesus. No matter how strong your body, mind and emotions may appear, unless you have spiritual tenacity and resolve, you will not be able to run the course God has laid out before you. As you open yourself to the truth of Scripture and share your hopes and struggles with the members of your group during the next 12 weeks, you'll find yourself becoming the healthy child of God you are designed to be!

## Week Two

# getting to know Him

### SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

*Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,  
and all these things will be given to you as well.*

MATTHEW 6:33

In choosing First Place 4 Health, you have made a decision that has life-changing potential. Our Creator fashioned us as multi-faceted beings: people with a wonderfully made body, an intricate mind, a wide range of emotions—and a spiritual dimension, too. That’s why only a program that addresses our needs on all four levels has the ability to cure the angst that keeps us from realizing our health and fitness goals.

Proverbs 24:10 gives us some wise counsel that will help us realize the importance of being steadfast in body, mind, emotions and spirit: “If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!” If we concentrate all of our effort on just the physical aspect of health and wholeness, we will surely falter when the road gets difficult and we are faced with temptation. No matter how strong our bodies, minds and emotions may appear, unless we have spiritual tenacity and resolve, we will not be able to run the course God has laid out before us. Likewise, if we concentrate all our effort on gaining spiritual strength but neglect the precious body God has entrusted to our care, our lack of physical discipline, emotional self-control and mental perseverance will be our undoing. Only a health and fitness program that brings balance to our four-sided being can restore us to the health and wholeness that honors our Creator.

As we begin this study, take a moment to complete an honest assessment of where you are with regard to strength, stamina and stability in each of the four aspects of your being. This will help you identify your weak areas, those parts you need to shore up until you have increased your strength. The assessment will also help you identify your strengths: the areas that will be the mainstays of your First Place 4 Health program while you grow and develop the

areas that are currently frail. In doing this evaluation, remember that this exercise is not an occasion to belittle or berate yourself. This is strictly diagnostic information—information you can utilize when times of temptation come. By knowing where you are strong and where you are weak, you will be better able to protect yourself. Having identified your strengths and weaknesses, you will be able to lead from your strengths rather than putting excess pressure on areas that are more vulnerable. Rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest:

Physical Strength, Stamina and Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Emotional Strength, Stamina and Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Mental Strength, Stamina and Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Spiritual Strength, Stamina and Stability	1	2	3	4	5

Carefully assess your answers. We will revisit this diagnostic tool at the end of our *Begin with Christ* Bible study so that you can praise God for the progress you have made during this 12-week segment of our ongoing effort to put Christ first in all things.

## THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

Day  
**1**

*Almighty God, in You are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. As I begin this Bible study, I pray that You will open my spiritual eyes so that I can see You in new and exciting ways. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, please give me the grace to clearly understand and freely choose the way of Your wisdom through Christ my Lord. Amen.*

It is one thing to say that Christ has first place in our life; it is quite another to put those words into practice. But before we can say that Christ has authority in our life, it is important that we understand who this Christ is that we are turning our life and will over to! Faith cannot be confused with foolishness. Part of our problem in the past has been foolishly putting our trust in people and programs that were not worthy of our confidence. So during this week of our *Begin with Christ* Bible study, we are going to learn more about Jesus, the One who is altogether faithful and completely worthy of our trust.

The apostle Paul presents us with a very detailed description of the work and ministry of Jesus Christ. Turn to Colossians 1:15-20 in your Bible, and then read Paul's description. What do you learn about Jesus Christ in these verses?

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You may want to reread Paul's words so that you can grasp the entire truth presented in this passage. Verse 18 tells us:

And he is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_, the church; he is the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ from among the dead, so that in \_\_\_\_\_ he might have the \_\_\_\_\_.

Having read Paul's words, rewrite the passage in your own words, substituting "first place" for the word "supremacy."

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After meditating on Colossians 1:15-20, what new information about Jesus Christ did you learn that will make you more inclined to surrender your life and will to this man called Jesus the Christ? Be specific and list as many new facts as the Holy Spirit impressed upon your heart during this reading.

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Just prior to the passage we have been studying today, Paul gives us another important fact about Jesus. Read Colossians 1:10-14. What has Christ done for you that assures you of a place in God's kingdom and qualifies you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light?

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How is First Place 4 Health part of “growing in the knowledge of God” and “being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience” (verses 10-11)?

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In verse 10, Paul prays that those reading his words would “live a life worthy of the Lord and . . . please him in every way.” How is Paul’s prayer related to this week’s Scripture memory verse?

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*Gracious God, I am humbled when I read of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for me. Help me to apply the words of today’s study to my life so that I can grow in the knowledge of God and be strengthened in the core of my spiritual being. Amen.*

### THEN AND NOW

*Prepare my heart, O God, to accept Your Word. Silence in me any voices but Your own so that I may clearly hear what You want to teach me today in and through Christ my Lord. Amen.*

Day  
**2**

Yesterday we studied Paul’s wonderful words about the work and ministry of Jesus Christ as described in Colossians 1:10-20. As we begin today’s study, recap what you learned yesterday, especially as it applies to your participation in First Place 4 Health.

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In order to fully appreciate what Christ has done for us, it is important that we acknowledge what our life was like before Christ appeared to us. Turn to Titus 3:3-5 in your Bible, and prayerfully read the passage.

In verse 3, Paul tells us what our life was like “at one time.” Although these words could be applied to many areas of our life, today we are going to apply them to our health and fitness efforts. How were you deceived and enslaved by the diet and exercise programs you tried in the past?

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What kinds of passions and pleasures ruled your life before Jesus Christ set you free? Make your answer applicable to those things that kept you from achieving your health and fitness goals.

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How did your chronic lack of loving self-care contribute to malice and envy, especially envy of those who took good care of themselves?

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Titus 3:4-5 contains a precious truth. Read these verses carefully. You might even want to underline them in your Bible! Who appeared, and what did He do? Paraphrase Titus 3:4-5 in your own words.

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What had you done to deserve God’s kindness and love?

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If you had done nothing righteous (that is, nothing to make yourself right with God), why did God your Savior appear?

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What additional information have you learned about Jesus Christ after completing today's lesson?

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After contemplating what Jesus Christ did for you, you are undoubtedly overflowing with gratitude that you need to turn into jubilant praise. Write a letter expressing your thankfulness to the One who saved you because of His great mercy. Record your letter below, or use your spiritual journal to record your prayer of thanksgiving.

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*Almighty and merciful God, thank You for Jesus. When I was lost He saved me, not because of any good thing I had done, but because of Your great mercy and love. Amen.*

### A GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Day  
**3**

*Gracious God, today I pray You will give me a humble, teachable and obedient heart so that I may receive the truth You will reveal to me in today's lesson; and that I may then put that lesson into practice in my life. Amen.*

Not only did Jesus, the One we are learning more about this week, save us when we were deceived and enslaved, but He also continues to play a vital role in our efforts to live a life pleasing to God. Turn to Hebrews 4:14-16 in your Bible.

According to verse 14, what role does Jesus Christ play in our twenty-first-century lives?

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How does the fact that Jesus is our "great high priest" benefit us (verse 14)?

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Verse 15 tells us that there is something unique about this great high priest. What makes Jesus Christ different from the priests who ministered to God's people before Christ came to save us from our sins?

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Jesus, our high priest, was tempted in every way, just as we are! He will never chide or scold us when we come to Him in our weakness. Verse 16 tells us about a very special benefit of having Jesus as our high priest. What is that benefit?

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According to verse 16, what do we receive when we come to God in our time of need?

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Reflecting on the inventory you did at the beginning of this week's study, what personal vulnerabilities do you need to bring to Jesus so that He can shore up your weakness with His strength?

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How is doing a daily First Place 4 Health Bible study that is specifically designed to increase spiritual strength and stamina an essential part of holding firmly to the faith you profess?

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How is caring for the other three aspects of your being—your body, your mind and your emotions—part of holding firmly to the faith you profess?

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According to Proverbs 24:10, which we read in the introduction to this week’s study, what happens to us during times of temptation when we are not strong in equal measure in body, mind, emotions and spirit?

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How is First Place 4 Health helping you to overcome your weaknesses through the power of Jesus Christ, your Lord?

