

Budget-Friendly Healthy Eating

There are many ways to save money at the grocery store and continue to eat healthy. This can work if you:

- Make a grocery list and only buy food that is on the list.
- Plan meals that fit your budget.
- Make food yourself at home.

What are tips for following this plan?

Reading food labels

- Compare food labels between brand name and store brand foods. Often the nutritional value is the same, but the store brand is cheaper.
- Look for products that do not have added sugar, fat, or salt (*sodium*). These often cost the same but are healthier for you. Products may be labeled as:
 - Sugar-free.
 - Nonfat.
 - Low-fat.
 - Sodium-free.
 - Low-sodium.
- Look for lean ground beef labeled as at least 93% lean and 7% fat.



Prepare for shopping

- Make a grocery list and bring it to the store. If you have a mobile phone, you could use it to create your shopping list.
- Check store apps and online, and look in newspapers for weekly deals.
- Check for coupons, but use coupons only for foods and brands you normally buy. **Do not** buy items you would not normally buy just because they are on sale.
- If possible, go to other stores to find the best prices. Consider shopping at dollar stores, larger wholesale stores, local fruit and vegetable stands, and farmers markets.

Shopping

- Buy only what is on your grocery list. Go only to the areas of the store that have the items on your list.
- Look at the unit prices on the shelf or price tag. Use it to find out which items are the best deals.
- **Do not** shop when you are hungry. If you are hungry, it may be hard to stick to your list and budget.
- Look at the top and bottom shelves for deals. Foods at eye level (for both adults and children) usually cost more.

- Be efficient with your time when shopping. The more time you are at the store, the more money you will likely spend.

What to look for when shopping

- Choose healthy items that are often low cost, such as carrots, potatoes, apples, bananas, and oranges. Dried or canned beans are a low-cost protein source.
- If you can, buy in bulk. Items you can buy in bulk include meats, fish, poultry, frozen fruits, and frozen vegetables, herbs, spices, flour, pasta, nuts, and dried fruit.
- Try not to buy:
 - "Ready-to-eat" foods, such as pre-cut fruits and vegetables and pre-made salads.
 - Chips, cookies, and other "junk food." These items are usually expensive and not healthy.
 - Sodas and other sweetened drinks. Choose water instead.
 - Fruits and vegetables that are out of season. Healthy in-season foods usually cost less.
- Buy a variety of vegetables and fruits by getting fresh, frozen, and canned items.
- To save money when getting more expensive foods like meats and dairy:
 - Choose cheaper cuts of meat, such as bone-in chicken thighs and drumsticks, instead of skinless and boneless chicken. When you are ready to prepare the chicken, you can remove the skin to make it healthier.
 - Choose lean meats like chicken or turkey instead of beef.
 - Choose seafood canned in water, such as tuna, salmon, or sardines.
 - Buy eggs as a lower-cost source of protein.
 - Buy dried beans and peas, such as lentils, split peas, or kidney beans instead of meats. Dried beans and peas are other good sources of protein.
 - Buy large tubs of yogurt instead of one-serving size.

Cooking

- Make extra food and freeze the extra in meal-sized containers or in individual portions for fast meals and snacks.
- Pre-cook on days when you have extra time to prepare meals. You can keep these meals in the fridge or freezer and reheat for a quick meal.
- When you come home from the store, wash, peel, and cut up fruits and vegetables so they are ready to use and eat. This will help keep you from eating less healthy snacks and reduce food waste.

Meal planning

- **Do not** eat out or get fast food. Make food at home.
- Plan meals and snacks using the grocery list and budget you create.
- Use leftovers in your meal plan for the week.
- Look for recipes where you can cook once and make enough food for many meals.
- Prepare budget-friendly types of meals like stews, casseroles, and stir-fry dishes.
- Try some meatless meals or try "no cook" meals like salads.
- Make sure that half your plate is filled with fruits or vegetables. Choose from fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables. If eating canned, remember to rinse them before eating. This will remove any excess salt added for packaging.

Where to find more information

- U.S. Department of Agriculture: [myplate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov)

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Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

Many factors influence your heart health, including eating and exercise habits. Heart health is also called coronary health. Coronary risk increases with abnormal blood fat (*lipid*) levels. A heart-healthy eating plan includes limiting unhealthy fats, increasing healthy fats, limiting salt (*sodium*) intake, and making other diet and lifestyle changes.

What is my plan?

