Demonstrating how simple heart-healthy cooking can be is a great way to inspire people to learn new cooking skills and prepare nutritious and budget-friendly meals at home.

heart.org/simplecooking
With the support of Walmart, the American Heart Association launched Simple Cooking with Heart in 2011 to help improve the American diet by encouraging a return to the kitchen. When we cook at home, we tend to eat healthier — consuming more vegetables, fruits and whole grains and less calories, saturated fat and sodium. By providing delicious recipes and useful resources, this program empowers and inspires people of all ages to learn new skills, save money and eat better!

Simple Cooking with Heart offers a variety of tools to help home cooks get started and stay motivated:

- **Website** — The online hub heart.org/simplecooking houses more than 150 quick, heart-healthy, budget-friendly recipes plus preparation videos and nutrition articles. Each recipe is less than $5 per serving.

- **Community Demonstrations** — AHA volunteers and staff model basic skills in a “how-to” format. Hundreds of live demonstrations have been conducted across the country since 2011.

- **At-Home Booklets** — Participants at the demonstrations receive additional information on basic culinary skills, healthy eating and budget-friendly grocery shopping and cooking.

- **Spanish Materials** — Many recipes, videos and resources are provided in Spanish at heart.org/cocinasimple.

- **Simple Cooking with Heart for Kids** — A demonstration guide with two kid-friendly recipes and resources for adults to help kids 8–14 explore cooking and learn how healthy meals are made.

- **Simple Cooking with Heart for Older Adults** — A demonstration guide with two easy recipes and resources designed for older adults who want to eat and age healthier.

- **Grocery Guide** — A detailed guide on how to shop smart with budgeting, planning and purchasing practices.

- **Infographics** — These one-page handouts illustrate topics such as how to store produce, common sources of added sugars, and how to save money at the grocery store. They make great giveaways at demonstrations!

Simple Cooking with Heart has won several National Health Information Awards recognizing the best consumer health information materials and programs.
PLANNING
Overview

The goal of a Simple Cooking with Heart cooking demonstration is to teach basic culinary skills (chopping, dicing, mixing, etc.) and let people taste how delicious simple, heart-healthy recipes can be. After seeing a demo, we hope participants will log on to heart.org/simplecooking and start cooking at home. Be sure when you’re planning your demo that you have Simple Cooking with Heart at Home booklets to give away to those who attend the demo.

In this kit you’ll find:

- Demonstration planning and set-up tips
- Two no-cook recipes
- Scripts and step-by-step instructions for each recipe
- Grocery and supply lists
- The American Heart Association’s Healthy Eating Recommendations
- Talking and recap points
- Fun ideas to enhance your demonstration
- Handouts and resources

To make your planning and set-up easier, neither of the recipes we’ve included in the kit require heat for cooking or use raw meat, which can present a food safety challenge.

For the recipe scripts included in this kit, it’s a great idea to watch the corresponding videos online as you prepare for the demonstration. Watching the videos will give you a feel for the steps, provide a refresher on any of the skills required for the recipes and clarify any instructions.

The two recipes included in this kit are Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad and Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap.

Why It’s Important

The obesity crisis in America has no one single cause, but usually it comes down to the fact that we eat more food than our bodies need. Why? There are many reasons, including the fact that we’ve become an extremely inactive society. We spend long hours sitting at computers, televisions and in cars. We eat nearly half of our meals in restaurants or from packages — food that generally has more calories, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugars and sodium and fewer fruits, vegetables and fiber-rich whole grains. All those factors mean we’re not shopping for healthy foods and cooking it in our own kitchens. As a nation, we simply no longer have the time or skills to cook healthy meals.

In response to this crisis, the American Heart Association, with the help of Walmart, is prioritizing a return to the kitchen as a part of our most pressing national goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent, and to reduce deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent by the year 2020.
Demonstration at a Glance

Sample agenda for Simple Cooking with Heart demonstrations:

- **Introduction** ................................................................. 5 minutes
  Introduce yourself and share a few personal details about your cooking history and experiences. Be energetic and engaging.

- **Overview of the American Heart Association and Simple Cooking with Heart** ........................................ 5 minutes
  Mention the American Heart Association’s 2020 Impact Goal (to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent) and the importance of prevention and other work happening in the community. Consider mentioning a few points about the health benefits of cooking at home (see Talking Points in Resources section).

- **Cooking Demonstration** .................................................. 15 minutes
  See recipe scripts.

