

Sam's week in the life

Hello! Welcome to what a week in the life looks like for me on the nutrition side of things as a family of five. While I do love cooking, our busy schedule doesn't always allow me the time to make all of the things. We have a few staples that are in heavy rotation and then I balance these out with throwing in a new or more elaborate recipe when time permits. As much as I said I wouldn't be the parent who made multiple meals for my family.. here we are! I do try to find ways to incorporate similar items in everyone's meals, but some days I do really give in and make something different for the kids vs what my husband and I will eat.

Household members: Sam, Kael, Liam (7 years old), Presly (5 years old) and Logan (2 years old).

Disclaimer:

- The quantities that I eat for each meal might make absolutely no sense for your nutritional needs! This is not intended for you to copy exactly, just to show you what I do

Saturday or Sunday

- One day on the weekend I will create the following week's meal plan. I have a magnetic calendar on the side of my fridge that I sit down and write out each meal for the entire week. I always grab our family's weekly schedule and plan meals around what we have going on that week in terms of extracurriculars, so I know what I have time for.
- I have recently begun to include my kids in the meal planning process, especially for breakfasts and school lunches. I find this helps our mornings move along a little more smoothly when we can point to the board and remind them we agreed to something already.
- I used to only plan out dinners, but found that I was scrambling for lunches, and without a plan in place- midday, hungry and short on patience I wasn't always reaching for the options I know best align with my nutrition goals. The Strength Club Recipe Bank has some of my favourite go-to quick recipes, I also use Pinterest, and my favourite recipe books- Half Baked Harvest (I have three of these cook books). Half Baked Harvest offers delicious recipes that are easy to follow along with and are often a little more indulgent than what is in my usual rotation, but good food that feeds the soul and comforts me is also very important, and life is all about balance!
- Once I have my meals planned out, I make a plan for groceries. Being a family of five, Costco is a go-to, but we also love using the online ordering with curbside pickup option at Superstore. We will typically buy all of our meat at Costco and then divide it, vacuum seal it and freeze it.
- I do not do any sort of prep once I get my groceries home. They get put away, and because I am fortunate enough to be home each day, I do daily prep instead of prep ahead for the week, while I do see the benefits of doing it once or twice a week than daily, this is just what works best for me in this season of life.

Grocery Outline

Staples we make sure we always have on hand (typically buy in bulk at Costco and monitor for restock as needed)

- Costco chicken fingers (spicy buffalo, original + chicken nuggets)
- Frozen smoked salmon
- Cans of tuna
- Chicken breasts
- Ground beef

- Ground chicken and/or turkey
- Bacon and/or breakfast sausage
- Cereal
- Rice
- Potatoes
- French fries
- Hashbrown patties

Things we stock up on weekly:

- Cottage cheese
- Greek yogurt
- Eggs
- Egg whites
- Produce (lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, bananas, apples, and our life savings on berries)
- Milk (whole milk for kids, protein milk for myself for lattes)
- Breakfast carb of choice (bread, English muffin, bagels, tortillas or oats)
- Any odds/ends/sauces we need for specific meals

Breakfasts

- For the kids' breakfasts we were stuck in a rotation of cereal and waffles only. Since including the kids in the meal planning process, we now have more options in rotation and are also able to use this as an opportunity to discuss the importance of balanced nutrition with them.
 - The kids' weekly rotation usually now consists of: toast, cereal, yogurt bowls and hashbrowns + bacon and once a week they get waffles, everything with a side of fruit.
- The adult breakfasts are usually eggs (the girls join us for eggs, Liam unfortunately doesn't like them) and a carb source – whether it be in wraps, on a bagel or beside a piece of toast.
 - A personal fave is the breakfast tacos found in the Strength Club Recipe Bank. When making scrambled eggs, we will add egg whites and/or some cottage cheese in them, to up the protein intake.
 - To change things up, we will typically have yogurt bowls when the kids do, and also have hashbrown patties when they do, we top ours with cottage cheese and tomatoes.
- On weekends we will usually make pancakes together one morning, and the next morning we stick to the basics again.

Lunches

- Both Kael and I and our two daughters are home for most lunches during the week. Liam gets packed lunches which are very basic and repetitive. When making my meal plans, I always look at what we are having for dinner the night prior and if I know there will be leftovers, that will be lunch the following day.
- A go-to is chicken fingers over salad topped with pressed cottage cheese for added protein(SSC Recipe Bank). I love the spicy buffalo chicken fingers from Costco, while the rest of the family has regular breaded chicken strips. This is heavily in our meal rotation because of how quickly it comes together, everyone in the family likes a variation of the

same thing, and it helps hit nutrition goals. We sometimes move this to dinner and serve it with French fries as well.

- **Other go-tos are:**

- Sushi Bowls (found in SSC Recipe Bank). The salmon is from Costco, it comes frozen and is ready to eat after sitting out to thaw for an hour or so.
- Tuna sandwiches are also frequently in our rotation. Again, I love how quickly these meals come together midday while still helping me stick to my nutritional goals.

Dinners

- **Meals that are heavily in dinner rotation:**

- Taco Tuesday
- Burger Bowls (found in SSC Recipe Bank),
- Pasta night
- Breakfast for dinner (typically save this for a day that we had yogurt for actual breakfast).
- I like these meals as they allow each family member to customize their dinner to their liking without me needing to prep anything additional.
- On an evening that we have a bit more time, I like to make homemade pizzas using a cottage cheese based crust (SSC Recipe Bank) to help us all get a bit more protein, especially for the kids that only have cheese pizza.
- We typically have at least one gathering on the weekends and share a meal with family or friends. The rest of the meals are based on what the schedule allows time for, either using Pinterest, SSC Recipe Bank or some of my favourite cook books.

Snacks

- This isn't an area that I prep for much. The kids of course have lots of snacks throughout the day, and for myself and Kael, when we feel we need more fuel or are craving something, we grab whatever speaks to us during this time.
- Again, going back to the balance thing, sometimes it will be an apple or sometimes some chips or a sweet treat, I don't believe in restricting too much; I find when I tell myself I can't have something, it makes me want it even more.

That's it! Remember, food is fuel for your body, and when you have training in your schedule there is no food you can eat that is worse for your body than under-fuelling is.

Xoxo
Sam