

## Eating healthfully on a budget



For most families, groceries take the biggest chunk of income after housing and transportation. When you're shopping with cost in mind, you may be tempted by inexpensive, prepackaged foods. Unfortunately, many of those come with a hefty price... in calories, fat, and sodium. You can eat healthfully on a budget by choosing foods that make good cents:

- **Stock up.** Keep your eye out for sales or coupons on frozen fruits and veggies. It's also good to keep canned goods on hand, but check the sodium content and avoid fruits packed in syrups, which can be high in calories.
- **Visit the farmer's market.** When you support local farms, you're doing something beneficial for the community, the environment, your health, and your wallet. And while some specialty items may be expensive, you can usually find at least a few bargains.
- **Grow your own.** The most economical choice of all is growing your own garden. You'll get some exercise while tending to it *and* you'll enjoy the tasty rewards.
- **Cut down on meat.** To save on cost, serve smaller portions of meat and fill your plate with produce and whole grains instead. Planning a few vegetarian meals per week can prove tasty, filling, and less expensive; it can be as simple as adding zucchini instead of beef to your marinara sauce.
- **Plan, plan, plan.** Plan some meals for the week ahead and shop from a list. The time and money saved at the grocery store are well worth it! Don't shop when you're hungry, which might lead to impulse buying.

Shopping on a budget doesn't have to be difficult or unhealthy. Choose wisely, with nutrition in mind, and shop around at different stores to explore where the best deals are to be had.

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