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*Thank You, God, for giving me a great high priest who can sympathize with my weakness. Because He was tempted as I am, I can come to You for grace and help, no matter how weak and helpless I may feel. Amen.*

I AM

Day  
4

*O Lord, I do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from Your mouth. Make me hunger for this heavenly food, that it may nourish me today. I ask this in the name of Jesus, the bread that came down from heaven. Amen.*

So far we have been looking at what other people have said about Jesus. Today we are going to learn what Jesus said about Himself. The Gospel of John gives us some “I Am” statements Jesus made. Who did Jesus say He was?

John 6:48: “I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

John 8:12: “I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

John 8:23: “I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

16 week two

John 10:9: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 10:11: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 10:36: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 11:25: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 14:6: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 15:1: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

John 18:37: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."

What do these "I Am" statements teach you about Jesus that you did not learn about Him in our Day One, Day Two or Day Three study?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reread the list of "I Am" statements you have just compiled. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you which "I Am" statement you most need to believe today so that you will be better prepared to surrender your life and will to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Which verse did you pick, and why?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Finally, let's read what God the Father has to say about Jesus, His Son. Turn to Mark 9:7 in your Bible. What does God say about Jesus?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How is listening to Jesus, God's beloved Son, part of your First Place 4 Health program, and why?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Loving and gracious Lord, You are the way, the truth and the life. Help me to listen carefully to everything You say, knowing that You and You alone can satisfy my hungry soul. Amen.*

## MY LORD AND MY GOD

Day  
**5**

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer. Amen (Psalm 19:14).*

After His cruel death on the cross at Calvary, Jesus rose from the tomb and appeared to His disciples before He ascended back to the right hand of His Father. One disciple, Thomas, was not with the others when Jesus first appeared to them. Later, when Thomas was in their midst, Jesus reappeared. Turn to John 20:24-25 in your Bible, and read about the beginning of the incident.

What did Thomas say to the other disciples about believing that Jesus had risen from the dead (verse 25)?

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Now read John 20:26-27. What was Jesus' greeting to the disciples when He entered the house (verse 26)?

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Was Thomas at peace when Jesus first came into the room? Explain your answer.

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Even though Jesus had not been in the room when Thomas declared he would not believe unless he saw the nail marks and put his hand into Jesus' side, Jesus

knew exactly what was keeping Thomas from believing He was the risen Christ. What did Jesus say to Thomas (verse 27)?

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According to verse 28, what was Thomas's response?

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Jesus also knows exactly what is keeping you from truly believing that He is the risen Christ. What does Jesus need to do to convince you that He is the One who died for your sins and deserves supremacy in your life? Spend some time today talking to Jesus about your doubts and fears and your questions and anxieties. Record this conversation below—or better yet, in your spiritual journal.

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When you have finished writing, hear your Lord say, "Peace be with you!" He will prove Himself worthy of the title "My Lord and My God," if you will only give Him an opportunity to do so. But you must also do your part. Reread Jesus' words to Thomas. What is Jesus saying to you through this account?

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How can First Place 4 Health help you stop doubting and start believing?

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When you, along with Thomas, can boldly declare, “My Lord and my God,” you will be ready to put Christ first in all things. What is standing between you and making that bold confession right now?

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Once that obstacle is removed, what will keep you from caring for your body, mind, emotions and spirit in a way that reflects God’s great love for you in Christ Jesus, your Lord and your God? Be specific in your answer.

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*My Lord and my God, thank You for showing Yourself to me in ways that calm my anxious fears. Thank You for appearing and reappearing until I can finally grasp the height, breadth, depth and width of Your love for me. Amen.*

## REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

*O Lord, Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Give me the grace to receive your truth in faith and love, and the strength to follow the path you set before me, through Jesus Christ. Amen (Psalm 119:105).*

Day  
**6**

During our Day Four study, we looked at 10 “I Am” statements made by Jesus Christ. One day while Jesus and His disciples were alone, Jesus asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?” (Luke 9:18). In response to Jesus’ question, the disciples answered, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life” (Luke 9:19). Having heard their answer, Jesus then asked His disciples a piercing question, the same piercing question He is asking you today: “But what about you? . . . Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter boldly declared, “The Christ of God” (Luke 9:20).

Reflecting on what you have learned during this week of the *Begin with Christ* Bible study, write 10 “You Are” statements in response to Jesus’ question “Who do you say I am?” Don’t just paraphrase Jesus’ “I Am” statements, but rather search your heart and write a genuine confession of your belief in Jesus, the Christ of God.

20 week two

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

You are \_\_\_\_\_

Having declared who Jesus is, go about your day so that your very life becomes a tribute to the One who saved you because of His great mercy.

*O Lord God Almighty, You are the Son of God, the One who came to save me from my sins. Thank You for revealing Yourself to me through the Begin with Christ Bible study. The more I know You, the more I love You. Thank You for calling me to be one of Your disciples and for allowing me to sit at Your feet and learn from You. Amen.*

Day  
7

### REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

*My Lord and my God, You are the source of all light; through Your Word, You give light to my soul. Pour out on me the spirit of wisdom and understanding that my heart and mind may be opened to Your truth. Amen.*

This week you have discovered many truths about Jesus Christ, the One who saved you because of His great mercy. Before going on to the Week Three study, spend some time today allowing the truths you have learned this week to soak into the depth of your being. Perhaps your spiritual muscles are even a bit sore, much like your physical muscles are sore when you first begin to exercise! And just as you might soak your aching physical muscles in a hot tub or spa, soak your aching spiritual muscles in the warmth and love of God's Word.

Reflect on the truths about Jesus that you have learned during Week Two of *Begin with Christ*. What truth was new information, something you had not realized about Jesus before now?

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What truth that you have known for some time was reaffirmed or presented in a way that shed new light on your commitment to Jesus?

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If Jesus were in the room with you right now, what question would you ask Him that would help you believe and not doubt? By the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is closer to you than your own breath, so why don't you pick up your spiritual journal and spend some time asking Jesus to encourage and strengthen your heart? Pause as you write so that Jesus can talk to you, too! Remember that this is the Son of God speaking, and you are to listen to Him!

*O gracious and loving Lord, thank You for revealing Yourself to me so that I can grow in grace and knowledge of You. You are my Lord and my God, and it is my desire to please You in all that I do. Today I surrender my will and my way to Your Lordship, especially as it applies to caring for my body, mind, heart and spirit as a reflection of Your great love for me. Amen.*



Week One

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# giving thanks

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

*Give thanks in all circumstances  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

## A THANKFUL HEART

*by Carole Lewis*

Day  
**1**

The Thanksgiving season is a nostalgic time of year for me. My dad went home to be with the Lord just a week before Thanksgiving in 1976. I was 34 years old and had never fixed a holiday meal before, but we had our entire family to our home for Thanksgiving dinner. That became our tradition until just a few years ago when we started going to our daughter Lisa's home for the day.

On Thanksgiving night 2001, our daughter Shari went home to be with the Lord after being struck by a drunk driver while standing behind the family car in the driveway of her in-laws' house, talking to her mother-in-law.

You might wonder how I am able to endure Thanksgiving when sad memories surround the day. Making this verse a part of my life is the reason I can not only endure the day but also enjoy it as well. You see, this verse in 1 Thessalonians tells us to be thankful *in* all circumstances—not *for* all circumstances.

How can I be thankful in the circumstance of never going to my parents' home again for a holiday? Well, our children learned the art of hospitality at an early age. They learned how to set the table and be gracious to those who came to our home for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The lessons they learned all those years ago have helped them as they now carry on our traditions in their own homes. Our daughter Lisa is a great cook like her daddy and is able to make all his Thanksgiving recipes exactly as he did for years. She is so good that she and our daughter-in-law, Lisa, prepare all the meals for our First Place 4 Health Wellness Weeks each year.

How can I be thankful when I think about Thanksgiving without our precious Shari? Well, God has done some great and mighty things for our family in the years since Shari's homegoing. All three of their daughters have grown into lovely young women. Cara, who is 25, graduated from college and married Michael. They now have a baby boy named Luke. Christen is 21 and a student at Texas A & M University. Amanda is 19 and a student at Sam Houston State University. God brought a wonderful Christian woman into their daddy, Jeff's, life a couple of years after Shari died and they were married in September 2007.

Probably the thing I will be most thankful for this Thanksgiving season is that my husband, Johnny, is still here after being diagnosed with stage-4 prostate cancer in 1997. Yes, we battle cancer every day, but our quality of life is good and our God is good. This Thanksgiving will be a wonderful day with the family we love.