- **Tasting** ................................................................. 5–10 minutes
  Pass out samples of the dish prepared.

- **Questions** ................................................................. 5 minutes
  If you’re comfortable, consider doing a question and answer session.

- **Closing** ................................................................. 5 minutes
  Thank your audience and leave them motivated to go home and try cooking. Hand out the Simple Cooking with Heart at Home booklets and other resources. Remind participants they can find today’s recipe(s) and more at heart.org/simplecooking.

Consider playing video lessons from heart.org/simplecooking between demonstrations, while you clean up or while you set up for the next demonstration.
Demonstration Planning

Space
Once you know when and where your demonstration will take place, plan a space that’s appropriate for the event. You’ll need a good-size surface for food preparation. It should be positioned so the audience can see you and what you’re doing with your hands. Remember, the goal is to teach culinary skills. Here are some things to consider:

- If you’re in a walk-up setting, like a health fair or an outdoor tent, make sure people have access to stand on all three sides of you. Consider trying to put your work space on an elevated platform so your hands are just below eye level for the audience.
- If you’re in front of a large audience, try to have video projection focusing on the culinary skills. Or, be sure to explain the steps thoroughly so people understand what you’re doing.
- If space allows, consider having a tablet or laptop with Internet access so people can browse the Simple Cooking with Heart website.

Supplies
All the supplies needed for each recipe are listed in this kit. For the cooking equipment (bowls, mixing spoons, etc.) consider visiting a local discount store to save money. If your location has a kitchen, ask if you can use supplies they may already have on hand, such as cups, bowls, napkins, utensils, spices, trash cans and bags, etc. You may need to look for specialty items like tasting cups and spoons at a restaurant supply or warehouse club store or online. (Think small plastic or paper condiment cups like you see at restaurants and mini tasting spoons like they use at the ice cream shop.)

Grocery shopping
You can find what you need at a regular grocery store. If you talk to a grocer in advance, you may be able to get items donated or at a discount. Shop a day or two before your demonstration — early enough so you have time to organize your supplies, but not so early that fresh ingredients go bad. Make sure you have a complete shopping list, and stick to it so you don’t go over budget.

Quantity
Plan your shopping lists based on the expected attendance of the event and the portion size you want to provide. The Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad makes 8 servings and will yield about 80 small tasting samples. The Tex-Mex Black Bean Wrap makes 4 wraps. Each wrap could yield 4–6 samples.
Demonstration Planning, continued

Food safety
Wash hands, utensils and preparation surfaces often and the right way. (Example: Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water.) Some ingredients may need to be kept refrigerated; make sure you have access to a refrigerator or a cooler with enough ice to store ingredients. Refrigerators or coolers should maintain a temperature of 40° F or below. Even items that don’t need to be refrigerated can go bad if they stay too long in the hot sun, so plan accordingly if your demonstration is outside. Don’t leave perishable food out at room temperature for more than two hours, and in the summer months, cut this time down to one hour. If you’re using fresh produce, you’ll need to cut away any damaged or bruised areas, rinse it under running water, dry it with a paper towel or clean cloth towel and scrub firm produce like melons and cucumber with a clean produce brush. If you don’t have access to water at your demonstration site, pre-wash the produce and mention during your presentation that you’ve already washed it.

Food allergies/sensitivities
Some of the recipes contain milk, milk products, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, soybeans and gluten. Mention if these ingredients are included before offering samples, in case any of the participants have food allergies/sensitivities.

Liability release
Please follow safe, responsible practices and use caution when conducting the demonstration. Read the full liability release at right.

Simple Cooking with Heart Release
The enclosed information, recipes and instructions are provided to you to help you learn to cook healthy at home and to conduct a healthy cooking demonstration. Please follow safe, responsible practices and use caution when cooking. By using the information provided in this cooking demonstration, you acknowledge that there are inherent risks in cooking, which could result in serious injury or death, including but not limited to the risk of allergic reaction to foods, slips, falls, cuts, burns, choking, and other accidents and injuries that may arise from the activity of cooking and consuming the foods prepared in the cooking demonstration or at home. You also understand that there are potential risks which may presently be unknown. YOU UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT YOUR USE OF THE ENCLOSED INFORMATION, RECIPES AND INSTRUCTIONS IS AT YOUR SOLE RISK. You also agree that you will be responsible for the safety of any participants in a healthy cooking demonstration that you might conduct, organize or host. You agree on behalf of yourself and your heirs, beneficiaries and estate, not to hold the American Heart Association, Inc. and its sponsors, officers, agents, employees (“Released Parties”) responsible for any accidents and loss or damage to your property and person, and you release and discharge the Released Parties from all damages, actions, claims and liabilities of any nature, specifically including, but not limited to, damages, actions, claims and liabilities arising from or related to cooking at home or conducting or participating in a cooking demonstration and related activities. You agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Released Parties for any and all claims, liability, loss, cost, expense, injury, or proceeding arising out of any of your acts or omissions.
Fun Ways to Enhance Your Demonstration

