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# What to Eat for the Rest of Your Life: A Decade-by-Decade Nutrition Plan

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What to Eat for the Rest of Your Life: A Decade-by-Decade Nutrition Plan  
What to Eat for the Rest of Your Life // Microwave meal (© Michael Pohuski/FoodPix/Jupiterimages)

### Your 20s: The Beat-Stress Decade

Thanks to a smorgasbord of stressors—the kind that come with 70-hour work weeks, copious dating, and late nights on the cocktail circuit—the first episodes of depression often hit women in their twenties. And it's not just your mind that pays the price. A busy, high-stress lifestyle often leads to a diet of convenience—one that lacks vitamins and minerals and is overloaded with sugar, fat and calories. The result is a body that can never realize its full potential. See, this is your last chance to lay down new bone: By the time you're 30, your skeletal system is practically set. A poor diet not only inhibits your ability to do that but also increases your risk of disease, weight gain and mental breakdown, now and for the decades ahead. But you can fight back today—with food.

#### The problem: No time to eat right

Between work, dating, and trying to keep some measure of a social life, who has time to eat, let alone eat in a healthy way?

**The fix:** Choose microwave-friendly meals that have the perfect balance of protein, carbs and veggies in one package (we like Kashi's Sweet and Sour Chicken). In general, look for these qualifications when choosing a frozen feast: 450 milligrams or less of sodium and no more than three grams of total fat and one gram of saturated fat per 100 calories, says Constance Brown-Riggs, R.D., spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. Bonus: Harvard scientists found that every one-serving increase in daily vegetable intake decreases your risk of heart disease by 4 percent.

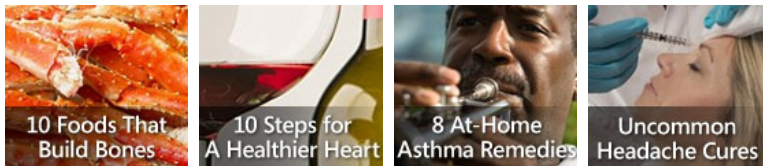
By Phillip Rhodes; additional reporting by Elizabeth Callahan

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