Aging Healthfully
Newsletter
Illinois Department on Aging

10 Tips to Eating Healthy on a Budget

There are three main steps to saving money on the foods you eat: Plan ahead, choose items that are the best price, and prepare meals that stretch your food budget! **Here are some additional tips for eating healthy on a budget:**

1. **Plan Ahead** – it helps to plan your meals each week (and plan for leftovers), so you only buy what you need. Plan for recipes like stews, casseroles, and stir-fries, which help to stretch expensive items like meats and produce into more portions.
2. **Compare Prices** – compare the "unit price" on the shelf (below the product) to different brands and sizes of the same food item to determine which one is the best deal!
3. **Use Coupons** – look in newspapers, online, coupon booklets (in stores), and magazines for coupons to help reduce your grocery bill.
4. **Stock Up When Things are on Sale** – frozen fruits and vegetables that are on sale will keep in your freezer and can save you money in the long run.
5. **Buy Store Brands** – store brand foods/beverages are almost always the cheapest option and often nutritionally similar to popular name brand items.
6. **Purchase In-Season** – purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables that are in-season will always be the cheaper and most nutritious option compared to produce that is out of season.
7. **Choose Budget-Friendly Staple Foods** – beans, oatmeal, rice, eggs, bananas, and apples are less expensive choices that are available all year long.
8. **Buy in Bulk** – buying in bulk when items are on sale is always the way to go compared to getting single items like potatoes or apples separately.
9. **Use Alternative Sources of Protein** – canned tuna, salmon, or chicken, peanut butter, eggs, and beans are all budget-friendly protein options that can be used in a variety of ways.
10. **Choose Canned and Frozen Foods over Fresh** – canned and frozen foods are convenient and are almost always a better deal. In addition, some frozen items like fruits and vegetables, are a better option than fresh produce that is not in season and have more nutrients. Choose no-salt-added canned or low sodium options to cut down on salt.

January is National Fiber Focus Month

Fiber cannot be made by the body and therefore it must be consumed in the diet to meet the body's needs. Fiber is so essential that it has its' own month to highlight the importance of it.

What Fiber Does for You:

- Helps to prevent and ease constipation by drawing in water to help move things along.
- Can help prevent diverticulosis, which is a disease that affects the large intestine and causes infection, inflammation, and pain.
- Helps to prevent and reduce diarrhea by absorbing extra water.
- Soluble fiber is a type of fiber that dissolves in water and has the ability to trap fat, which means your body absorbs less.
- Can help reduce your risk of colorectal cancer.
- A high fiber diet increases the amount of time it takes for your stomach to empty, which means slower digestion and absorption of sugars.
- Eating enough soluble fiber also helps lower cholesterol and improve blood sugars!
- A diet rich in fiber can also help reduce your risk of diseases like high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.
- Fiber helps keep you feeling fuller longer while also providing the added benefits of vitamins and minerals from fiber-rich, plant-based foods.

Fiber Recommendations for Older Adults (* 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines):

Males (50+ years) **need approximately** 28 grams to 31 grams per day
Females (50+ years) **need approximately** 22.4 grams to 25 grams per day

What is the Difference Between Soluble Fiber and Insoluble Fiber:

- **Soluble fibers**
  - Can dissolve in water and form a thick gel-like substance in the stomach.
  - Can reduce absorption of dietary fat and cholesterol, which can help reduce cholesterol levels and improve heart health.
  - Can slow digestion and the rate at which carbohydrates are absorbed, which can help control blood sugars.
- **Insoluble fibers**
  - Do not dissolve in water and pass right through the gastrointestinal tract without providing any calories.
  - Provide "bulk" for forming stools and speeds up how quickly the body moves food through the digestive tract, which helps prevent constipation.

Food Sources of Dietary Fiber**

Food Item (Type of Fiber) (I=Insoluble Fiber; S=Soluble Fiber)	Standard Portion Size	Amount of Fiber in Standard Portion Size in grams (gm)
High fiber bran ready-to-eat cereal (I)	1/3 – ¾ cup	9gm – 14gm
Navy beans, cooked (S)	½ cup	9.6gm
Shredded wheat ready-to-eat cereal (I)	1-1 ¼ cups	5gm-9gm
Black beans, cooked (S)	½ cup	7.5gm
Lima beans, cooked (S and I)	½ cup	6.6gm
Pear, raw (S and I)	1 medium	5.5gm
Soybeans, cooked (S and I)	½ cup	5.2gm
Avocado (S and I)	½ cup	5gm
Apple, with skin (I)	1 medium	4.4gm
Green peas, cooked – fresh/frozen/canned (S)	½ cup	3.5-4.4gm
Raspberries (I)	½ cup	4gm
Blackberries (I)	½ cup	3.8gm
Prunes, stewed (I)	½ cup	3.8gm
Sweet potato, baked in skin (S and I)	1 medium	3.8gm
Whole-wheat spaghetti, cooked (I)	½ cup	3.2gm
Orange (S)	1 medium	3.1gm
Pearled barley, cooked (I)	½ cup	3gm
Quinoa, cooked (I)	½ cup	2.6gm

Source: U.S Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Nutrient Data Laboratory. 2014. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 27. Available at: http://www.ars.usda.gov/nutrientdata.

Attachments:
- Healthy Stocked Pantry
- Eating Better on a Budget (MyPlate)
- Healthy Eating on a Budget Cookbook (USDA)
- 2 Week Budget-Friendly MyPlate Meal Plan
- Dietary Fiber Information Sheet (FDA)
- Recipes: Honey Mustard Pork Chops; White Chili

References:

https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/get-the-facts-on-fiber#1
https://wholegrainscouncil.org/newsroom/whole-grain-statistics
*https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-7/
**https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-13/

Illinois Department on Aging
One Natural Resources Way, Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62702
https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/CommunityServices/nutrition/Pages/nutrition.aspx