

## Quick Tips: Healthy Eating on a Budget

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### Getting Started

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There are ways to make healthy eating fit your budget. You might be surprised at how spending just a little extra time can save you money.

#### Save money by planning ahead

Planning your meals ahead of time can help you eat healthy foods and snacks. When you get into the habit of planning, you also can reduce trips to the grocery store and save time and money.

Set aside some time on the weekend for planning your next week's meals. Try these tips for planning:

- Use cookbooks or online recipes to plan several main meals.
- Plan some quick meals for busy nights.
- Double some recipes, and freeze half for nights when you don't have time to cook.
- Plan meals and snacks around healthy ingredients. Try to use fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, lean meats (such as skinless chicken), and fish as often as you can.
- Make your own cookies, cakes, or muffins on the weekend. Freeze some to have later.

Make a meal plan every week. Use your plan to make a shopping list before you go to the store.

#### Save money when you shop

These ideas can help you pay less for healthy foods.

- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables when they're in season.  
They are likely to be fresher and cost less.
- Buy frozen vegetables.  
They have just as many (or more) vitamins and minerals as fresh. And they cost less.
- Choose store brands instead of name brands.
- Shop in the bulk foods aisle.  
Things like beans, rice, pasta, and other dried foods may be cheaper.
- Look for a bakery outlet in your community.  
You can buy day-old whole-grain bread there at a discount.
- Check out fresh produce at a farmers market or a produce stand.  
Prices are sometimes lower there than at the grocery store.

- Check for local orchards.  
Many fruit orchards let customers pick the fruit themselves, which can save money.

## Save money in your kitchen

Here are some ideas to help you make affordable, healthy meals at home.

- Invest in a slow cooker such as a Crock-Pot.  
With a slow cooker, you can buy less expensive cuts of meat. The long, slow cooking time makes them tender and very tasty.
- Make vegetables your main dish.  
Serve meat as a smaller side dish. You'll save money by eating less meat. You can also serve beans instead of meat.
- Learn how to cut up a chicken.  
You can save money by buying whole chickens and cutting them apart yourself. And you can make soup with the bones.
- Buy meat in bulk and freeze it.  
Buy large packages of meat and poultry. Divide them into portions that are right for you, and freeze them.

## Credits

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**Clinical Review Board**

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