Your health care provider may recommend that:

- You limit your fat intake to _____% or less of your total calories each day.
- You limit your saturated fat intake to _____% or less of your total calories each day.
- You limit the amount of cholesterol in your diet to less than _____ mg per day.
- You limit the amount of sodium in your diet to less than _____ mg per day.

What are tips for following this plan?

Cooking

Cook foods using methods other than frying. Baking, boiling, grilling, and broiling are all good options. Other ways to reduce fat include:

- Removing the skin from poultry.
- Removing all visible fats from meats.
- Steaming vegetables in water or broth.

Meal planning

- At meals, imagine dividing your plate into fourths:
 - Fill one-half of your plate with vegetables and green salads.
 - Fill one-fourth of your plate with whole grains.
 - Fill one-fourth of your plate with lean protein foods.
- Eat 2½–4 cups of vegetables per day. One cup of vegetables equals 1 cup (91 g) broccoli or cauliflower florets, 2 medium carrots, 1 large bell pepper, 1 large sweet potato, 1 large tomato, 1 medium white potato, 2 cups (150 g) raw leafy greens.
- Eat 1½–2½ cups of fruit per day. One cup of fruit equals 1 small apple, 1 large banana, 1 cup (237 g) mixed fruit, 1 large orange, ½ cup (82 g) dried fruit, 1 cup (240 mL) 100% fruit juice.
- Eat more foods that contain soluble fiber. Examples include apples, broccoli, carrots, beans, peas, and barley. Aim to get 25–30 g of fiber per day.
- Increase your consumption of legumes, nuts, and seeds to 4–5 servings per week. One serving of dried beans or legumes equals ¼ cup (90 g) cooked, 1 serving of nuts is ½ oz (12 almonds, 24 pistachios, or 7 walnut halves), and 1 serving of seeds equals ½ oz (8 g).



Fats

- Choose healthy fats more often. Choose monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, such as olive and canola oils, avocado oil, flaxseeds, walnuts, almonds, and seeds.
- Eat more omega-3 fats. Choose salmon, mackerel, sardines, tuna, flaxseed oil, and ground flaxseeds. Aim to eat fish at least 2 times each week.
- Check food labels carefully to identify foods with trans fats or high amounts of saturated fat.
- Limit saturated fats. These are found in animal products, such as meats, butter, and cream. Plant sources of saturated fats include palm oil, palm kernel oil, and coconut oil.
- Avoid foods with partially hydrogenated oils in them. These contain trans fats. Examples are stick margarine, some tub margarines, cookies, crackers, and other baked goods.
- Avoid fried foods.

General information

- Eat more home-cooked food and less restaurant, buffet, and fast food.
- Limit or avoid alcohol.
- Limit foods that are high in added sugar and simple starches such as foods made using white refined flour (white breads, pastries, sweets).
- Lose weight if you are overweight. Losing just 5–10% of your body weight can help your overall health and prevent diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.
- Monitor your sodium intake, especially if you have high blood pressure. Talk with your health care provider about your sodium intake.
- Try to incorporate more vegetarian meals weekly.

What foods should I eat?

Fruits

All fresh, canned (in natural juice), or frozen fruits.

Vegetables

Fresh or frozen vegetables (raw, steamed, roasted, or grilled). Green salads.

Grains

Most grains. Choose whole wheat and whole grains most of the time. Rice and pasta, including brown rice and pastas made with whole wheat.

Meats and other proteins

Lean, well-trimmed beef, veal, pork, and lamb. Chicken and turkey without skin. All fish and shellfish. Wild duck, rabbit, pheasant, and venison. Egg whites or low-cholesterol egg substitutes. Dried beans, peas, lentils, and tofu. Seeds and most nuts.

Dairy

Low-fat or nonfat cheeses, including ricotta and mozzarella. Skim or 1% milk (liquid, powdered, or evaporated). Buttermilk made with low-fat milk. Nonfat or low-fat yogurt.

Fats and oils

Non-hydrogenated (trans-free) margarines. Vegetable oils, including soybean, sesame, sunflower, olive, avocado, peanut, safflower, corn, canola, and cottonseed. Salad dressings or mayonnaise made with a vegetable oil.

Beverages

Water (mineral or sparkling). Coffee and tea. Unsweetened ice tea. Diet beverages.

Sweets and desserts

Sherbet, gelatin, and fruit ice. Small amounts of dark chocolate.

Limit all sweets and desserts.

Seasonings and condiments

All seasonings and condiments.

The items listed above may not be a complete list of foods and beverages you can eat. Contact a dietitian for more options.

