

# Healthy Eating Support For Your Aging Loved One, *who wishes to remain at home*

## *A Family Caregivers' Meal Preparation Guide & System To Minimize Stress And Promote Healthy Eating*

When you have concerns about healthy eating and your aging loved one, it can be very stressful on everyone. Whether it's a loss of interest of cooking for one, a bad habit of reaching for low nutritional food or forgetting to eat altogether, unhealthy eating habits can result in big problems for your loved one.

As a family caregiver, you value a proactive and preventative approach. Our meal preparation guide & system will assist you in helping your loved one with healthy meals while maintaining a sense of independence to remain at home for as long as possible.

MEALPLAN  
ADDICT

[www.mealplanaddict.com](http://www.mealplanaddict.com)



[www.getafriendindeed.com](http://www.getafriendindeed.com)

# Who we are...



Hi, I'm Robyn Pearson, creator of A Friend Indeed. We help the busy family caregiver by providing regularly scheduled visits with their aging loved one. Their loved one gets a new Friend and the family doesn't have to put everything all on their shoulders.

You can learn more about us and what we do by visiting [www.getafriendindeed.com](http://www.getafriendindeed.com)

Hi I'm Steph Todd. I am addicted to living an organized life with meal planning and prep ahead meals.

You can learn more about me and what I do by visiting [www.mealplanaddict.com](http://www.mealplanaddict.com)



## Step 1 Assess the freezer space

Where will the meals be kept? In her freezer? In your freezer? Take inventory of the amount of space available.

## Step 2 Choose the right containers

Choose clear containers with lids that seal well. Make sure they are the correct size you need for the size of the portion. Too big and the air will be trapped causing ice crystals to form. Too small and the portion will not be fulfilling and then interest will be lost. (see last page for more info on containers)

## Step 3 Make a list of their favorite meals

Have a conversation with your loved one to learn or confirm what their favorite meals have been. You might find the “good ol’ standby” is no longer a favorite, or that they can’t get enough of something new. Have fun together and make a list.

## Step 4 Pick a few and make a grocery list

From your list of meal ideas, pick four or five of the best. Next you want to build a grocery list. don’t get overwhelmed, it is all going to work out so well and you will be proud of yourself!

## Step 5 Build your game plan

Schedule a day on your calendar. Decide the order of recipes you will be making. What recipes are cooked on the stovetop? In the oven? Or in a crock-pot or instant pot? Put together your game plan. Consider getting the crock pot going first, then prepare a meal or two for the oven and save the stove top for when the others are cooking. If you have an Instant Pot, all the better! Ask the kids to help –they will love it! Who knows, you might find in the not so near future a wonderful homemade meal made for you by them!

## Step 6 Turn on the music and prepare the recipes

Preheat the oven. Think streamlining tasks whenever possible. Some examples, one person can cut up enough onion for all the recipes that require it. Someone can trim the meat as needed. Someone can mix the coatings or seasonings. What other tasks can one person stay busy with that contributes to many recipes? Assign the jobs and have fun!

## Step 7 Cool down

Once the meals are done, give them time to cool down. This is when you and your helpers marvel over the efforts made. All senses are overjoyed.

## Step 8 Portion into servings

This is the really cool part! Using the wonderful containers you have ready, portion the meals into servings (singles or doubles if making for a couple). Be sure to label and date.

## Step 9 Freeze all the meals

Stack the containers by contents in your freezer. Marvel at your accomplishment! You did this! High five, fist pump, laugh out loud! You made this happen!

## Step 10 Deliver

Unless using the Friendly 4 Day System (see next page)

# When special circumstances arise...

You may discover some challenges when supporting an aging loved one. Put on your detective hat. With a little investigation, learn more about the challenge(s) and then make some minor adjustments. Systems work until they don't and then what you need to do is improvise.

## The most common concerns:

Your loved one is not using the meals in the freezer.

Are there are too many options? Has decision making become a struggle? Have you noticed the meals are left in the freezer but the fridge food is being consumed?

Your loved one forgets to eat altogether.

Is there more going on?

You have concerns over food handling safety.

Are leftovers being refrigerated or disposed of properly? Are they kept longer than they should?

You have concerns over safe food reheating practices – unreliable stove-top, oven or microwave safety.

*Note: Phone call reminders may not be a safe solution.*

## Options you can do:

### Switch To The Friendly 4 Day System

First, label containers the days of the week. Follow the steps from the previous page except you keep the storage of portions in YOUR freezer. Bring 4 days worth of portions from your freezer to your loved one's fridge (not the freezer). Every 4 days swap out the containers (discard any leftovers). Be sure you are coordinating the labels with the days of the week.

## If more support is needed:

### Friendly Phone Reminders

Schedule to call your loved one during the day with a reminder to take a meal out of freezer. Stay on the phone until the action is done. If needed, schedule another call when it's time to microwave/heat the meal up. If this method doesn't fit into your schedule, consider arranging A Friend Indeed to do the calling for you.

## If even more support is needed:

### Someone To Be There

Arrange for regularly scheduled visits from A Friend Indeed for companionship and support over mealtime and with clean up. A visit summary can be emailed to family so you know how your loved one is doing.

## A note about containers

As for containers, the Meal Plan Addict always suggest Snapware and Pyrex (both at Superstore!). If there are no concerns or confusion around heating up a meal (particularly with using the microwave), there is also the option of foil pans for things that are frozen then baked (casseroles). Dollar store has them!

For more tips and help with meal planning check out [www.mealplanaddict.com](http://www.mealplanaddict.com)

If you have concerns about your loved one, check out [www.getafriendindeed.com](http://www.getafriendindeed.com)



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