Yes, I love this verse so much, I wrote an entire book about it called *A Thankful Heart!*

*Dear Lord, thank You for always bringing good from the circumstances of life that have the potential to destroy us. It is only because of Jesus and the Holy Spirit who lives inside us that we are able to walk on water, as Peter did, instead of perishing in the storm (see Matthew 14:22-33).*



Day  
2

## CHOOSING THANKFULNESS

by Elizabeth Crews

In 2005, I had the awesome privilege of writing the First Place 4 Health Bible study *Choosing Thankfulness*. The study was intended to be a companion for Carole Lewis's book *A Thankful Heart*, and Carole and I worked on these writings simultaneously. During the writing process, Carole and I talked together via telephone several times a week; however, most of our conversations had nothing to do with what we were writing.

Instead of talking about thankfulness, we often ended up comparing notes on how the enemy was trying to thwart our plans and sabotage our work! It was almost as if Satan were saying, "You two ladies think you can write about being thankful in all circumstances? Well, I've got some special circumstances for you. Let's see if you can practice what you preach." Each week, the enemy's efforts increased. Before long it was almost comical to watch his overkill tactics. But even though Satan was persistent in his efforts, God was faithful to His Word! We were not tempted beyond what we could bear (see 1 Corinthians 10:13), and both of us were convinced that the Lord's hand was on us as we wrote these important words. Praise God that the Spirit in us was stronger than any weaponry the enemy tried to use against us. When complete, both works became a tribute to God's faithfulness and love—a reason for thankfulness no matter what our circumstance.

As part of the research I was doing for *Choosing Thankfulness*, I began to read about the benefits of keeping a thankfulness journal. I was surprised to learn that doing something so simple promised to produce such positive results, and I decided that it was a practice I would begin to incorporate into my own spiritual disciplines. I purchased a composition book and began listing five things I was thankful for each morning and five things I was thankful for each night. At first I was skeptical—and fearful that I would not have enough thanksgiving to

write 10 entries each day for the next month. But at the end of the month I was amazed: On many days, I had written down more than 10 things I was thankful for! More than that, I could clearly see God active and working in my life through the simple “Thank You for . . .” sentences I wrote each day.

Three years later, the keeping of a thankfulness journal is an essential part of my daily quiet time with God. And as I have thanked God in all circumstances, I have had more and more reasons to give Him thanks and praise. Each Thanksgiving Day, since I began recording my thankfulness entries on a daily basis, I have taken the time to reread my words. What an awesome God we have! Every day is Thanksgiving Day when we make the decision to keep God first in all things and honor Him by giving Him thanks no matter what our circumstances.

*Thank You, Lord, for Your faithfulness and love. No matter what situation or circumstances I find myself in, I know that You are near. You hear my prayers and see my distress and come to my rescue. You are such an awesome God! Today I choose to live a lifestyle characterized by thankfulness.*

**Journal:** Are you keeping a thankfulness journal? If not, begin the practice today! Write five things in the morning and five in the evening about God's thankfulness and love—and then make a decision to continue the practice of giving thanks in all circumstances until this time next year.

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## OVERINDULGING IN THANKFULNESS

*by Judy Marshall*Day  
**3**

Before I matured in Christ through First Place 4 Health, I viewed all holidays from the fridge and pantry doors. All my plans revolved around the bountiful spread of the family's favorites on the table—the richest of foods containing thousands of calories with practically no nutritional value. (You know the ones—those we think we cannot possibly live or celebrate without!)

Today, most of those foods are hardly missed at my table, or they have been converted into healthier recipes for family and guests. Through the years with First Place 4 Health, my family has also developed new tastes that have led to new traditional favorites. I find it exciting to shop in the vegetable section and to select from the variety of fresh and colorful fall fruits and vegetables. I scan current magazines and cookbooks to find new and interesting recipes to turn into healthy dishes, and look forward to sharing recipes with other First Place 4 Health members.

When our extended family gets together for Thanksgiving and Christmas, I bring the traditional layered salad, squash casserole and a to-die-for chocolate dessert—all because years ago I volunteered to bring these “legal” dishes so that I wouldn't starve to death while others were overindulging. Today they are requested, expected and gone at the end of the meal!

One of my nieces began the tradition of the Thankful Box, which she and her daughter made together. During our time together, each of us writes on a card what we are thankful for this year. Then after the meal, both past and current cards are displayed on a table for all to read, seeing God's goodness and continued blessings in our extended family over the years. What a treat (right up there with the to-die-for chocolate dessert!). With our focus on God and our responsibility to live balanced and healthy lives even during the holidays, we can see His provision for



## GOD IN CONTROL

by Martha Rogers

Day  
4

When I first heard the word “malignant” after a biopsy, I was anything but thankful. First came fear, then anger. I had been doing everything right through First Place 4 Health with my diet and exercise, so why had this disease struck me? After venting my anger toward God, I began to think of everything that might come because of this diagnosis. My mother had just finished her chemotherapy treatments, and I did not want to suffer like she had.

Surgery was scheduled for the following week, and as I prepared, I couldn’t stop asking, *Why me?* The answer came back very clearly: “*Why not you?*” Some of the memory verses I had memorized in First Place 4 Health entered my mind and brought great comfort.

However, the morning of my surgery I read through Philippians and Thessalonians for my Bible study lesson, and the topic on giving thanks didn’t really interest me. I didn’t feel like giving thanks. But then I began to pray, and God showed me that He was still in control. I knew that nothing I could do would change the outcome of what happened in the operating room. At that moment, I gave the cancer completely to Him. What a peace and joy filled my heart! I prayed with thanksgiving that He had shown me the way to peace. I realized I could give thanks to God in any and all circumstances and the result would be His will for my life.

I had such a remarkable recovery! The doctor attributed it to my good health because of First Place 4 Health and my attitude of victory, but I give all the credit to God, who has a purpose for my life and has showed me how to give thanks. And although the cancer returned five years later, I was ready for whatever God planned because I remembered this verse and let it be my testimony again.

It’s been well over five years since the second surgery, and I am cancer-free. That is His will and purpose for my life at this time. If the



## THANKFUL IN HINDSIGHT

*by Dee Matthews*Day  
**5**

I was sitting in a Bible study one morning in Rio de Janeiro, listening to the teacher speak about being thankful for everything. I remember thinking that I was not thankful that my son, Robbie, had so many difficult bouts with asthma. He was just three when we moved to Brazil and we made many frightening trips to the hospital, including one when he almost died during the first month we were there.

I remember thinking that there was no way I could be thankful for the way Robbie suffered. I was discouraged that I could not figure out what was causing the sudden attacks and often felt that the school where he attended was feeding him the wrong foods. He was sick almost every weekend.

Looking back on those years, I realize that I had much to be thankful for in the circumstance of Robbie's asthma. While we were still in the hotel prior to Robbie's first hospitalization, someone in the restaurant told me they knew of a pediatrician who had returned to Rio that month. She was an asthma specialist, and she was willing to treat children for any reason. Ultimately, we called her one night when Robbie was ill. She came to the hotel, checked him over, picked him up and drove him to the hospital in her car. She gave him excellent care and became a wonderful friend, as well as our doctor.

Every Thursday, my husband, Bob, brought a friend home from the office to share dinner with us. One night he commented on the amazing desserts I served each week. I had a cake decorating class in my home on Thursday mornings, and each week for dinner I served a beautifully decorated cake. When he complimented me, I realized that every Thursday I was feeding my son dessert covered with artificial flavoring and coloring. It wasn't Robbie's school that was making him sick every weekend . . . it was me!

As I think over those years, I realize how good God was to us in providing a physician specially trained in the United States to be Robbie’s doctor. I was so grateful to determine what was triggering Robbie’s attacks. Most of all, in spite of all the difficulties caused by Robbie’s asthma, I am thankful for the many hours I spent with him, sitting by his bed and holding his hand as he struggled to breathe. We became very close because of those difficult nights. God was faithful and met our every need.

Sometimes it takes a little longer than it should for us to realize how good God is to us. I’m so glad it is never too late to be thankful and to express our gratitude to our wonderful and patient God.

*Father, thank You for Your patience with me. Sometimes it takes me a long time to realize how You have blessed my life and protected me. Thank You for Your faithfulness in caring for me and for my family. I love You and want to be aware of Your presence in my life daily.*

**Journal:** Think about a situation in the past when you found it difficult to be thankful. Has your perspective changed? How?

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## GIVING THANKS OR FEELING THANKFUL?

