

## How to Choose Frozen Dinners

Looking for a convenient frozen meal to have on hand when time is tight? There's no getting around it: You'll need to read the "nutrition facts" panel on the package to see whether your choice is a healthy one.

In general, look for meals that include one or more servings each of vegetables, whole grains, and lean meat, fish, or poultry. These tend to be lower in calories and higher in vitamins and minerals as well as fiber (which helps fill you up).

Skip frozen dinners with cream sauces, gravies, or fried foods. And although dessert may look like a bonus, maybe have a piece of fresh fruit instead, for more fiber, nutrition, and fewer calories.

Here are the guidelines for choosing a healthy frozen dinner. Keep in mind that some healthy meals will meet some, but not all, of these recommendations:

- \* 300-500 calories
- \* 10-18 grams of total fat, or less than 30% of total calories
- \* Less than 4 grams of saturated fat
- \* Less than 600 milligrams of sodium.
- \* 5 grams of fiber or more.
- \* 10% of the Recommended Daily Value of vitamins or minerals
- \* 10-20 grams of protein

A few good brands to try are: Kashi, Healthy Choice and Lean Cuisine.

It's also important to pay attention to serving sizes. Although they may be lower in calories, smaller entrees may leave you hungry. But don't be afraid to add a few extras to boost nutrition and satisfaction.

- \* Add a side salad and low-fat dairy to boost the nutritional value of the meal and add fiber and calories, so it will fill you up and satisfy your hunger
- \* If you want to boost the protein, add 1/2 cup of beans or a sprinkling of nuts to your meal.

### 32 Good Choices

There are many healthy options on the market to list, but here are a few to consider when choosing your next frozen entree.

|   | Calories | Total Fat (g) | Sat. Fat (g) | Sodium (mg) | Fiber (g) |
|---|----------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| Amy's Asian Noodle Stir Fry   | 240      | 4.5           | 0.5          | 680         | 4         |
| Ethnic Gourmet Bowl Pad Thai w/ shrimp                                      | 350      | 7             | 1            | 650         | 3         |
| Michelina's Budget Gourmet Chinese Style Vegetable & Chicken w/ rice        | 300      | 7             | 1.5          | 690         | 3         |
| Seeds of Change Chicken Teriyaki  | 300      | 3.5           | 1            | 770         | 4         |
| Lean Cuisine Salmon with basil  | 260      | 8             | 2.5          | 680         | 5         |
| Trader Joe's Chicken Tandoori with spinach                                  | 360      | N/A           | 2            | 520         | 5         |
| Celentano Roasted Vegetable lasagna   | 300      | N/A           | 3            | 350         | 5         |
| Healthy Choice Cajun Shrimp and Chicken                                     | 240      | 3.5           | 1            | 800         | 3         |
| Smart Ones Rigatoni with Broccoli and Chicken                               | 290      | 8             | 3            | 690         | 2         |
| Gardenburger Meals Meatless Citrus Glazed Chicken with green beans and rice | 220      | 2             | 0            | 610         | 5         |
| Healthy Choice Mushroom Roasted Beef  | 280      | 8             | 3            | 600         | 5         |
| Michelina's Lean Gourmet Chicken Alfredo Florentine                         | 270      | 6             | 3            | 610         | 2         |

|  | <b>Calories</b> | <b>Total Fat (g)</b> | <b>Sat. Fat (g)</b> | <b>Sodium (mg)</b> | <b>Fiber (g)</b> | <b>Prot. (g)</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Kashi Mayan Harvest Bake                         | 340             | 9                    | 2                   | 380                | 8                | 9                |
| Healthy Choice Cajun Style Chicken and Shrimp    | 260             | 4                    | 1                   | 570                | 3                | 15               |
| Lean Cuisine Sundried Tomato Pesto Chicken       | 270             | 9                    | 2                   | 570                | 4                | 18               |
| Healthy Choice Pumpkin Squash Ravioli            | 300             | 6                    | 2.5                 | 600                | 5                | 9                |
| Kashi Black Bean Mango                           | 340             | 8                    | 1                   | 380                | 7                | 8                |
| Lean Cuisine Beef Chow Fun                       | 320             | 5                    | 2                   | 520                | 3                | 15               |
| Healthy Choice Sweet Asian Pot stickers          | 340             | 4.5                  | 1                   | 560                | 5                | 8                |
| Smart Ones Lasagna Bake with meat sauce          | 270             | 4                    | 1.5                 | 560                | 4                | 13               |
| Kashi Chicken Pasta Pomodoro                     | 280             | 6                    | 1.5                 | 470                | 6                | 19               |
| Smart Ones Cranberry Turkey Medallions           | 250             | 2                    | 0                   | 460                | 4                | 16               |
| Kashi Sweet and Sour Chicken                     | 320             | 3.5                  | .5                  | 380                | 6                | 18               |
| Healthy Choice Roasted Beef Merlot               | 230             | 8                    | 2                   | 600                | 5                | 9                |
| Kashi Chicken Florentine                         | 290             | 9                    | 4.5                 | 550                | 5                | 22               |
| Amy's Light & Lean Spinach Lasagna               | 250             | 5                    | 2.5                 | 540                | 5                | 11               |
| Lean Cuisine Santa Fe Style Rice & Beans         | 290             | 5                    | 2                   | 590                | 4                | 11               |
| Healthy Choice Golden Roasted Turkey Breast      | 290             | 4.5                  | 1                   | 460                | 8                | 17               |
| Smart Ones Chicken Marsala                       | 160             | 6                    | 1.5                 | 590                | 3                | 16               |
| Lean Cuisine Cafe Classics Steak Tips Portabella | 150             | 4                    | 2                   | 430                | 3                | 15               |
| Amy's Light and Lean Black Bean Cheese Enchilada | 240             | 4.5                  | 2                   | 480                | 4                | 8                |
| Healthy Choice Portabello Spinach Parmesan       | 270             | 7                    | 2.5                 | 580                | 5                | 12               |

<http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/top-12-healthy-frozen-dinners>