What foods should I avoid?

Fruits

Canned fruit in heavy syrup. Fruit in cream or butter sauce. Fried fruit. Limit coconut.

Vegetables

Vegetables cooked in cheese, cream, or butter sauce. Fried vegetables.

Grains

Breads made with saturated or trans fats, oils, or whole milk. Croissants. Sweet rolls. Donuts. High-fat crackers, such as cheese crackers and chips.

Meats and other proteins

Fatty meats, such as hot dogs, ribs, sausage, bacon, rib-eye roast or steak. High-fat deli meats, such as salami and bologna. Caviar. Domestic duck and goose. Organ meats, such as liver.

Dairy

Cream, sour cream, cream cheese, and creamed cottage cheese. Whole-milk cheeses. Whole or 2% milk (liquid, evaporated, or condensed). Whole buttermilk. Cream sauce or high-fat cheese sauce. Whole-milk yogurt.

Fats and oils

Meat fat, or shortening. Cocoa butter, hydrogenated oils, palm oil, coconut oil, palm kernel oil. Solid fats and shortenings, including bacon fat, salt pork, lard, and butter. Nondairy cream substitutes. Salad dressings with cheese or sour cream.

Beverages

Regular sodas and any drinks with added sugar.

Sweets and desserts

Frosting. Pudding. Cookies. Cakes. Pies. Milk chocolate or white chocolate. Buttered syrups. Full-fat ice cream or ice cream drinks.

The items listed above may not be a complete list of foods and beverages to avoid. Contact a dietitian for more information.

Summary

- Heart-healthy meal planning includes limiting unhealthy fats, increasing healthy fats, limiting salt (*sodium*) intake and making other diet and lifestyle changes.
- Lose weight if you are overweight. Losing just 5–10% of your body weight can help your overall health and prevent diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.
- Focus on eating a balance of foods, including fruits and vegetables, low-fat or nonfat dairy, lean protein, nuts and legumes, whole grains, and heart-healthy oils and fats.

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Reading Food Labels

Foods that are in packages or containers have a Nutrition Facts panel on the side or back. This is commonly called the food label. The food label helps you make informed food choices by providing information about serving size and the amount of calories and various nutrients in the food. You can check the food label to find out if the food contains high or low amounts of items that you want to limit in your diet. You can also use the food label to see if the food is a good source of the nutrients that you want to include in your diet.

How do I read the food label?

- Start by looking at the serving size and servings per package.
- Check the calories.
- Check the amount of fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Try to limit these nutrients.
- Check the amount of dietary fiber, protein, and other vitamins and minerals listed. Depending on recommendations from your health care provider or dietitian, certain values may be more important to your overall health and diet than others.
- Check the added sugar. This is sugar that was added in the making of the food or drink. This number does not include sugar that naturally occurs in foods such as milk, fruits, and vegetables. Try to limit added sugar. Children aged 2–18 years and women should limit added sugar to 6 teaspoons (25 g) a day. Men should limit added sugar to 9 teaspoons (36 g) a day.
- Look at the ingredient list. Depending on your dietary needs, you may need to avoid foods with certain ingredients. Talk to your health care provider or dietitian about what ingredients you should watch for.



What does the information on the food label mean?

Serving size

- This indicates the amount of the food that makes up one serving. All of the nutrition information listed on the food label is based on one serving.
- Serving size may be based on:
 - The number of food pieces.
 - The volume of food (cups, fluid ounces, tablespoons, milliliters).
 - The weight of food (grams, ounces).
- The label will also indicate how many servings are in one package. If you eat more than one serving, you must multiply the amounts (such as calories, grams of saturated fat, or milligrams of sodium) by the number of servings.

Calories

- Calories are a measure of the amount of energy that your body gets from the food.
- Most food labels list only the calories in one serving of food. Some foods may list the number of calories per package if one package contains slightly more than one serving.
- Counting total daily calories is one way that is used to help manage weight.

- Talk to your health care provider or dietitian about how many calories you should eat each day.

Percent daily value

- Percent Daily Value (%DV) tells you what percent of the daily value for each nutrient one serving provides. The daily value is the recommended total amount of the item that you should get each day. For example, if 15% is listed next to dietary fiber, it means that one serving of the food will give you 15% of the recommended amount of fiber that you should get in a day. The daily values are based on a diet of 2,000 calories a day. You may get more or less than 2,000 calories in your diet each day, but the %DV gives you an idea of whether the food contains a high or low amount of the listed item.
 - 5% DV or less means there is a low amount of a nutrient in one serving.
 - 20% DV or higher means there is a high amount of a nutrient in one serving.

