



# Eating Healthy on a Budget

These are some tips to help you eat healthy within your budget!

## **Eat first, and then shop later!**

- Eat a snack before you shop and leave any impulse shoppers at home. When we're hungry, high calorie foods seem more appealing.

## **Make a list**

- Plan ahead by taking a look at your cupboards and planning your meals for the week. Always write out your list at home and do not add items. The longer you are in the grocery store, the more money you will spend.

## **Buy less**

- Buy foods you use most and can be used in a variety of recipes. For example, when buying skinless boneless chicken breast you can use it for a baked chicken nugget recipe, a chicken stir fry recipe and a low fat chicken quesadilla recipe.

## **Be smart about fruits and veggies**

- Shop what is in season and compare frozen, fresh and canned to select the best option.
- Check out local Farmer's Market and Farm Stands for fresh produce. Some produce may be less expensive, and local food means less fuel to transport it.

## **Eat and cook at home more often instead of buying ready-made meals**

- Most pre-packaged meals are high in sodium and fat. You'll feel more satisfied after tackling a new recipe or putting your own spin on an old one. It's both economical and often healthier for

you and your family. Buying items in bulk such as rice, dried beans, or oatmeal may be less expensive than instant products.

- Use buying clubs to get discounts on bulk items, and then split the order with friends.
- Buying in bulk those items you use often is usually less expensive. You can then cook larger batches of food and freeze portions to enjoy later. Portioning out your food also ensures you eat the right amount for your appetite. Using leftovers in stews omelets, soups and stir fry is economical and also saves time.

### **Limit amount of sugar sweetened beverages**

- Sodas and fruit drinks may sometimes cost less than milk and 100% juice, but they don't provide the nutrients that we need.

### **Avoid bottled water or vitamin waters**

- These often cost as much as gasoline. Tap water is always the best choice!

### **Limit chips, cookies and high calorie snack foods**

- These are often high in fat, calories, sodium and sugar. Opt for fruit and yogurt or veggies with low calorie salad dressing. These healthy snacks give you more nutrition 'bang for your buck'!

### **Choose a different protein**

- Meat is usually the biggest expense of our grocery costs. Substitute kidney, pinto, black or other beans in for your meat or poultry. Add a couple of bean-based meals twice a week to save money and add fiber.

## **Shop “stock up” sales and “buy one get one free” sales if it's for items you use.**

- Beware of these types of sales of foods you do not normally use. It's not always worth the deal to buy more food than we need or can use.
- Use coupons for only what your family needs and if it costs less than another store. Sometimes coupons promote pricier or unhealthy items that you might not usually buy.

## **Choose the less expensive store or generic brands**

- Brand-name items are often more expensive due to marketing costs. The store or generic brands usually have the same ingredients and are just as nutritious.

## **Check out the highest and lowest levels of the shelves**

- Higher priced brands, that also tend to be high in sugar and calories, are often placed at eye level.

## **Pay attention to unit price**

- The price per ounce or pound can clue you into the most economical product. If it's not listed on the shelf simply divide the price of the product by the number of ounces.

## **Check out dates**

- Always check the “sell by” or expiration dates on products. Look at the “reduced” section in the store. Often these items are close to the sell date. Remember foods are safe to eat and cook or freeze up to at least two days after the sell date.

## **Always review your receipts and track your spending**

- You'll be able to determine how much you spend on what items and how much you are saving weekly, monthly and yearly.