*by David Self*

God's Word commands us to "give thanks" about 135 times. How is *giving thanks* different from *feeling thankful*? Giving thanks is an action that implies specificity; feeling thankful is passive and deals in generalities. Giving thanks recognizes the One who is the source of our blessings; feeling thankful may not even acknowledge our Source. Giving thanks ultimately gives glory to God; feeling thankful only makes us feel good about ourselves.

What about the "all circumstances" part of this week's verse? How literally do we take that? Elisabeth Elliot said, "It is always possible to be thankful for what is given rather than to complain about what is not given. One or the other becomes a habit of life." Even in bad circumstances, we can find reasons to give thanks.

My wife, Bonnie, and I were having a difficult Christmas season due to her mother's health. Rose had rather suddenly developed double vision and was experiencing painful headaches. She had visited multiple doctors and undergone many tests.

While my wife and I were traveling north on I-45 to see my side of the family for Christmas, her cell phone chirped. "This is the doctor's nurse. Your mother's MRI has revealed a spot in her brain that may be malignant. Can we schedule an appointment with the doctor after Christmas to discuss treatment options?" Just like that, the axis of our world seemed to pivot; everything seemed to change.

We exited the interstate and pulled into a vacant lot, with a thousand questions on our minds. *What does this mean? Should we cancel our trip? Is this the right time, just before Christmas, to tell Rose, who is 80 years old?* Feeling terribly alone and discouraged, we held hands and began to pray. Increasingly, our prayers turned to thanks. We thanked God for His love, His power and His care for His children. We admitted our ig-

norance and lack of direction, but thanked Him for His wisdom and knowledge. We thanked God that, even though we felt out of control, He was in perfect control. Finally, we thanked Him in advance for peace.

After we prayed, I felt that Bonnie should call the doctor for some clarification. I called my brother, a physician. Both doctors offered solid advice and counseled us not to assume the worst. As the diagnosis developed over the next weeks, we found that Rose had a benign cyst, unconnected to her other symptoms. The double vision and headaches required a surgical repair of an eye muscle, which was very successful.

While not everyone's crisis has such a happy ending, every believer can still "give thanks in every circumstance." The very act of giving thanks directs our attention from our helpless position on Earth to God's limitless resources in heaven.

*Dear Heavenly Father, I give thanks to You for Your  
indescribable gift (see 2 Corinthians 9:15), Your inalterable victory  
(see 1 Corinthians 15:57), Your incomparable inheritance  
(see Colossians 1:12), and Your inconceivable power (see Matthew  
28:18). You are my Source and the One due all praise.*

**Journal:** Have you given thanks today? Make it an "everyday, every circumstance" habit. Make a list of things you can be thankful for today and every day.

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## THANKFUL IN CHRIST JESUS

*by Karrie Smyth*Day  
**7**

My First Place 4 Health journey began because Carole Lewis was faithful to obey God's command in this week's key verse. Carole's daughter Shari was killed in a tragic accident on Thanksgiving Day 2001. Just a few short months later, I heard Carole share of the Lord's amazing faithfulness to her during this time of great loss. She expressed how thankful she was that the Lord had awakened her early that Thanksgiving morning to speak tenderly through His Word. I was amazed at the fact that Carole could give thanks in such horrible circumstances. I wanted a relationship with the Lord like that.

Sometimes I think we don't put enough emphasis on the words "in Christ Jesus" in this verse. It was because of her deep abiding relationship in Christ that Carole could give thanks in her grief. It was God's will for her and it is God's will for us. My life is forever changed as a result.

At one time or another, we all face circumstances when being thankful is a choice. The enemy tells us that we have nothing to be thankful for. Our minds focus on all the reasons that we have to be discouraged. That is when we need to draw ever closer to God and find all we need in Christ Jesus.

Allow Him to wake you in the mornings. Sit with Him and allow Him to speak to you through His Word. He wants to transform you in the midst of those circumstances by the renewing of your mind. He will never leave you or forsake you. He is the Friend that sticks closer than a brother. He will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Are you facing tough circumstances this holiday season? Does giving thanks seem impossible? God knows everything you are going through and how you feel. He will never command you to do something that He will not empower you to do. Begin thanking Him that





28 | week one

## Group Prayer Requests



Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Request

### Results

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# First Place 4 Health menu plans



Each menu plan is based on approximately 1,400 to 1,500 calories per day. All recipe and menu exchanges were determined using the MasterCook software, a program that accesses a database containing more than 6,000 food items prepared using the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) publications and information from food manufacturers. As with any nutritional program, MasterCook calculates the nutritional values of the recipes based on ingredients. Nutrition may vary due to how the food is prepared, where the food comes from, soil content, season, ripeness, processing and method of preparation. For these reasons, please use the recipes and menu plans as approximate guides. As always, consult your physician and/or a registered dietitian before starting a weight-loss program.

*For those who need more calories, add the following to the 1,400-calorie plan:*

- 1,800 calories: 2 ounce equivalent of meat, 3 ounce equivalent of bread, 1/2 cup vegetable serving, 1 tsp. fat
- 2,000 calories: 2 ounce equivalent of meat, 4 ounce equivalent of bread, 1/2 cup vegetable serving, 3 tsp. fat
- 2,200 calories: 2 ounce equivalent of meat, 5 ounce equivalent of bread, 1/2 cup vegetable serving, 1/2 cup fruit serving, 5 tsp. fat
- 2,400 calories: 2 ounce equivalent of meat, 6 ounce equivalent of bread, 1 cup vegetable serving, 1/2 cup fruit serving, 6 tsp. fat

## First Week Grocery List

### Produce

- (1) white onion
- (1) bell pepper
- (5) oranges
- (1) cantaloupe
- (2) peaches
- (2) bananas
- potatoes
- green beans
- (3) apples
- (30) spears fresh asparagus
- 4 cups broccoli
- 4 cups berries
- large bag spinach leaves
- (1) bag baby carrots
- (1) bunch celery stalks
- (2) small plums
- (1) bunch green leaf lettuce
- (1) package fresh mushrooms
- 2 cups strawberries
- 2 cups mixed greens
- (3) red peppers
- (1) package grapes
- (1) red onion
- (6) roma tomatoes
- (1) bunch romaine lettuce leaves

### Baking Products

- cinnamon
- nutmeg
- walnuts
- (1) jar applesauce
- Tabasco sauce
- garlic salt
- nonstick cooking spray
- reduced-fat Miracle Whip®

- reduced-fat Ranch dressing
- ground pepper
- dried oregano
- ground nutmeg
- balsamic vinegar
- salt
- olive oil
- Italian bread crumbs
- flour
- raisins
- (1) jar salsa
- all-fruit strawberry spread
- fresh lemon or lime juice
- pasta
- grape juice
- brown rice
- reduced-fat Catalina-style dressing
- 6 oz. wide egg noodles (whole wheat blend)
- light Italian dressing
- red wine vinegar

### Breads and Cereals

- nonfat whole-wheat flour tortillas
- whole wheat pita bread
- Grape Nuts
- Rice Chex®
- English muffins
- instant oatmeal (flavored, sugar-free)
- saltine crackers
- French bread
- breadsticks
- oyster crackers
- low-calorie rye bread
- Italian bread
- oatmeal

**Canned Foods**

- (1) 15 1/2-ounce can red salmon
- (1) 2-oz. jar pimientos
- (1) jar marinara sauce
- (1) can white beans
- (1) can condensed beef broth
- (1) can vegetable soup
- (1) can wax beans
- (1) can chickpeas
- (2) cans sliced peaches in fruit juice
- (1) small can black olives
- (1) 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> can reduced-fat Cream of Mushroom soup

**Dairy Products**

- light margarine
- nonfat milk
- egg substitute
- (1) sugar-free nonfat yogurt with fruit
- 1/4 cup 2%-fat cottage cheese
- light mayonnaise
- 4 oz. light sour cream
- 2 oz. reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- eggs
- 2-ounce part-skim mozzarella cheese
- reduced-fat feta cheese

**Seafood and Meat**

- (1) 10-ounce Lean Cuisine Dinner Selects
- (4) 4-ounce pork center loin
- 1 lb. red snapper
- 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> ounces boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef
- (2) 8-oz. lean strip loin steaks (1" thick)

**Frozen Foods**

- whole-wheat waffles
- (1) 16-oz. bag frozen dark-pitted cherries
- (2) 10-oz. pkg. frozen asparagus
- sugar-free, nonfat chocolate yogurt

## First Week Meals and Recipes

### DAY 1

#### Breakfast

2 whole-grain waffles  
1 cup nonfat milk

2 tbsp. raisins  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup applesauce, sweetened with artificial sweetener (if desired)

*Nutritional Information:* 397 calories (16% calories from fat); 6g fat; 19g protein; 52g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 132mg sodium.

