EDUCATION

Healthy Eating on a Budget

Allina Health

Eating with others can help to build relationships and encourage healthy habits.

Share More Than a Meal

Eating with others gives you the opportunity to share more than a meal. You will make social connections, gain positive support and build relationships with your family and friends.

Staying connected can even improve your health! Having strong social connections and positive support may help make you happier and healthier.

Plan a meal with your family and friends to get started on the path to better health together.

Good Nutrition

Good nutrition is essential for a healthy body. Eating healthful foods will help you feel your best. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, a healthful diet is one that:

- focuses on fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk
- includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts
- is low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars.

Regularly eating with others who eat healthful foods can help you stick with your own goals for better health. Together, you can create healthy habits and support each other along the way.

More Information

Visit choosemyplate.gov for more information about good nutrition. You can also type "healthy eating on a budget" in the search box for tips and materials to help you eat healthful foods while staying within your budget.

Healthy Eating on a Budget

Eating healthful foods does not have to be expensive. Taking time to plan, prepare and shop will help you stock your kitchen with healthful foods while sticking to your budget. Use the tips on the following pages to help you before, during and after your shopping trip.

Tip

Some healthful foods are low cost and available all year. Shop smart by stocking your kitchen with the following:

- eggs
- fresh apples and bananas
- fresh carrots, greens, and potatoes or sweet potatoes
- dried or canned beans
- canned tomatoes
- brown rice and whole-grain pasta
- old-fashioned oats.

Before Your Shopping Trip

Smart shopping starts at home. Use the following tips to help you prepare for your budget-friendly shopping trip.

- Look to see what foods you have in your refrigerator, freezer and cupboards. Write down any foods you have run out of and need to buy.
- Read your local grocery store's weekly flyer to see what is on sale.
- Clip coupons from newspapers and magazines or go online to find and print coupons.
- Plan your meals for the entire week. Try to include as many of the foods on sale that week or foods for which you have a coupon.
- Make a shopping list. Turn to the chart on pages 5 to 6 to help you plan your first shopping trip.
- Have a small snack so hunger does not cause you to buy foods not on your list.

Tip

Look to see what foods you already have on hand before going shopping.

How to Plan Your Shopping Trip

The following chart lists healthful, budget-friendly foods you may want to include in your regular shopping routine. Use this as a guide as you write your own shopping list.

Food group	Budget-friendly choices
Fruits and vegetables	■ fresh fruits such as: — apples — bananas — navel oranges — kiwi ■ fresh vegetables such as: — red or white potatoes — sweet potatoes — greens (kale, spinach, romaine lettuce) — squash (butternut, spaghetti) — baby carrots ■ fresh, in-season fruits and vegetables ■ canned fruit packed in 100% fruit juice ■ canned vegetables labeled "no salt added" or "low sodium" ■ frozen fruits and vegetables of all kinds (no sauce or syrup) ■ canned tomatoes labeled "no salt added" or "low sodium"

Food group	Budget-friendly choices
Dairy	■ fat-free or low-fat milk ■ plain, fat-free or low-fat yogurt ■ fat-free or low-fat flavored Greek yogurt ■ low-fat cheese
Protein	■ eggs ■ peanut butter ■ tofu ■ canned fish in water (tuna, salmon, sardines) ■ canned chicken breast in water ■ dried or canned beans (garbanzo, kidney, black)
Grains	■ popcorn (dry kernels) ■ whole-grain bread ■ whole-grain pasta ■ brown rice ■ barley ■ old-fashioned oats (dry).

Tip

Write a list and stick to it as you do your grocery shopping. Only the items on your list make it into your cart!

During Your Shopping Trip

You have done your planning and are ready for the store. Use the following tips to help you save money during your shopping trip.

- Stick to your list — unless you see specials or sales on healthful foods that have a longer shelf life (whole-grain pasta, canned tomatoes). You may want to buy more than you had planned to take advantage of the low price.
- Skip convenience foods (pre-cut vegetables, frozen meals) and prepare the foods yourself.
- Buy fresh produce in season.
- Buy dried, canned or frozen fruits and vegetables out of season.
- Buy foods in bulk (frozen vegetables, meat, whole-grain products).
- Buy store brands when possible.
- Buy dried beans instead of canned.

