A healthy meal provides important nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, good fats and protein sources, and fiber. The guidebook includes simple yet helpful ways to incorporate healthy foods into a menu while cutting out unnecessary fats and sugars. Furthermore, a healthy meal does not need to be expensive or complicated. We have included a variety of recipes that use affordable ingredients. Readers will also find helpful grocery lists and key time- and cost-saving tips.

**Components of a Healthy Meal**

- Plan ahead. First determine what is possible for you to do, purchase ingredients, and prepare the food in advance.
- Make extra portions of your regularly planned meals and freeze them for future volunteering.
- Buy meats on sale and freeze for later.
- Choose simple recipes.

**Time and Cost Saving Tips**

A healthy meal does not need to be expensive or complicated.

- Plan ahead. First determine what is possible for you to do, purchase ingredients, and prepare the food in advance.
- Make extra portions of your regularly planned meals and freeze them for future volunteering.
- Buy meats on sale and freeze for later.
- Choose simple recipes.
Food Safety
By following food safety and sanitation standards, volunteers will help to ensure that the food they are providing is safe. Additionally, the guidebook will address food storage tips relevant to the needs of agencies receiving prepared, donated foods. Volunteers need to remember that they may be serving individuals with special health needs such as diabetes, cancer, or other chronic illnesses.

“We can’t always fulfill preferences, but we try to come close; we try to provide something appealing while doing our best to keep it healthy.”

—Volunteer coordinator

Sample Meals & Recipes
The guidebook provides sample meals and their estimated costs, in addition to healthy recipes with complete shopping lists and nutrition facts.

Chicken Dinner for 12
• Baked chicken
• Au gratin potatoes
• Cucumber salad with tomatoes
• Easy fruit salad

Approximate cost: $26.00

For access to the full-version of Helping Hands, please visit www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/fammed/index.cfm. For comments and questions, contact Jill Jennings at jenningsj06@students.ecu.edu.