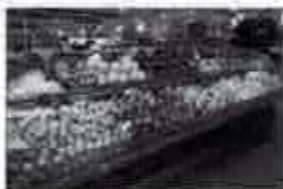


Eat Well on Your Budget



Eating well doesn't have to mean spending more money or buying costly "health foods." You can eat well on a budget by planning ahead and choosing foods that give you more nutrition for your money. In fact, you might find that you spend less, not more, to eat right.

Money Saving Tips

Here are ways to save money.

- Plan your meals and snacks in advance.
- Before you shop, check store flyers to look for nutritious foods and ingredients that are on sale.
- Take a shopping list with you to the grocery store and try to buy only the items on the list.
- Choose store brands instead of name brands.
- Clip and use coupons.
- Look for items that are on sale.
- Use supermarket discount cards.

Plan Ahead

Start by planning your meals and snacks in advance. Take a shopping list with you to the grocery store and try to buy only the items on the list. Before you shop, check store flyers to look for nutritious foods and ingredients that are on sale.

If you want to save money by buying large sizes of foods, you might plan to share them with a friend or neighbor. Large sizes may cost less per pound or other unit, but they aren't a bargain if you end up throwing out a lot of the food.

Choose Healthier Foods

Get more nutrition for your money by choosing nutrient-dense foods: vegetables and fruits, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, whole grains, seafood, lean meats, and other healthy foods. Avoid convenience foods, sweets, and snack foods that give you fewer nutrients for your food dollars.

Before you buy, think about how much of a product you'll really use. Buy only enough fresh fruits and vegetables to eat within a few days. Also, try not to buy more perishable items than

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you will use before the "use-by" date marked on the package. Meats, poultry, fish, seafood, cooked vegetables, dairy products, and eggs are examples of perishable foods.

If You Eat Out

If you like to eat out, go to restaurants that offer senior discounts. Look for early-bird dinner specials or go out for lunch instead of dinner. Some restaurants offer two-for-one or discount coupons. When eating out, consider ordering low-fat, low-sodium, and other healthy menu items. Ask for sauces or dressings on the side so you can better control how much you eat.

Sharing meal preparation and ingredient costs with friends can also save money -- and be fun. For instance, you might plan a potluck dinner with neighbors. You might also buy ingredients and cook with a friend.

Help With Food Costs

If you need financial help to buy food, here are some federal programs for older people with limited budgets.

- **The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program** gives coupons to older adults with low incomes that can be used at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and some other places. The coupons can be exchanged for fresh, nutritious, locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs. For more information, go to www.fns.usda.gov/wic/seniorFMNP/sfmnpmenu.htm and look up the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for your state.
- **The SNAP program, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (formerly known as the Food Stamp program) helps qualified people buy groceries. The program helps people with a low income or salary get enough to eat, and they encourage good nutrition and health. Find out more at www.fns.usda.gov/snap
- **The Commodity Supplemental Food Program** provides some vegetables, fruits, grain products, dry beans and canned meats to eligible older people to supplement their own food. Find out more at www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfp

Free and Low-cost Meals

You might also be able to enjoy free or low-cost meals at places in your community. These meals offer good food and a chance to be with other people. Contact your local senior center or places of worship to find out about these meals. Home-delivered meals may be available for people who can't get out.