Festive decorations

*Simple Cooking with Heart* shows that cooking is easy and fun. Be sure your demonstration space conveys that message — decorate with colorful tablecloths and aprons, brightly colored produce and homely touches. You could make it look like a typical home kitchen, go with a festive theme inspired by the recipe, or use inexpensive fresh produce and other ingredients to create a farmers market feeling. It’s also important that your audience be able to relate to the scene. Using ultra high-end equipment and ingredients may intimidate novice cooks and imply that cooking at home might be too expensive. Keep it simple and budget-friendly.

Give away goodies

Our At-Home booklets, recipe cards and infographics are great take-home materials for participants. If your budget allows, consider also giving away inexpensive items such as vegetable peelers, measuring spoons, pot holders or other kitchen items. You may be able to get items donated or find them at a dollar store. Or give away items you purchased and used for the demonstration after it’s over.

Break the ice

If you need an ice breaker, or if things get too quiet during the demo, ask participants for their heart-healthy ideas. Sample topics:

- Their favorite heart-healthy recipe (which they brought with them or know by heart)
- How they’ve made a favorite family recipe healthier
- Their best cooking memory from childhood
- Their biggest cooking catastrophe

Sharing tips

People love to share (and hear) shopping advice. Ask the audience for budget-friendly shopping tips during or after the recipe demonstration. Sample questions:

- One tip for saving money on groceries and eating healthier is to do a weekly meal plan. Who does a meal plan? Do you do it over the weekend? How do you do it?
- How do you make a shopping list? Do you look at what’s in your pantry or do you make a list of ingredients from recipes in cookbooks, magazines or online?
- Where do you find the best bargains? In which aisles of the store do you find good deals? Who buys in bulk? Do you find good buys at club or warehouse stores?
- Does anyone save receipts to compare your food budget to what you actually spent? Do you use budgeting tools or apps?
- Where do you find the best coupons? Newspaper, at the store, or online?

Get the audience involved

Keep your guests engaged by bringing them “on stage” to help chop, grate or do other prep work. Make sure they wash their hands or use gloves and follow all safety precautions.

Teamwork

If budget, time and space allow, you may want to break the audience up into groups and ask each group to prepare the recipe. This is great hands-on practice. Be sure to have enough ingredients and supplies for multiple teams.
Host a Simple Cooking with Heart Party

A party or community get-together is a great way to present Simple Cooking with Heart to a smaller group. Guests can watch the video for your recipe, followed by your cooking demo and recipe tasting. Highlight the culinary skills from the video and use as much interactive participation as possible. At the end, ask guests if they’d like to attend more events like this to learn cooking skills and try new heart-healthy recipes together. Try to get participants to sign up for future cooking parties, host in-home parties and commit to cooking more at home.

A demo party may be held in a private home, workplace, community center, place of worship or other setting. Follow the tips in this kit for Demonstration Planning.

What you’ll need

- A TV or computer and, if possible, a large screen to show the Simple Cooking with Heart video (from the website) so everyone can see it.
- A “stage” to do the demo. You can use a table or countertop that everyone can see from around the room.
- Plenty of seating.
- Copies of Simple Cooking with Heart recipe cards, At-Home booklets and/or infographic handouts.
- Ingredients, equipment and tools for your demo (see grocery and supply lists for each recipe).
- Premade servings if you need more than the recipe makes.
- Tasting cups, tasting utensils, napkins and cups for drinks.
- Heart-healthy drinks such as sparkling water garnished with fruit.
- If your budget allows, appetizers like cut-up fruits and veggies, healthy dips, and whole-grain crackers or baked chips. (optional)

Ready, set... invite!

Promote your party or send your invitation by email or regular mail, post it on Facebook or a community center bulletin board, or insert it into a local newsletter or church bulletin. Keep it simple. Ask attendees to RSVP to a coordinator or use a sign-up sheet. Try to get a good head count so you’ll have enough food and space for everyone.