#### Lunch

##### *Broiled Chicken Breasts*

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. boneless, skinless chicken breast, broiled and served with mixed bean salad  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Italian green beans, cooked

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chickpeas, drained  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup wax beans  
1 tbsp. reduced-fat Italian dressing

Serve each with 2 breadsticks,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon margarine and 1 small nectarine.

*Nutritional Information:* 509 calories (14% calories from fat); 10g fat; 34g protein; 103g carbohydrate; 12g dietary fiber; 41mg cholesterol; 1,595mg sodium.

#### Dinner

##### *Italian Breaded Snapper*

1 lb. red snapper, cut into 4 fillets  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt  
1 tbsp. olive oil

1 tbsp. fresh lemon or lime juice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Italian-seasoned breadcrumbs

Rinse fish fillets and pat dry with paper towel. Combine breadcrumbs with salt in small plate. Dip fillets in lemon or lime juice, and then dip in breadcrumbs to coat. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet. Cook fillets over medium heat 4 to 5 minutes each side, turning once (about 10 minutes total for 1-inch thick fillets or until flakey when tested with fork). Serve each with 1 cup steamed broccoli,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked pasta tossed with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup prepared marinara sauce, 1 breadstick and 1 cup mixed berries. Serves 4.

*Nutritional information:* 497 calories (15% calories from fat); 9g fat; 39g protein; 79g carbohydrate; 11g dietary fiber; 42mg cholesterol; 1,407mg sodium.

## DAY 2

### Breakfast

- 1 package flavored instant oatmeal (no sugar added)
- 2 walnut halves, chopped
- 1 small banana
- 1 cup nonfat milk

*Nutritional Information:* 519 calories (13% calories from fat); 8g fat; 23g protein; 92g carbohydrate; 12g dietary fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 945mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Mozzarella Sandwich*

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|---|--|
| 2 oz. reduced-fat mozzarella cheese                 | 1/4 cup romaine lettuce leaves                 |
| 1/4 cup roasted red bell pepper,<br>cut into strips | 2 slices tomato                                |
| 1 tsp. red wine vinegar                             | 1 1/2 tsp. light Italian dressing              |
| 2 1-oz. slices Italian bread, toasted               | 1 cup whole green beans, cooked and<br>chilled |

Drizzle vinegar and dressing over bell peppers and tomato slices. Layer cheese, lettuce, bell pepper and tomato between bread slices. Serve with chilled green beans and 1 small orange.

*Nutritional Information:* 407 calories (28% calories from fat); 13g fat; 24g protein; 53g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 31mg cholesterol; 619mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Ground Beef Stroganoff on Noodles*

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 6 oz. egg-free noodles       | 1 cup beef broth               |
| 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef | 1 tbs. reduced-fat margarine   |
| 1 medium onion, diced        | 8 oz. mushrooms, sliced        |
| 1 tsp. flour                 | 1/2 tsp. salt                  |
| 1/2 tsp. ground pepper       | 1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream |

Cook noodles according to package directions (omitting salt and fat); then drain and combine with 1/2 cup beef broth in medium cooking pot. Cook ground beef in skillet over medium heat until well done. Drain and remove from skillet; set aside. Sauté onions and mushrooms in margarine for 3 minutes, or until tender crisp. Sprinkle with flour and season with salt and pepper. Add remaining beef broth and bring mixture to a boil. Simmer for 2 minutes. Add cooked ground beef and slowly stir in sour cream. Return to

heat and cook over low heat until warm—*do not* let boil or sour cream will curdle. Serve over noodles. Serve each with a spinach salad with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sliced strawberries and 1 tablespoon reduced-fat sweet and sour dressing. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 494 calories (42% calories from fat); 23g fat; 32g protein; 39g carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 120mg cholesterol; 723mg sodium.

## DAY 3

### Breakfast

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup Rice Chex (or other unsweetened fortified dried cereal)	1 small banana
$\frac{1}{2}$ English muffin	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. reduced-fat margarine
1 tsp. all-fruit spread	1 cup nonfat milk

*Nutritional Information:* 381 calories (6% calories from fat); 3g fat; 13g protein; 78g carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 491mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Egg Salad Sandwich*

1 egg, hard-boiled and minced	1 egg white, hard-boiled and minced
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup celery, chopped	2 tsp. reduced-calorie mayonnaise
2 slices reduced-calorie rye bread	

Combine minced eggs, celery and mayonnaise. Spread on bread to make sandwich. Serve with 1 cup each carrot sticks and zucchini, 2 tablespoons reduced-fat Ranch dressing and 4 ounces sugar-free, nonfat, chocolate-flavored frozen yogurt.

*Nutritional Information:* 388 calories (23% calories from fat); 10g fat; 20g protein; 60g carbohydrate; 15g dietary fiber; 221mg cholesterol; 547mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Pizza Hut Supreme Pizza*

2 slices medium Thin and Crispy Supreme  
Tossed with salad with 1 tbsp. salad dressing

Serve with 1 cup sliced peaches, drained.

*Nutritional Information:* 548 calories (52% calories from fat); 44g fat; 24g protein; 65g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 60mg cholesterol; 1,470mg sodium.

## DAY 4

### Breakfast

#### *Breakfast Burrito*

(2) 6-inch fat-free flour tortillas	1/2 cup egg substitute, scrambled
2 tbsp. onion, chopped	2 tbsp. bell pepper, chopped
2 tbsp. salsa	

Serve with 1 small orange

*Nutritional Information:* 455 calories (30% calories from fat); 16g fat; 22g protein; 60g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 2mg cholesterol; 941mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Soup and Salad*

(1) 8-oz. can vegetable soup (90-calorie), served with	1/2 cup roasted red bell pepper strips, chilled
2 cups mixed green lettuce	1 tbsp. light Italian dressing
1/2 cup celery, sliced	1 tsp. light margarine
2 oz. reduced-fat cheddar cheese, diced	(1) 1-oz. slice Italian or French bread

Serve with 20 oyster crackers and 1 cup strawberries.

*Nutritional Information:* 449 calories (23% calories from fat); 12g fat; 25g protein; 64g carbohydrate; 12g dietary fiber; 12mg cholesterol; 1,549mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Pork Chops with Cherry Sauce*

(4) 4-oz. boneless, center-cut pork chops, trimmed of fat	nonstick cooking spray
1/2 tsp. garlic salt	1/2 tsp. ground pepper
3/4 tsp. dried leaf oregano, crushed	(1) 16-oz. bag frozen dark-red pitted cherries, thawed and drained
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg	1/2 cup red grape juice
1/2 tsp. balsamic vinegar	

Coat a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Coat pork chops evenly on both sides with garlic salt and pepper. Arrange in preheated skillet and brown well on both sides over medium heat. Combine grape juice, vinegar, remaining seasonings and half of cherries in blender. Puree and pour over pork chops in skillet. Sprinkle remaining cherries over top, and then reduce heat. Cover and simmer 10 minutes. Serve each immediately with 1/3 cup cooked brown rice, 6 to 8 steamed asparagus spears and a slice of garlic bread with 1/2 teaspoon reduced-fat margarine. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 429 calories (27% calories from fat); 13g fat; 25g protein; 54g carbohydrate; 5g dietary fiber; 56mg cholesterol; 665mg sodium.

## DAY 5

### Breakfast

1 cup oatmeal with dash cinnamon  
 1/4 tsp. reduced-fat margarine 2 tbsp. raisins  
 dash nutmeg  
 1 cup nonfat milk

*Nutritional Information:* 284 calories (11% calories from fat); 3g fat; 15g protein; 50g carbohydrate; 5g dietary fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 517mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Burger King Kid's Meal*

1 small hamburger (without mayonnaise)  
 1 small French Fries  
 1 small diet soda

Serve with 1 small apple.

