

Ideas for Healthy Eating on a Budget



Shop around the outside aisles of stores. Get fresh, less processed foods (you pay for the processing).

- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season.
- Most of the time you can find good prices for potatoes, sweet potatoes, greens, carrots, onions and cabbage.
- Bananas, oranges, apples, raisins and prunes are almost always a good buy.
- Wash and cut your own lettuce for salads.
- Choose whole chicken or a bulk size bag of chicken pieces.



Look in the frozen food section.

- Frozen vegetables are a healthy choice.
- Frozen juice is cheaper than other juice.



Buy things in bulk and choose less processed foods.

- Buy a bag of rice, not boxed rice mixes.
- Buy fresh potatoes, not instant potatoes or other mixes.
- Beans are inexpensive, healthy and easy to cook even though it takes longer.
- Try lentils, split peas or black-eyed peas.
- Buy the longer cooking oatmeal (5 minutes is not that long)



Dairy

- Buy plain yogurt in large containers.
- Buy cheese in blocks, not sliced.



Plan your menu for the week.

- Plan menus around foods that are in season or on sale.
- Make extra and freeze to use later.
- Plan for leftovers. For example, serve grilled chicken one night and chicken soup the next.



Don't buy on impulse.

- Make a shopping list ahead of time.
- Shop when you are not hungry.
- Shop without your children when you can. Candies and toys are often put at children's eye level.
- Only use coupons to buy foods you plan to prepare.

Choose
these easy
meals and
snacks

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Easy Meals:

Sandwiches or Wraps with whole grain wrappers (or use lettuce for your wrap):

- Egg salad sandwich
- Tuna salad sandwich (don't overdo tuna while pregnant)
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich
- Chicken salad sandwich

Mexican Food:

- Bean and veggie burritos
- Eggs with salsa and tortillas
- Rice and beans with tortillas

Soups (make a big pot and freeze portions):

- Lentil or bean soup
- Chili with cornbread
- Barley soup with carrots and meat
- Chicken and vegetable soup

Pasta (whole wheat is best!):

- Spaghetti with tomato sauce – add veggies to bottled sauce
- Tuna noodle casserole
- Vegetable and cheese lasagna
- Pasta salad with veggies and beans

Stir-fries:

- Stir-fried tofu and vegetables with soy sauce and sesame oil
- Thai Stir-fry tofu and vegetables with light coconut milk and curry
- Italian sauté with veggies in tomato sauce with oregano, rosemary, etc.

Other:

- Baked potato with cheese and broccoli
- Quinoa and black bean salad
- Baked sweet potato with black beans and salsa



Healthy Snacks:

Often leftovers from meals make great snacks – think outside the bag!

- Leftovers from anything in column 1
- Fresh fruit or dried fruit
- Hard boiled eggs
- Small “pizza” on pita bread (sauce, veggies and cheese on pita, toasted in the toaster oven)
- Cottage cheese or yogurt

Salads:

- Fruit salad. Use fruits in season.
- Green salads. Wash and cut your own lettuce mixture.
- Pasta salad with vegetables and beans

Spreads and Dips:

- Veggies with hummus, low fat ranch or peanut butter
- Corn tortillas, toasted, with bean dip
- Bagel with low-fat cream cheese
- Fruit with yogurt
- Whole grain crackers with bean spreads or nut spreads