SAMPLE INVITATION

You’re Invited!

Cooking at home is good for your heart and your budget. Join me for a Simple Cooking with Heart party where we can learn new cooking skills together! We’ll watch a fun demo and make a quick, affordable and heart-healthy recipe. I really hope you can make it!

When: (Date and Time)
Where: (Include Address and Directions)
Please Bring: An appetite for heart-healthy, tasty food!
RSVP to: (Your Name with Phone Number or Email Address)
Host a Simple Cooking with Heart Party, continued

Ideas to enhance your party

- Have guests bring several copies of their own favorite heart-healthy recipe to share.
- If a friend or community member has experienced heart disease or stroke, ask them in advance if they would be willing to share their story to help motivate people to cook and eat healthier.
- Ask attendees to wear a special apron and tell the story behind it (someone may have their grandmother’s).
- Form a healthy cooking club that meets on a regular basis.

Recruit some volunteers

Make your party smooth and avoid a mile-long to-do list by asking a few friends to be your co-hosts. Ask them to:

- Collect RSVPs.
- Shop for and bring ingredients and supplies for the demo.
- Help set up and decorate.
- Prep ingredients (e.g., chop onions).
- Make the recipe ahead of time so there will be enough samples (if needed).
- Greet and guide party participants.
- Serve samples, distribute handouts and giveaways, and help clean up.

Stick to a budget

- Ask if guests will sign up to bring tasting cups or an ingredient. (For example, in the summer, your neighbors might have extra cucumbers growing in their home gardens.)
- Keep appetizers simple or ask a few guests to bring heart-healthy munchies.
- Don’t buy new decorations. Use items that you and your co-hosts already have — or make your own.
- Bring a copy of your invitation and your printed shopping list to a local grocery store manager and ask if any supplies could be donated.
Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad

8 servings  |  About $1.13 per serving

10 ounces (1¼ cup) canned albacore tuna, packed in water, drained
6 cups packed baby spinach leaves
1 cup chopped tomatoes (1 large tomato) OR
½ can no-salt-added diced tomatoes
½ cup chopped red onion (about ½ medium onion)
1 cup chopped peeled cucumber (1 medium cucumber)
¼ cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
2 tablespoons olive oil

In a large bowl, combine the tuna, spinach, tomatoes, onion, cucumber and feta. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, lemon juice, oregano and olive oil. Toss with the tuna mixture.

PER SERVING
Calories 100.6 kcal
Fat 5.1 g
Saturated Fat 1.1 g
Trans Fat 0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.9 g
Monounsaturated Fat 2.9 g
Cholesterol 16.6 mg
Sodium 215.5 mg
Carbohydrates 3.4 g
Dietary Fiber 1.1 g
Total Sugars 1.4 g
Protein 10.3 g
Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad, continued

Preparation for Demonstration

• Open and drain tuna.
• Wash and dry spinach.
• Chop tomato and onion.
• Peel one cucumber and remove seeds with spoon, chop half the cucumber and leave the other half whole.
• Place cheese and all ingredients for dressing in small clear bowls/ramekins to the side.
• Set aside a medium bowl in which to mix the dressing.
• Set out large salad bowl in which to begin demo.

SUPPLY LIST

— Colander
— Paper towels
— Small bowls/ramekins for ingredients
— Large salad bowl
— Bowl for garbage (tomato seeds, etc.)
— Fork (2)
— Spoon (for cucumber)
— Measuring cups and spoons
— Vegetable peeler
— Chef’s knife (long blade)
— Cutting boards (1–2)
— Medium bowl for dressing
— Whisk or fork
— Spoon or salad tongs for scooping

GROCERY LIST

— Canned albacore tuna, packed in water
— Baby spinach leaves
— Tomato, fresh or canned
— Red onion
— Cucumber
— Reduced-fat feta cheese
— Cider vinegar
— Lemon juice
— Dried oregano leaves
— Olive oil
**Demonstration Script**

Today, I’m showing you how to take a basic tuna salad and then jazz it up with the rich and healthy flavors of Greece for a Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad. I’m (name), and I’m here to give you a quick and heart-healthy cooking demonstration. (You can share additional personal information such as how long you’ve been cooking, some of the cooking challenges you’ve faced or other light banter.)