*Nutritional Information:* 575 calories (38% calories from fat); 25g fat; 17g protein; 77g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 40mg cholesterol; 945mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Salmon Cakes*

(1) 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-oz. can red salmon, drained 6 saltines, crushed  
 (1) 2-oz. jar diced pimentos 1 tsp. lemon juice  
 3 tbsp. reduced-fat Miracle Whip Butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray  
 3 drops Tabasco sauce  
 2 tsp. onion, minced

Remove skin and large bones from fish. Combine remaining ingredients in medium mixing bowl, mashing any remaining bones with a fork. Shape mixture into 4 patties. Coat medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Cook salmon cakes over medium-high heat until lightly browned on each side. Serve with 1/2 cup garlic mashed potatoes, 1 cup green beans and a medium piece of fruit. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 496 calories (28% calories from fat); 18g fat; 50g protein; 54g carbohydrate; 10g dietary fiber; 124mg cholesterol; 624mg sodium.

## DAY 6

### Breakfast

#### *Breakfast Pita*

(1) 6-inch whole-wheat pocket pita      1/4 cup 2% cottage cheese  
 1/3 cup diced peaches, in own juice      2 walnuts, chopped

Combine cottage cheese, peaches and walnuts. Split pita in half; fill each half with cottage cheese mixture.

*Nutritional Information:* 290 calories (22% calories from fat); 8g fat; 20g protein; 44g carbohydrate; 8g dietary fiber; 5mg cholesterol; 570mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Spinach, Bean and Chicken Salad*

2 cups spinach leaves      2 oz. skinless, boneless chicken  
 1/4 cup cooked cannelloni      breast, cooked and diced  
 (white kidney) beans, drained      2 tbsp. reduced-fat Catalina-style dressing

Serve with 1/2 cup each carrot and celery sticks, 2 long breadsticks and 2 small plums.

*Nutritional Information:* 322 calories (24% calories from fat); 9g fat; 27g protein; 35g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 39mg cholesterol; 318mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Grecian Skillet Steaks*

(2) 8-oz. lean strip loin steaks,      1 tbsp. ripe olives, chopped  
 about 1-inch thick      1 tsp. dried leaf basil, crushed  
 1 1/2 tsp. dried leaf oregano, crushed      1/4 tsp. black pepper  
 1/2 tsp. salt      3 garlic cloves, minced  
 1 tbsp. olive oil      1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice  
 2 tbsp. feta cheese, crumbled

Sprinkle both sides of steaks with herbs and seasonings. Heat oil on medium heat in large skillet. Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add steaks and cook 5 minutes on each side for medium-rare (longer for well-done). Remove from heat and sprinkle with cheese, lemon juice and olives. Cut each steak in half before serving. Serve each with 1/2 cup roasted potatoes, 1 cup marinated green beans, a 1-ounce dinner roll and 1 small orange. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 626 calories (45% calories from fat); 32g fat; 30g protein; 58g carbohydrate; 10g dietary fiber; 83mg cholesterol; 866mg sodium.

## DAY 7

### Breakfast

1/3 medium cantaloupe or honeydew  
 1 cup artificially sweetened, nonfat pineapple-flavored yogurt  
 1/4 cup Grape Nuts

*Nutritional Information:* 320 calories (4% calories from fat); 1g fat; 14g protein; 50g carbohydrate; 5g dietary fiber; 3mg cholesterol; 256mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Frozen Light Dinner Entree*

(1) 10- to 11-ounce frozen light dinner entrée (with 300 to 350 calories, fewer than 800 mg sodium and fewer than 10 grams fat) Spinach salad with mushrooms 1 tbsp. reduced-calorie dressing

Serve with 15 grapes.

*Nutritional Information:* 421 calories (10% calories from fat); 5g fat; 24g protein; 74g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 40mg cholesterol; 632mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Asparagus Chicken*

1/2 lb. chicken tenders	(2) 10-oz. pkg. frozen asparagus, thawed
(1) 10 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> -oz. can reduced-fat cream of mushroom soup	1/2 cup reduced-fat mayonnaise
1 tsp. lemon juice	Dash cayenne pepper
3/4 cup reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded	1/4 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
	Butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375° F. Coat 8x8-inch baking dish and large skillet each with nonstick cooking spray. Sauté 1/2 chicken in skillet 1 to 2 minutes; remove and repeat with remaining chicken. Place asparagus in bottom of baking dish. Arrange chicken over asparagus. Combine soup, mayonnaise, lemon juice and pepper in medium bowl. Pour into skillet and heat until bubbly, stirring constantly. Pour over chicken. Top with cheese and bake for 15 minutes, covered. Remove cover and sprinkle with breadcrumbs, then bake 10 more minutes. Serve with 1/2 cup cooked rice and 1 small apple. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 421 calories (10% calories from fat); 5g fat; 24g protein; 74g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 40mg cholesterol; 632mg sodium.

## Second Week Grocery List

### Produce

- (2) packages fresh mushrooms
- (2) onions
- (2) grapefruits
- (1) peach
- (1) package strawberries
- (2) plums
- (2) bunches broccoli
- garlic cloves
- (1) bunch scallions
- (1) bunch cauliflower
- (3) bananas
- (1) bag mixed greens
- (1) bag potatoes
- 5 cups fresh green beans
- cantaloupe or other type melon  
to make 3 cups
- (1) bunch fresh cilantro
- (3) cucumbers
- (1) green bell pepper
- (1) red bell pepper
- (2) kiwi fruits
- (1) head of cabbage
- (1) bag baby carrots
- (2) apples
- (4) tomatoes
- (1) head romaine lettuce
- (1) bunch celery
- (1) bunch grapes
- (1) cup berries
- (1) small bunch alfalfa sprouts
- (1) package raspberries

### Dairy Products

- eggs
- nonfat milk

- 2 oz. reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- (3) packages nonfat sugar-free  
yogurt with fruit
- 6 oz. nonfat plain yogurt
- (1) package light cream cheese
- Parmesan cheese
- light margarine
- 16-oz. package lowfat Swiss cheese
- 8 oz. part skim milk mozzarella  
cheese
- 6 oz. orange juice
- (1) small container lowfat, sugar-  
free vanilla yogurt

### Baking Products

- black pepper
- salt
- granulated garlic
- canned unsweetened applesauce
- raisins
- 6 oz. fettuccini noodles
- olive oil
- 16 oz. linguini noodles
- oregano
- ground nutmeg
- brown rice
- brown mustard
- honey
- 1/2 cup pecans
- Italian seasoning
- all-purpose flour
- sugar
- rice
- 4 oz. wide noodles
- taco seasoning mix
- (1) jar chunky salsa

- nonstick cooking spray
- light Italian salad dressing
- pickle relish
- prepared mustard
- coleslaw dressing
- (1) package sugar-free orange gelatin
- light mayonnaise
- individual vanilla pudding
- (1) small jar roasted red peppers
- all-fruit strawberry spread

#### Breads and Cereals

- (1) loaf whole-wheat bread
- small reduced-fat oat muffin
- box Grape Nuts
- box Kellogg's Nutri-Grain cereal
- bagels (2 oz. each)
- dinner rolls
- saltine crackers
- (1) package hot dog buns
- (1) small bag baked chips

#### Meat and Seafood

- 1 lb. chicken tenders
- 3 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 lb. tilapia
- 1 lb. round steaks
- (1) package reduced-fat hot dogs
- 2 oz. sliced roast beef
- (1) package turkey sausage

#### Frozen Foods

- frozen waffles
- light pancakes
- (2) 10 oz. packages frozen chopped spinach
- (1) Lean Cuisine Dinner Selects
- (1) package frozen 100% fruit bars

#### Canned Foods

- (1) 10-ounce can tomatoes with green chilies
- (1) can evaporated skim milk
- 32 oz. canned fruit salad in water
- (1) 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-oz. can reduced-fat condensed tomato soup
- (1) 15-ounce can chunky tomato sauce
- (1) 15-ounce can black beans
- (1) 8-oz. can beef barley soup
- (1) 4-oz. can pineapple in water
- (1) 14-oz. can peaches packed in juice
- (1) 8-oz. can tomato soup

## Second Week Meals and Recipes

### DAY 1

#### Breakfast

- 1 slice whole-wheat (or 2 slices diet multigrain) bread, toasted
- 2 tsp. all-fruit spread
- 1 cup nonfat plain yogurt, artificially sweetened, garnished with
- 3 tbsp. wheat germ (or 2 tbsp. Grape Nuts)
- 6 oz. orange juice

*Nutritional Information:* 340 calories (5% calories from fat); 2g fat; 16g protein; 68g carbohydrate; 5g dietary fiber; 3mg cholesterol; 364mg sodium.

