



Helping families eat well and be active

Smart Shopping Guide

Trying to find healthy choices at the grocery store can be hard when there are so many options. Our tips will help you find healthy foods from each of the food groups that don't cost too much.

Before you get to the store:

- **Make an eating plan for the week.**
Think ahead about what healthy meals and snacks you and your family will want to eat.
- **Prepare a list of the foods.**
This will help you stick to your plan when you're shopping.
- **Look for coupons and sales.**
Look on store websites and in flyers.
- **Try not to shop when you're hungry or rushed.**
You may make poor food choices like buying sweets or high-fat foods.

Once you're at the store:

- **Start in the produce section.**
This is where you'll find the fruits and vegetables. This section is usually at the outside edge of the store.
- **Shop the outer rows of the store first.**
Fill up your cart with healthy un-processed foods before going down any aisles.

Produce:

- **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.**
Try to choose a variety of colors when you buy produce selections. Each type provides something that helps the health of our bodies. All fruits and vegetables are high in vitamin, mineral and fiber content and low in calories, fat and sodium.
- **Have at least five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day.**
- **Choose fruits and vegetables that are in season.**
Sometimes prebagged store-brand produce costs less also. Make less expensive fruits like apples, bananas and oranges part of your weekly eating plan.

- **Add avocado to salads and sandwiches.**
- **Choose frozen produce when fresh produce is not available.**
Produce is frozen when the food is at its peak of freshness. Try not to use frozen produce with added sauces, such as butter or cheese.
- **Look for canned fruits and vegetables during the colder months.**
Choose low-sodium canned vegetables or make sure to rinse well before eating. Canned fruit should be kept in their own juice. Try not to buy fruit canned in syrup.

Meats, fish and poultry (chicken and turkey):

- **Try making seafood a protein on your plate twice weekly.**
Seafood has omega 3 fats in it which help stop heart disease. There are many low-cost options, such as canned tuna and cod. Try not to eat high-mercury fish like mackerel, shark and swordfish.
- **Choose lean and low-fat meat and poultry.**
Lean cuts of meat include round or sirloin cuts. Choose "select" or "choice" grades of beef instead of prime cuts. Pick ground beef that is at least 90% lean.
- **Try not to eat poultry with the skin on it.**
Or, take the skin off the meat prior to cooking it. Try lean ground turkey or chicken in place of beef for meatloaf, burgers and pasta sauce.

***TIP:** Stick to your shopping list and you will arrive home with a variety of healthy foods. If you find yourself impulse shopping at the store, try using an online grocery shopping service.*

Beans and other protein:

- **Use canned beans to add protein to meals.**
Rinse beans well to remove extra sodium. Add beans to soups, stews and salads. Blend canned beans to make your own hummus or sandwich spread.

- **Choose meat-free sources of protein that are made from soy or wheat.**

Look for tofu, tempeh and seitan.

- **Look for plain, unsalted nuts, seeds and nut butters.**

These can be a good source of healthy fat and protein. Don't buy "reduced fat" nut butters as they contain added sugar. Look at the product label.

Buy nut butters that only contain nuts and maybe a small amount of salt. Honey roasted and candied nuts are less healthy and should be a limited snack.

Dairy:

- **Choose dairy products that are low-fat or fat-free.**

This will help cut the saturated fat content from these foods. Dairy provides calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein and other nutrients that help our bones and overall health.

- **Have two to three servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy per day.**

- **Try not to buy flavored milks, frozen yogurt and puddings.**

These drinks and snacks contain added sugars. Fruit-on-the-bottom yogurt is often full of sugar. Try plain, unsweetened yogurt and add fresh fruit.

- **Limit cream cheese and butter.**

Cream cheese and butter are not considered servings of the dairy group. They are high in saturated fat and have little or no calcium.

Grains:

- **Make at least half your grains whole grains.**

Grains are divided into two subgroups: whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel and have more fiber which helps your body.

- **Try small changes at first.**

Choose 100% whole wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

- **Be familiar with ingredient lists.**

Choose products where a whole grain is listed as one of the first ingredients.

Look for:

- whole wheat
- bulgur
- oatmeal
- whole rye
- whole oats

Deli:

- **Choose low-sodium, low-fat and lean processed meats and cheeses.**

Meat and cheese are packaged prior to slicing, so the "Nutrition Facts" label is available to you upon request. This lets you know what's in the food you're buying.

- **Choose low-fat cheese that is either made from 2% milk or part-skimmed milk.**

Try not to eat high-fat meats like salami or bologna.