The American Heart Association has established a goal to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent by the year 2020. To do that, we want to improve the diet and nutritional habits of all Americans. We’re excited to have partnered with Walmart and the National Council on Aging to bring you today’s Simple Cooking with Heart recipe and resources. We know that when meals are prepared at home they are often lower in calories, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugars and salt — and higher in fiber-rich whole grains, fruits and vegetables. As part of our work with NCOA, we want to show you some easy ways you can keep meal preparation simple, affordable, healthy, and of course, delicious!

This salad is easy to make with grandchildren, especially if they like don’t like tuna (or if they think they don’t). They might want to try it if they’ve helped make it! Children can help wash, measure and toss everything together. There’s no cooking involved, so you don’t have to worry about little hands by the stove. It’s also a great dish to take to a picnic or potluck.

Fish is a good source of protein and can be a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are good for your heart. The American Heart Association recommends eating fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids at least twice a week. These include oily or fatty fish like salmon and albacore tuna. Canned tuna is one of the easiest and most affordable ways to eat more fish. It’s also a good source of vitamin D, which plays a major role with calcium in keeping bones strong.

I buy the canned albacore tuna, packed in water (show the can). For this salad I’m using one 10-ounce can, which is about 1¼ cups of tuna, which I’ve already rinsed and drained to remove some of the sodium. When shopping for canned foods like tuna, compare the food labels, and select the item with the lowest amount of sodium (add to bowl).

I’m using spinach for my greens (show). Dark green leafy greens like kale, collards and chard are packed with nutrients including antioxidants, which help protect our bodies against many diseases. I’ve already washed and patted dry the spinach and I have 6 packed cups here (show and add to bowl).

Next I have 1 cup of chopped tomatoes (show), which is from one large tomato cut up. If you are using fresh tomatoes, you may want to remove the seeds, which can have a bitter taste. To do this, cut out the core and gently squeeze the tomato in the sink. You’ll see the seeds pop out, then you can cut it up. If tomatoes aren’t in season, you can use half of a can of diced tomatoes. That’s a staple that’s always in my pantry. Again, compare the food labels and choose the products with the lowest amount of sodium.

If you have a local farmers’ market nearby, check there for some of the things we’re using today, like tomatoes, spinach, and onions. Farmers’ markets can be a good source for affordable, local and in-season produce.

Next, I’m adding ½ cup of chopped red onion, which is the equivalent of a half of a medium onion (add), and 1 cup of peeled and chopped cucumber, which is about one medium cucumber (add). After you peel and cut the cucumber in half, scoop out the seeds with a spoon. And here’s another trick: run a fork down the entire side of
Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad, continued

the cucumber (do so on an extra cucumber half). This makes for a pretty presentation after you chop up the cucumber, as you can see (show and chop remaining cucumber half and add to bowl).

This next ingredient is what really makes this a Mediterranean salad: feta cheese. This is a quarter cup of crumbled reduced-fat feta (show and add to bowl), which adds tang and saltiness. Because feta cheese can have a lot of sodium, we are using a small portion.

Now it’s time to mix up the salad dressing. We’re going to make a simple vinaigrette. As you’ll see, it’s easy to make your own at home. It can be more affordable than buying bottled dressings and healthier because you control the ingredients that go into it!

I’m going to whisk together 2 tablespoons of cider vinegar (add to small bowl), or you could use red wine vinegar, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, freshly squeezed or bottled (add to bowl), 1 teaspoon of dried oregano (add to bowl) and 2 tablespoons of olive oil (add to bowl).

Spices and vinegars are good pantry staples. They can add flavor without adding salt or saturated fat. A pantry stocked with a few common spices will get you through most recipes, and the combinations you can make are endless. I’ll just whisk that together (do so) and just like that, you have homemade dressing!

The good news is that your dressing will stay fresh and tasty for a few days. This salad is great for leftovers, especially if you’re on your own and would rather not cook every day. Now, I’ll pour it over the salad (do so), toss it together using two forks (do so) and that’s all there is to it! It’s a great salad for any time of the day — quick to make and bursting with heart-healthy ingredients and flavors.

Now let’s talk about what you can do if you don’t have feta cheese on hand. You can consider adding a low-fat cottage cheese or even a sharp cheddar. Dried parsley could be used instead of oregano. These substitutions will change the flavor of the salad, but the point of this demonstration is to show you how easy a healthy salad like this can be. I hope you’ll want to make this Mediterranean Tuna Chef Salad soon — especially after we taste it today!