#### Lunch

##### *Roast Beef Sandwich*

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|--|--|
| 1 1/2 oz. cooked lean, boneless roast<br>beef, thinly sliced | 2 slices reduced-calorie bread<br>2 romaine lettuce leaves |
| 1 tbsp. reduced-fat Thousand Island<br>dressing              | 2 slices tomato  |

Serve with 1/2 cup each celery and carrot sticks, and 1 cup sugar-free white-grape flavored gelatin mixed with 1 cup grapes.

*Nutritional Information:* 416 calories (21% calories from fat); 9g fat; 25g protein; 50g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 36mg cholesterol; 1,018mg sodium.

#### Dinner

##### *Chicken Florentine*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 2 tsp. reduced-fat margarine  | (4) 3-oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts |
| (1) 10 3/4-oz. can condensed reduced-fat cream of chicken soup, undiluted | 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg                       |
| 2 oz. part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded                               | 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper                 |
| (2) 10-oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach                                    | 2 tbsp. fresh Parmesan cheese, grated        |

Preheat oven to 350° F. Melt margarine in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Sauté chicken breasts 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until browned well. Combine soup, mozzarella and seasonings in medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat until cheese is melted. Line bottom of 13x9-inch baking dish with spinach. Top with chicken in a single layer. Pour cheese sauce evenly over the top; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and bake for 12 to 15 minutes. Serve

each with  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup brown rice, 1 cup steamed cauliflower, a 1-ounce dinner roll and a banana. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 392 calories (35% calories from fat); 15g fat; 33g protein; 34g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 10mg cholesterol; 586mg sodium.

## DAY 2

### Breakfast

(1) 2-oz. whole-wheat bagel                      1 tbsp. reduced-calorie cream cheese  
3 medium stewed prunes (or 3 plums)      1 cup nonfat milk

*Nutritional Information:* 383 calories (12% calories from fat); 5g fat; 17g protein; 69g carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 12mg cholesterol; 509mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Cheese and Veggie Sandwich with Tomato Soup*

(1) 8-oz. can ready-to-eat tomato soup       $\frac{1}{4}$  cup roasted red bell pepper strips,  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup alfalfa sprouts                              drained  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup spinach leaves                              1 oz. slice reduced-fat Swiss cheese  
2 slices reduced-calorie whole-wheat      1 tbsp. reduced-fat Thousand Island  
bread    dressing

Serve with 6 saltine crackers, 1 cup broccoli florets and 1 cup artificially sweetened raspberry-flavored nonfat yogurt topped with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup raspberries.

*Nutritional Information:* 488 calories (18% calories from fat); 9g fat; 30g protein; 80g carbohydrate; 14g dietary fiber; 13mg cholesterol; 1,521mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Taco Beef and Pasta*

4 oz. rotini pasta, uncooked                      1 lb. round-tip steak, about 1-inch thick  
1 pkg. taco seasoning mix                      1 tbsp. fresh cilantro, chopped  
3 garlic cloves, crushed                              1 tbsp. olive oil  
2 cups chunky commercial salsa              (1) 15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water    drained

Cook pasta according to package directions (omitting fat). Cut steak into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick strips. Combine beef and seasonings; toss to coat. Heat skillet; then sauté half of steak strips over high heat 1 to 2 minutes, or until no longer pink. Remove from skillet with a slotted spoon; set aside. Sauté remaining half in same manner. Add pasta, salsa, beans and water to pan; cook 4 to 5 minutes over medium heat. Combine with beef in serving bowl and garnish as desired.

Serve each with salad of cucumbers and peppers, tossed with reduced-fat dressing, and 1 kiwi. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 541 calories (34% calories from fat); 20g fat; 34g protein; 54g carbohydrate; 10g dietary fiber; 67mg cholesterol; 1,590mg sodium.

## DAY 3

### Breakfast

(3) 4-inch lowfat pancakes	1 tsp. strawberry all-fruit spread
1/2 cup fresh strawberries, chopped	6 oz. nonfat plain yogurt

**Pancake topping:** Melt strawberry spread and combine with fresh strawberries and yogurt.

*Nutritional Information:* 262 calories (4% calories from fat); 1g fat; 14g protein; 49g carbohydrate; 2g dietary fiber; 3mg cholesterol; 305mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Arby's Turkey Deluxe Sandwich*

Green salad with fat-free dressing

Serve with 1/4 cup canned peach slices, packed in own juice

*Nutritional Information:* 507 calories (31% calories from fat); 18g fat; 25g protein; 66g carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 37mg cholesterol; 1,353mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Swiss-Style Chicken*

(3) 3-oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 16 strips	2 tsp. reduced-fat margarine
	1 garlic clove, minced
3/4 cup reduced-fat Swiss cheese, shredded	1 cup mushrooms, sliced
1 tsp. Italian seasoning	1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
(1) 15-oz. can chunky tomato sauce	2 tsp. sugar
Butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray	

Preheat oven to 350° F. Place chicken in 8x8-inch baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle chicken with cheese. Heat margarine in small skillet and sauté garlic 1 minute. Add mushrooms and sauté 2 to 3 minutes, or until tender. Combine tomato sauce, Italian seasoning, flour, sugar and mushrooms in small bowl; mix well and pour over cheese-topped chicken. Bake uncovered for 30 to 35 minutes. Serve with 1/4 cup cooked rice and 1 cup broccoli. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 389 calories (28% calories from fat); 12g fat; 28g protein; 43g carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 11mg cholesterol; 174mg sodium.

## DAY 4

### Breakfast

- 1 small reduced-fat oat muffin
- 1 medium fresh peach, or other fruit
- 1 cup artificially sweetened, nonfat fruit-flavored yogurt

*Nutritional Information:* 353 calories (14% calories from fat); 5g fat; 15g protein; 61g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 3mg cholesterol; 390mg sodium.

### Lunch

- (1) 8-oz. can beef barley soup
- 6 saltine crackers
- Dark green salad with vegetables and
- 3 tbsp. reduced-fat dressing

Serve with 2 slices pineapple, packed in own juice.

*Nutritional Information:* 338 calories (31% calories from fat); 13g fat; 12g protein; 56g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 5mg cholesterol; 1,951mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Chicken Linguine*

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|--|---|
| 12 oz. cooked boneless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces | 1/4 cup fresh Parmesan cheese, shredded               |
| 4 oz. dry linguini   | 1 tbsp. reduced-fat margarine                         |
| 1/2 cup red bell peppers, chopped                                  | 1/2 cup onion, chopped                                |
| 1 cup mushrooms, sliced  | 4 oz. reduced-fat Jarlsberg or Swiss cheese, shredded |
| 2 garlic cloves, minced  | 2 cups broccoli florets                               |
| 1 tsp. dry leaf oregano, crushed                                   | 1/2 cup scallions, sliced                             |
| 1/2 cup evaporated nonfat milk                                     |   |

Cook pasta according to package directions (omitting salt and fat). Drain and set aside. Melt margarine in large nonstick skillet and sauté peppers, onion, garlic, mushrooms and oregano. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add chicken and remaining ingredients; then cook until cheese is melted, stirring constantly. Add linguini and mix well. Serves 4. (Refrigerate leftovers immediately for a great cold pasta salad.) Serve with 1 cup fruit salad mixed with 1 tablespoon lowfat vanilla yogurt.

*Nutritional Information:* 422 calories (20% calories from fat); 10g fat; 34g protein; 52g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 65mg cholesterol; 255mg sodium.

## DAY 5

### Breakfast

#### *Brunch Casserole*

4 slices wheat bread, crusts removed	2 oz. turkey sausage
1/4 cup mushrooms, chopped	1 tsp. onion, chopped
4 eggs, beaten (or 1 cup egg substitute)	1 cup nonfat milk
1/8 tsp. black pepper	1/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. granulated garlic	2 oz. 2% cheddar cheese, shredded
Nonstick cooking spray	

Line bottom of 9x9-inch casserole dish with bread. Spray skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Sauté sausage until done. Remove from skillet and set aside. Sauté mushrooms and onions until tender. Crumble sausage and combine with mushrooms and onion. Sprinkle mixture over bread. Combine eggs, milk and seasonings and pour over top. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Before cooking, set out for 15 minutes. Bake at 350° F for 40 to 45 minutes. Serve each with 1/2 grapefruit. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 244 calories (32% calories from fat); 9g fat; 16g protein; 26g carbohydrate; 2g dietary fiber; 203mg cholesterol; 582mg sodium.

