Guide to Healthy Shopping

Supermarkets are a place to make powerful, healthy decisions, but without the right tools they can be overwhelming and lead to less healthy choices. Read on for helpful tips!

Make a list

To make supermarkets less overwhelming, make a shopping list ahead of time. Leave it near your refrigerator or carry it with you in your wallet and add items as you think of them. Once you get to the market, stick to your list. This will help you stay under budget and prevent you from buying unnecessary items at whim.

Plan a menu ahead of time

Think of a few main courses and side dishes that will make for good leftovers and last you until your next grocery trip. Once you plan out your menu, be sure everything you need is on your shopping list. Planning a menu will help to prevent expensive restaurant meals during the week. Additionally, having leftovers in your refrigerator will prevent you from grabbing junk food when you’re feeling too hungry to start cooking.

What’s on your menu this week?

Shop around the perimeter

For healthy choices shop the perimeter; around the walls or edges of the market. Produce is often located at the entrance; milk, eggs and dairy at the back; frozen along the sides. Shopping the edges will ensure that some fresh food gets into your basket. Once you have everything you need from the edges, use your shopping list to find what you need from inner isles. Beware, the inner isles are where most junk food is located, so stick to your shopping list and stay focused on only what you need.

Consider portion sizes

Some foods are better bought in small or large portions. When buying prepared foods, resist the urge to buy in large portions. This will save you money and help control how you eat. If the large portion isn’t in your refrigerator, you’re less likely to eat more than you need. This will help to prevent unwanted weight gain (see side bar for more information.)

Quick Tuna Salad

1 can tuna, drained
1 tsp honey mustard
1 tsp olive oil
1 tsp balsamic vinegar
¼ cup canned chickpeas, drained

Mix all ingredients and enjoy over salad greens or on whole grain bread

More on Portion Sizes:

It may be more economical to buy these items in bulk:

- Dry rice
- Dry pasta
- Canned goods
- Frozen value packs

Freeze some or store in sealed containers to extend shelf life.
**Grocery Shopping Guide (cont.)**

**How to shop in the...**

**Frozen section:** Frozen produce is usually picked at its peak ripeness and immediately frozen. This locks in all the vitamins and nutrients, giving the same nutritional value as you would find in fresh produce. The advantage of buying frozen is that it’s often less expensive, and lasts longer when you store in the freezer. **Did you know that frozen fruits and vegetables can last up to a year in your freezer!**? Look for exciting frozen combos like a bag of mixed berries or stir-fry veggies for an interesting twist.

The frozen section is also a good place to find low fat sources of protein like fish and poultry. **Frozen fish and meat can be stored in your freezer for up to 6 months, as long as it is stored in a sealed bag or container, and the freezer temperature is consistent.** If you are not planning to cook the entire item, section pieces into appropriate serving sizes using zip-lock plastic bags, so that you can and freeze bags separately. This will allow you to cook one portion at a time rather then having to throw away excess food.

**Canned section:** The canned section is a great place to find inexpensive sources of protein, vegetables and fruit. You might find canned tuna, canned salmon, canned beans, and canned sardines; these are all great sources of low fat protein. Canned beans and canned fish are an easy way to sneak protein into a meal. They add great flavor to pasta salads, make excellent sandwich fillings, and are even worth a try on their own. Canned soup is also a great item to have in your pantry for an easy, no-cook meal option. **Hint:** when choosing a canned soup, try to avoid “creamy” soups such as chowders or bisques. These generally contain more fat and sodium. Look for vegetable, lentil and bean based soups. See sidebar on page 1 for more tips.

**Vegetable of the Quarter: Pumpkin**

Whichever way you serve up this tasty treat, you’ll benefit from delicious flavor and lots of nutrition. The bright orange color in pumpkins lets us know that it has a compound called beta-carotene. This is the same compound that gives carrots and sweet potatoes their orange color. In the body, beta-carotene turns into vitamin A, an important vitamin for skin and bone health. Pumpkin is also a great source of iron! Iron prevents fatigue and helps every cell in the body get the nutrients it needs. .

**Add some crunch** with pumpkin seeds! Don’t be fooled by their size, these little guys pack a big nutritional punch. Pumpkin seeds are a great source of protein. Protein is an essential part of your diet; it helps keep you energized throughout the day, keeps bones and muscles strong, and keeps you feeling fuller for longer. A handful of pumpkin seeds have few calories and plenty of protein, which makes it a perfect snack.

Don’t fear, there’s no need to lug that heavy pumpkin back from the store. Look for **canned pumpkin** in the section of the grocery store where other canned vegetables are found. Canned pumpkin is less expensive, more convenient to buy and has just as much nutritional value as the fresh version.

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**Pumpkin Breakfast Shake**

- 1 cup plain non-fat yogurt
- ½ cup mashed pumpkin
- ½ cup chopped green apple (or any other fruit)
- Dash of nutmeg and or cinnamon

Mix all ingredients in a blender and enjoy!