Did You Know?

Many farmers markets offer foods at a lower cost than grocery stores. By shopping at farmers markets, you will be able to:

- buy local, healthful foods
- meet the farmers who grow your food
- save money through buying directly from the farmers.

After Your Shopping Trip

Now that your kitchen cupboards are filled with healthful foods, it is time to prepare the foods so they are ready to eat! Use the following tips to help you:

- Cook and prepare healthful foods at home instead of going out to eat.
- Try making one meatless meal each week.
- Cook and freeze foods so they are ready to eat during the week. You can do this with entire meals (casseroles, soups) or parts of a meal (chicken breasts, brown rice).
- Adjust your portions of certain foods. Try serving smaller portions of expensive foods (meat) and larger portions of less expensive foods (brown rice, in-season produce).
- Place smaller portions of foods you buy in bulk in zip-close bags for convenient, on-the-go snacks.
- Do not waste leftovers! Bring leftovers to work or school to eat for lunch the next day. Make leftovers into a new dish to serve for your next meal. Put leftover meat on a salad or uneaten vegetables into a stir-fry, casserole or soup. You may even want to make planned leftovers to freeze and reheat for a quick dinner.

Tip

Rinse canned foods with water to get rid of extra sodium and sugar.

Recipe Cards: Cut Out and Start Cooking!

Budget-friendly Chicken and Black Bean Casserole

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 10-ounce can chicken breast in water, drained and separated with a fork
- 1 15-ounce can sweet corn, rinsed and drained
- 1 16-ounce can diced tomatoes (Do not drain.)
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ½ cup uncooked brown rice
- ¾ cup water

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a large bowl, combine chicken, corn, tomatoes, black beans, cilantro, cumin, uncooked rice and water. Stir.
3. Pour mixture into a 9-by-7-inch baking dish.
4. Bake for 45 minutes, until rice is tender.
5. Let cool for 5 to 10 minutes. Serve warm.

MAIN DISH

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Fiesta Corn Salad

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 cup canned corn, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
  (You can also use lime juice*.)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Stir.
2. Cover and refrigerate.
3. Serve chilled with tortilla chips.

*Option not included in nutrition facts.

TIP

Soak the brown rice in water overnight (or 1 hour before cooking) before adding it to the casserole. This will help to soften the rice so it cooks faster.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 1/4 cup (320g)
Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 30
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3g	**5%**
Saturated Fat 0.5g	**3%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 40mg	**13%**
Sodium 690mg	**29%**
Total Carbohydrate 38g	**13%**
Dietary Fiber 7g	**28%**
Sugars 5g	
Protein 20g	

Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 20%
Calcium 6% • Iron 10%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Recipe contains: corn
Carb choices per serving: 2.5

GF = gluten free

Visit allinahealth.org/recipes for more healthful recipe ideas.

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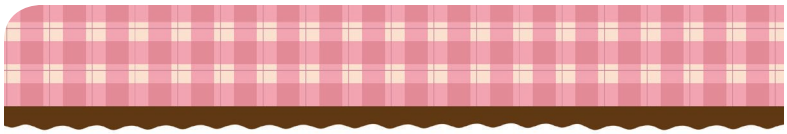

TIP

To turn this snack into a meal, try serving the salad warm with cooked rice or meat.

GF = gluten free

Visit allinahealth.org/recipes for more healthful recipe ideas.

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Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 1/4 cup (278g)
Servings Per Container 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 170	Calories from Fat 40
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 4.5g	**7%**
Saturated Fat 0.5g	**3%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 950mg	**40%**
Total Carbohydrate 28g	**9%**
Dietary Fiber 8g	**32%**
Sugars 8g	
Protein 6g	

Vitamin A 8% • Vitamin C 30%
Calcium 6% • Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Recipe contains: corn
Carb choices per serving: 2

Visit allinahealth.org/recipes for more healthful recipe ideas.

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