### Lunch

2 oz. grilled fat-free hot dog	(1) 2-oz. hot dog bread roll
1 tsp. pickle relish	1 tsp. prepared mustard
1 cup green and red cabbage, shredded	1 1/2 tsp. reduced-fat coleslaw dressing
1 cup carrot sticks	

Serve with 1 small apple.

*Nutritional Information:* 402 calories (15% calories from fat); 7g fat; 14g protein; 76g carbohydrate; 11g dietary fiber; 18mg cholesterol; 966mg sodium.

### Dinner

#### *Spicy Chicken Stir-Fry Fettuccine*

6 oz. fettuccine noodles	2 tbsp. olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced	3/4 tsp. black pepper
1 lb. chicken tenders	1/2 tsp. salt

8 oz. mushrooms, sliced (1) 10-oz. can diced tomatoes with green  
 1/4 cup fresh Parmesan cheese, grated chiles

Cook pasta according to package directions (omitting salt and fat). Drain well and leave cooked pasta in pot. Mix oil, garlic and pepper in medium bowl; add chicken and toss to coat. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat and stir-fry chicken 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from skillet with slotted spoon and sprinkle with salt. Add mushrooms to skillet and stir-fry for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes and cooked chicken; stir well. Pour mixture into pot of pasta. Heat if needed. Add Parmesan and toss well. Serve each with 1 cup oven-roasted vegetables. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 395 calories (31% calories from fat); 9g fat; 9g protein; 38g carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 80mg cholesterol; 367mg sodium.

## DAY 6

### Breakfast

1 cup Kellogg's Nutri-Grain cereal  
 1 cup nonfat milk  
 2 tbsp. raisins

*Nutritional Information:* 270 calories (2% calories from fat); 1g fat; 11g protein; 56g carbohydrate; 1g dietary fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 404mg sodium.

### Lunch

#### *Chicken Salad Sandwich*

2 oz. cooked skinless, boneless chicken breast, chopped	2 tsp. reduced-calorie mayonnaise
1/4 cup celery, chopped	2 romaine lettuce leaves
Pinch freshly ground black pepper	2 slices reduced-calorie whole-wheat bread
2 slices tomato	

Combine chicken, celery, mayonnaise and black pepper for sandwich filling. Spread on bread slices. Top with tomato and lettuce. Serve with 1/2 cup each cucumber slices and carrot sticks, 1 small banana and 1/2 cup reduced-calorie vanilla pudding (made with nonfat milk).

*Nutritional Information:* 384 calories (15% calories from fat); 7g fat; 9g protein; 79g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 12mg cholesterol; 528mg sodium.

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**Dinner**

***Honey-Mustard Pecan Tilapia***

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| (4) 4-oz. tilapia, catfish or similar fish fillets | 2 tbsp. nonfat milk                  |
| 1/4 cup Creole or brown mustard                    | 1 cup pecans, or pecan meal, crushed |
| 3 tsp. honey                                       | Nonstick cooking spray               |

Preheat oven to 450° F and coat sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Rinse fillets and pat dry. Combine mustard, milk and honey in small bowl. Dip fillets in milk mixture; then press into pecans to coat. Bake 12 minutes or until crisp. Serve each with 3/4 cup mashed potatoes, 1 cup green beans and 3/4 cup mixed melon balls. Serves 4.

*Nutritional Information:* 482 calories (41% calories from fat); 23g fat; 29g protein; 46g carbohydrate; 9g dietary fiber; 51mg cholesterol; 566mg sodium.

**DAY 7**

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**Breakfast**

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|-----------------------|--|
| 2 lowfat Eggo waffles | 1/2 cup applesauce, sweetened with artificial sweetener (if desired) |
| 2 tbsp. raisins       |  |
| 1 cup nonfat milk     |  |

*Nutritional Information:* 368 calories (15% calories from fat); 6g fat; 13g protein; 67g carbohydrate; 4g dietary fiber; 27mg cholesterol; 654mg sodium.

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**Lunch**

***Subway Veggie Deluxe***

6-inch sandwich loaded with veggies with light mayonnaise

Serve with 1 cup mixed berries and 1 bag potato chips.

*Nutritional Information:* 404 calories (11% calories from fat); 6g fat; 14g protein; 100g carbohydrate; 12g dietary fiber; 0mg cholesterol; 801mg sodium.

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**Dinner**

***Frozen Dinner Entrée***

- (1) 10- to 11-oz. frozen dinner entrée  
 Tossed salad with veggies and 1 to 2 tbsp. reduced-fat dressing  
 1 frozen 100% juice bar

*Nutritional Information:* 359 calories (12% calories from fat); 5g fat; 23g protein; 57g carbohydrate; 10g dietary fiber; 40mg cholesterol; 608mg sodium.

## HEALTHY SNACK OPTIONS

- 2 skewers of *Fruit with Lemon-Lime Dip*: 160 calories (see recipe below)
- *Vegetable Salsa* with 14 pita chips: 150 calories (see recipe below)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup *Granola with Fruit and Cinnamon*: 163 calories (see recipe below)
- 30 small pretzel sticks: 90 calories
- 1 banana-chocolate whip (combine 1 cup fat-free milk, 1 small banana, a squeeze of chocolate syrup and a handful of ice cubes in a blender): 150 calories
- 3 cups air-popped popcorn sprinkled with 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese: 120 calories
- 1 mini-bagel with fat-free cream cheese (2 oz.): 145 calories
- Snack Plate—25 red grapes, 3 tablespoons feta cheese, 6 crackers: 200 calories

(**Note:** You will need to add the ingredients for these items to the grocery lists.)

## SNACK RECIPES

### *Fruit with Lemon-Lime Dip*

4 ounces lowfat, sugar-free lemon yogurt	1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
1 teaspoon lime zest	6 pineapple chunks
6 strawberries	1 kiwi, peeled and diced
$\frac{1}{2}$ banana, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch chunks	6 red grapes
4 wooden skewers	

In a small bowl, whisk together the yogurt, lime juice and lime zest. Cover and refrigerate until needed. Thread 1 of each fruit onto the skewer. Repeat with the other skewers until the fruit is gone. Serve with the lemon-lime dip. Serves 2.

*Nutritional Information for two skewers:* 160 calories (6% calories from fat); 1g fat; 4g protein; 36g carbohydrate; 4g fiber; 4mg cholesterol; 45mg sodium; 122mg calcium.

### *Vegetable Salsa*

1 cup diced zucchini	1 cup chopped red onion
2 red bell peppers, seeded and diced	2 green bell peppers, seeded and diced
4 tomatoes, diced	2 garlic cloves, minced
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh cilantro	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 teaspoons sugar	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lime juice
1 teaspoon salt	

Wash vegetables and prepare as directed. In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients. Toss gently to mix. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve with baked chips. (**Note:** For hotter salsa, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 tablespoon finely chopped jalapeno peppers.)

*Nutritional Information for 1/2 cup salsa:* 20 calories; 0g fat; 1g protein; 5g carbohydrate; 150mg sodium; 1g fiber; 12mg calcium.

### ***Granola with Fruit and Cinnamon***

1/4 cup slivered almonds	1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce	1 tbsp. vanilla extract
1 tbsp. ground cinnamon	2 cups dry old-fashioned oatmeal
2 cups bran flakes	3/4 cup dried apple pieces
1/2 cup golden raisins	

Preheat oven to 325° F. Lightly coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Spread the almonds on a baking sheet and bake, stirring occasionally, until golden and fragrant, about 10 minutes. Transfer immediately to a plate to cool. Raise the temperature of the oven to 350° F. In a small bowl, whisk together the honey, applesauce, vanilla and cinnamon. Set aside. In a large bowl, add the oatmeal and bran flakes. Stir to mix well. Add the honey mixture and toss with your hands. Don't break the clumps apart. Spread the cereal mixture evenly onto a baking sheet. Place in the oven and, stirring occasionally, bake until golden brown, about 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool slightly. In a large bowl, combine the cereal mixture, toasted almonds, apple pieces and raisins. Cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

*Nutritional Information per 1/2 cup serving:* 163 calories (11% calories from fat); 2g fat; 4g protein; 33g carbohydrate; 4g fiber; 0mg cholesterol; 115mg sodium; 27mg calcium.