Now, here’s a recap of some of the handy kitchen and nutrition tips we discussed today:

- The American Heart Association recommends eating fish twice a week, especially “oily fish” like salmon or albacore tuna, since they can be rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

- Canned tuna is an easy and affordable way to eat more fish. It’s also a good source of vitamin D, which plays a major role with calcium in keeping bones strong.

- When you buy canned foods, compare food labels and choose products with the lowest amount of sodium.

- Dark leafy greens like spinach, kale, collards and chard are packed with nutrients, which help protect our bodies against many diseases.

Thanks for joining me for this demonstration. I hope you’ll take one of our Simple Cooking with Heart at Home booklets and try some recipes yourself. You can find the recipe we made today as well as many other free recipes online at heart.org/simplecooking. We also have great instructional videos and lots of other tips and information to help you get started cooking at home. Now let’s taste this salad! (Pass out booklets and sample tastes to audience and collect trash.)
Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap

4 servings  |  About $2.23 per serving

PER SERVING
Calories  352.7 kcal
Fat        10.2 g
Saturated Fat  2.3 g
Trans Fat     0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat  1.9 g
Monounsaturated Fat  4.2 g
Cholesterol    24.0 mg
Sodium       569.4 mg
Carbohydrates 44.8 g
Dietary Fiber 10.7 g
Total Sugars  5.1 g
Protein       21.6 g

1 (15-ounce) can no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed (about 2 cups)
1 teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon red chili flakes OR ½–1 jalapeño pepper, seeds removed, chopped finely (optional)
4 tablespoons fresh cilantro leaves, chopped finely, OR 4 teaspoons dried cilantro leaves
4 (8-inch) whole-wheat wraps or tortillas
8 ounces all-white-meat chicken, canned OR grocery store rotisserie, shredded
1 medium carrot, shredded (about 1 cup)
1 small tomato, cut into half-inch pieces (about ½ cup)
1 avocado, cut into half-inch cubes (about 1 cup)

Combine beans, chili powder, cumin, black pepper, red chili flakes (or jalapeño pepper) and cilantro. In the center of each tortilla/wrap, add ¼ each of the bean mixture, chicken, carrot, tomato and avocado, in that order. Fold up the bottom and each side of the tortilla one at a time towards the middle, overlapping them over the filling to make the wrap snug. Secure with a toothpick if needed.
Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap, continued

Preparation for Demonstration

• Open beans, drain and rinse, and place in large mixing bowl.
• Measure out spices and cilantro; place each in a small, clear bowl.
• To the side, place drained canned chicken on a plate.
• To the side, place large cutting board with the following ingredients in small piles on the board: shredded carrots, chopped tomato, whole avocado.
• Place tortillas in a dishtowel.
• Plan where each ingredient will be placed while you assemble the wraps.

SUPPLY LIST

___ Colander
___ Can opener
___ Box grater
___ Measuring spoons and cups
___ Dishtowel
___ Large mixing bowl
___ Small clear ramekins/bowls for ingredients
___ Plate (for canned chicken)
___ Large cutting board
___ Bowl for garbage (avocado pit, skins, etc.)
___ Chef’s knife (long blade)
___ Paring knife (short blade)
___ Serrated knife for slicing wrap into samples (jagged, long blade)
___ Wooden spoon (for mixing)
___ Spoon
___ Large platter (for finished wraps)
___ Toothpicks

GROCERY LIST

___ Canned black beans
___ Chili powder
___ Ground cumin
___ Ground black pepper
___ Red chili flakes or jalapeño pepper
___ Cilantro
___ All white meat chicken, canned or rotisserie
___ Carrot
___ Tomato
___ Avocado
___ Whole-wheat wraps/tortillas
Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap, continued

Demonstration Script

Hello! I’m (name), and I’m here to give you a quick and heart-healthy cooking demonstration. (You can share additional personal information such as how long you’ve been cooking, some cooking challenges you’ve faced or other light banter.)

The American Heart Association has established a goal to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent by the year 2020. To do that, we want to improve the diet and nutritional habits of all Americans. We’re excited to have partnered with Walmart and the National Council on Aging to bring you today’s Simple Cooking with Heart recipe and resources. We know that when meals are prepared at home they are often lower in calories, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugars and salt — and higher in fiber-rich whole grains, fruits and vegetables. As part of our work with NCOA, we want to show you some easy ways you can keep your preparation simple, affordable, healthy, and of course, delicious!

This Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap is a great example of a home-prepared meal that’s bursting with good ingredients, especially veggies — plus it tastes great! The American Heart Association tells us that we should get at least four to five servings of vegetables daily, and this wrap will get you on your way to that goal!

Canned beans are a good pantry staple because they’re an affordable source of protein and you can do so much with them. Beans have no cholesterol and very little fat, and they’re high in minerals and fiber. Eating beans may reduce blood cholesterol, a leading cause of heart disease. Because they digest slowly, adding beans to your diet helps keep you feeling full.

The two things to remember when buying canned beans are 1) compare food labels and choose the can with the lowest amount of sodium, and 2) always rinse and drain them well with cold water to remove some of the sodium.

Here I have one 15-ounce can of no-salt-added black beans, which I’ve already rinsed and drained (show beans in large bowl). This is about two cups of beans. If you don’t have black beans on hand, you could substitute pinto beans or even kidney beans.

I’ll add in one teaspoon of chili powder (add), half a teaspoon of ground cumin (add), one fourth teaspoon of black pepper (add), and one fourth teaspoon of red chili pepper flakes for some spicy heat (add). Or you could use half of a finely diced jalapeño pepper instead. If you aren’t a fan of spicy foods, you can leave out the spicy ingredients, and you’ll still have a tasty, healthy wrap.

And finally, a Tex-Mex staple ingredient: fresh cilantro (show audience the herb). You may be more familiar with cilantro’s Italian cousin, parsley. Fresh cilantro really adds great flavor to this wrap. I’ve already finely chopped 4 tablespoons, and I’ll add it now (do so). I’ll mix that all together (mix) and set it aside for when it’s time to stuff the wrap (do so).

Next, I have eight ounces of canned all-white-meat chicken, which I’ve drained and rinsed (show on plate). You could also use half a pound of shredded grocery store rotisserie chicken, with the skin removed. Or you can even use chopped up leftover ham or turkey from another meal. I’ll put our chicken aside for wrap assembly, too (do so).

And here are our veggies all laid out and ready for the wraps (show on board). I have one medium carrot that’s been shredded (show), which is about one cup. Then one small tomato, cut into half-inch pieces (show). And finally, we’re using one avocado that I’ll show you how to cut into cubes.
Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wrap, continued

(show). First, cut through the middle and around the whole avocado and the pit (do so). Then, just turn and twist off the top (do so). Remove the pit with a spoon (do so) and then cut each half into crosshatch squares but do not cut through the skin (do so to each half, lifting half to show). And then scoop out the cubes (do so with both halves onto empty space on the cutting board).

And now it’s time to put our wraps together! Here, I have four 8-inch whole-wheat tortillas (show). Or you could use whole-wheat sandwich wraps. You can warm these in the microwave and then keep them warm by wrapping them in a dishtowel and taking them out, one at a time, as you make the wraps. (No need to actually warm tortillas.)

We’ll place a tortilla on the cutting board here (remove tortilla from dishtowel and show audience) and then I’ll spoon one-fourth of the bean mix down the middle (do so) followed by one-fourth of the remaining ingredients: chicken (add), carrot (add), tomato (add) and avocado (add). Now, fold up the bottom until it covers the bottom of the filling (show and do so), and then bring each side toward the middle, overlapping them over the filling to make the wrap snug (do so). You can secure the wrap with a toothpick, like this (do so), but be careful not to bite into it later! Then just repeat the process with the remaining tortillas. I often serve these with fruit for a complete meal. (Make the remaining tortillas — or ask an audience member to help you — after they’ve washed their hands.)

And there you have it, Tex-Mex Black Bean and Chicken Wraps. You won’t get bored with them anytime soon, so it’s a good thing they’re good for you too! You could make an Italian version with white beans or garbanzo beans (also called chickpeas), parsley and Italian seasonings instead of the cilantro and chili powder, and a light Italian dressing made from lemon, garlic, and olive oil. Have fun with these healthy options!

Now, here’s a recap of some of the handy kitchen and nutrition tips we discussed today:

- When buying canned beans, compare food labels and choose the can with the lowest amount of sodium.
- Drain and rinse canned beans and vegetables with cold water to remove some of the sodium.
- You can use fresh or frozen whole-wheat tortillas or wraps, wrapping them in a kitchen towel and microwaving them or heating them one by one on a dry skillet to soften them.

