

EATING HEALTHY



ON BUDGET

Eating healthy on budget:

In order to eat healthy on budget, first you have to be able to understand what healthy foods are, after which you must incorporate these foods into your daily diet. Some examples of healthy foods that are easily available in most local markets include;

- Vegetables
- Nuts
- Beans
- Fruits
- Lean meats

And many other healthy foods.

Sometimes having a limited budget can be a problem when you're trying to eat healthy. It's unfortunate today that many food items that are very unhealthy, including packaged "junk food" and drive-through items, are much cheaper than fresh fruits and vegetables. However, you can create wholesome and nutritious meals at home no matter your budget. In order to do so, you need to plan your meals accordingly, shop accordingly, and have a little bit of knowledge about nutrition as well.

1) Start by setting your weekly or monthly budget for food and stick to it:

This may involve a little extra work by reviewing all of your expenses but set up your budget and stay consistent. Keep track of your spending by reviewing your online banking or keep a physical notebook in your pocket.

2) Take an inventory at home and set up your meal plan:

This will be your grocery list. Make sure you know what you already have in your cupboards that can be eaten or used in a recipe. You'd be surprised what might still be hanging around in your cupboards for example; flours and cans of beans - you can make your own bread, cookies and soups with these! Decide on the meals you want to eat for the week, a quick Google search will give you hundreds of healthy recipes, so you can buy your ingredients accordingly.

3) Make a shopping list:



Going to the supermarket without a list is actually a very bad plan these days. You can easily be tempted to get many things you don't need and many things that sound good at the time, if you don't have an idea of what you really need for the week.

And when you shop this way (buying whatever tempts you), it's easy to go through your food budget very quickly and very easily. The money you need to plan out nutritious meals is gone, spent on other items. So, one thing you might consider is keeping a pad and pen in the kitchen, so you can keep track of the healthy foods you need and which you must purchase on your next trip.

4) Read the circulars:



Just about every supermarket today publishes and distributes weekly circulars and ads. You can find these in newspapers and even online. It's imperative to keep track of their sales and to take advantage of them so that you can stock up; this will give you a kitchen full of healthy food on a budget. And if you know you'll have fruits and vegetables and other healthy items on hand, you know you can prepare those foods every day as well. You can also look out for locally grown foods from local farmer's markets as these are usually more affordable than items trucked in from elsewhere.

5) Don't forget the staples:

It's also good to note sales on the staples you need every day, such as flour, pasta, rice, beans, and so on. This way, if you stock up when they're on sale, you'll save money in the long run.

6) Stick to whole foods rather than processed foods:



Your whole food choices are going to be the healthier and more nutrient-dense choices. Whole foods are actually less expensive than buying boxes or packages of processed food that provide little to no nutritional value. Why spend \$6 on a box of a few sugary snack when you can spend \$6 and get a bag of several apples or a big bag of potatoes?

7) Eat before you go:



You've probably heard the advice that you should never shop when you're hungry and you need to pay attention to this advice! Being hungry will make you more tempted to forget the list and blow your budget on impulse items.

8) Watch package sizes:

Two packages of food items can look the same size but not contain the same amount of food. You should always instead compare weight or volume when it comes to packaged foods. And remember that often generic or store brand items are just as good for much less money.

9) Buy fruits and veggies with the seasons and freeze the extras:



Seasonal fruits and vegetables are usually less expensive than the fruits and vegetables that are not in season. Local produce especially at your nearest farmer's market is going to be the least expensive. Remember, we need to eat fruits and vegetables for good health and energy - they are loaded with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that protect our cells. Freeze any leftovers you have before anything goes bad and needs to be thrown out.

10) Become coupon savvy:

mix & match
what a deal! **BUY 5, SAVE \$5**

Mix & match participating items in multiples of 5 with Card.
Participating item varieties and sizes may vary by store.

Look for these tags **1.99** **SALE**

	Kroger Cheese 6-8 oz or Natural Slices, 6 oz; Select Varieties --249 With Card -100 149 <small>ea</small> WHEN YOU BUY ANY 5 Participating Items With Card		Charmin Bathroom Tissue 6 Mega or 12 Double Rolls or Bounty Paper Towels, 6 Big or 8 Regular Rolls; Select Varieties --599 With Card -100 499 <small>ea</small> WHEN YOU BUY ANY 5 Participating Items With Card
	Cheetos or Fritos 7-10.25 oz or Natural Snack Crackers, 3.5-9.1 oz; Select Varieties --249 With Card -100 149 <small>ea</small> WHEN YOU BUY ANY 5 Participating Items With Card		General Mills Cereal Select Varieties, 14.1-21.6 oz --349 With Card -100 249 <small>ea</small> WHEN YOU BUY ANY 5 Participating Items With Card
			Hillshire Farm Smoked Sausage Select Varieties, 13-14 oz --349 With Card -100 249 <small>ea</small> WHEN YOU BUY ANY 5 Participating Items With Card

Coupons are a great way to save, in certain circumstances. Buying something you don't want or won't use simply because you have a coupon really doesn't save any money.

11) Forego meat:



Going without meat a few times is a good way to save money, but to get the protein your body needs you may want to substitute beans or lentils. Look for vegetarian recipes to be sure you get foods you enjoy and that taste good.

12) Cook at Home:



We all know that eating out is not only more expensive, but also much less healthy. The portions are typically larger than necessary, and you truly don't know what's in your dinner. Hitting that drive-through might seem fast and easy, but we pay for it both in cost and health.

And of course there are other ways you can eat healthy and have nutritious but delicious meals, while keeping your food budget under control. For example, keep your fridge stocked with staple items so that you don't need to make emergency trips to the corner store where things are more expensive, and which means you're missing out on sales at the supermarket as well. And when these items are on sale, stock up! Following through on a few of these simple tips and tricks will ensure that you're eating healthier while still sticking to your own budget.