Thanks for joining me for this demonstration. I hope you’ll take one of our Simple Cooking with Heart at Home booklets and try some recipes yourself. You can find the recipe we made today and many other free recipes online at heart.org/simplecooking. We also have great instructional videos and lots of other tips and information to help you get started cooking at home. Now let’s taste these wraps! (Ask a volunteer to help you slice up wraps into sample-sized pieces and secure with a toothpick. Pass out booklets and samples and collect trash.)
Simple Cooking with Heart for Older Adults

RESOURCES
Talking Points
for Simple Cooking with Heart Demonstrations

In addition to the scripts provided, the following talking points can be incorporated into your presentation or promotional materials.

- The obesity crisis in America has no one single cause, but it usually comes down to the fact that we tend to eat more food than our bodies need. We eat nearly half of our meals in restaurants or from packages — foods that generally have more calories, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugars and sodium and fewer fruits, vegetables and fiber-rich whole grains. All those factors mean we’re not shopping for healthy foods and cooking it in our own kitchens. As a nation, we simply no longer have the time or skills to cook healthy meals.

- Where we eat has a dramatic effect on what foods, and how much of these foods, we consume. The more people eat out, particularly at fast-food restaurants, the more calories, fat and sodium they tend to consume. And away-from-home meals contain fewer fruits, vegetables and whole grains than foods prepared at home. This contributes to higher weight gain in both children and adults.

- Away-from-home foods tend to be more energy-dense and contain more saturated fat, salt and added sugar. Eating more fast-food meals is linked to consuming more calories, more saturated fat, fewer fruits and vegetables, and less milk.

- It’s such a crisis that the American Heart Association is prioritizing a return to the kitchen as a part of our most pressing national goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent, and to reduce deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent by the year 2020.

- The American Heart Association’s Simple Cooking with Heart program is a fun and easy way to bring communities together and help people eat healthier. The idea is simple: Groups of people get together and learn how to prepare easy, affordable, tasty meals using free American Heart Association recipes. It’s a community bonding opportunity like a book club or bunco night — only with heart-health benefits that can help keep you fit, lower your risks of heart disease and stroke, and balance your food budget.

- Communities everywhere are suffering from obesity — two of every three adults in America are overweight or obese — and the fact that many people simply don’t cook at home anymore is a major factor. Simple Cooking with Heart helps you take on this problem in your home, getting you back into the kitchen in a fun and affordable way.

- Simple Cooking with Heart was created in partnership with Walmart. Simple Cooking with Heart is just one element of the American Heart Association’s nationwide effort to help people change the way they think about food.

- To learn basic heart-healthy cooking skills and to browse free, affordable recipes, visit heart.org/simplecooking today!
American Heart Association
Healthy Eating Recommendations

At the heart of good health is good nutrition. All of our recipes and cooking demonstrations are designed with these recommendations, and your health, in mind.

Include

• Fruits and vegetables
• Whole grains
• Beans and legumes
• Nuts and seeds
• Fish (preferably oily fish high in omega-3 fatty acids), skinless poultry, and plant-based alternatives
• Fat-free and low-fat dairy products
• Healthier fats and non-tropical oils

Limit

• Sodium and salt
• Saturated fat
• Sweets and added sugars, including sugar-sweetened beverages
• Red meats — if you choose to eat red meat, select lean cuts

Avoid

• Trans fat and partially hydrogenated oils

Tips

• Choose wisely, even with healthier foods. Ingredients and nutrient content can vary by brand and preparation.
• Compare nutrition information on package labels and select products with the lowest amounts of sodium, added sugars, saturated fat and trans fat, and no partially hydrogenated oils.
• Watch your calorie intake. To maintain weight, consume only as many calories as you use up through physical activity. If you want to lose weight, consume fewer calories or burn more calories.
• Eat reasonable portions. Often this is less than you are served.
• Eat a wide variety of foods to get all the nutrients your body needs.
• Prepare and eat healthier meals at home. You’ll have more control over ingredients.
• Look for the Heart-Check mark to easily identify foods that can be part of an overall healthy diet.
Online Resources

Help people be successful in their goals of cooking more at home, with heart. Be sure to send them to heart.org/simplecooking to learn more basic cooking skills and find more than 150 quick, affordable, heart-healthy recipes to share with friends and loved ones.

Just a few examples of what’s available at heart.org/simplecooking:

• Stocking a heart-healthy pantry on a budget
• How to pick good produce
• What to do with leftovers
• Eating healthy on the run
• Healthy substitutions for common foods
• Cooking techniques and skills glossary
• Step-by-step videos
• Recipes and resources in Spanish
• And more!

References