Total fat

- Total fat shows you the number of grams (g) of fat in one serving. Two of the fats that make up a portion of the total fat are included on the label:
 - Saturated fat. The food label shows both the amount of fat in grams (g) and the percent Daily Value per serving. This type of fat increases the amount of cholesterol in your blood. If you eat 2,000 calories each day, you should eat less than 13 g of saturated fat each day.
 - *Trans* fat. The food label shows the number of grams (g) per serving. This type of fat is the most unhealthy fat for heart health. It is recommended that people limit their intake of *trans* fat to as little as possible. Look for foods that have "0 g *Trans* Fat" on the label.

Cholesterol

- Cholesterol tells you the number of milligrams (mg) and the percent Daily Value of cholesterol in one serving. Cholesterol is a fat-like substance. It can be harmful if you eat too much of it.

Sodium

- Sodium tells you the number of milligrams (mg) and the percent Daily Value of sodium in one serving. If eaten in large amounts, sodium can raise your blood pressure. Most people should limit their sodium intake to 2,300 mg a day.

Total carbohydrate

- Total carbohydrate shows you the number of grams (g) of carbohydrates in one serving. Two types of carbohydrates make up the total carbohydrates included on the label:
 - Dietary fiber. The food label shows both the amount of dietary fiber in grams (g) and the percent Daily Value per serving. Most adults should eat at least 25 g of dietary fiber each day.
 - Total sugars. The food label shows the number of grams (g) of sugars per serving. This value includes both naturally occurring sugars, such as those in fruit and milk, and added sugars, such as honey or table sugar.
 - Added sugars. This value is the amount of added sugar. It is part of the total sugar count in the food or drink.

Protein

- Protein tells you how many grams (g) of protein are in one serving. The recommended amount of daily protein differs for men and women, and it may depend on your overall health. Talk to your health care provider or dietitian about how much protein you should eat each day.

Vitamins and minerals

- The food label shows the percent Daily Value for certain vitamins and minerals, including vitamin D, calcium, potassium, and iron. Other vitamins and minerals may be listed depending on the food.

Ingredients

- Food labels list each ingredient in the food. The ingredients are listed in the order of their amount by weight from most to least.
- Food labels may also include a warning about ingredients that can cause allergic reactions in some people. These may be indicated by the words "Contains" or "May contain." Examples of ingredients that may be listed are wheat, dairy, eggs, soy, and nuts. If a person knows that he or she is allergic to one of these ingredients, he or she will know to avoid that food.

Where to find more information

- U.S. Food and Drug Administration: www.fda.gov

Summary

- The food label is the common term for the Nutrition Facts panel on the side or back of food packages or containers.
- The food label helps you make informed food choices by providing information about serving size and the amount of calories and various nutrients in the food.
- To read the food label, begin by checking the serving size and number of servings in the container. Then check the calories and the amount of each listed item.

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Malnutrition, Adult

Malnutrition, specifically undernutrition, is a condition that can occur gradually or quickly, it usually depends on the cause. Malnutrition is a group of symptoms that affects adults such as: loss of appetite, weakness, fatigue, and weight loss.

What are the causes?

This condition may be caused by:

- A chronic disease, such as dementia, diabetes, cancer, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- A sudden illness like sepsis, a major surgery, or a traumatic event that puts you in a hospital in critical care.
- A mental health disorder, such as depression.
- A disability that limits you from getting or making food.
- Medicines.
- Having tooth or mouth problems.
- Mistreatment or neglect.

In some cases, the cause may not be known.

What are the signs or symptoms?

Symptoms of this condition include:

- Loss of more than 5% of your body weight.
- Being more tired than normal after an activity.
- Loss of appetite.
- Not getting out of bed.
- Not wanting to do usual activities.
- Frequent infections.
- Fragile skin that results in skin breakdown or bedsores.

How is this diagnosed?

This condition may be diagnosed with a diet history, physical exam, and tests. Your health care provider will ask questions about your diet, level of physical activity, access to food, health conditions, and typical dietary patterns, such as:

- Has your diet changed?
- Do you have any physical limitations or barriers?
- Are you able to eat, chew, and safely swallow?

Tests may also be done. They may include:

- Blood tests.
- Urine tests.

- Imaging tests, such as:
 - X-rays.
 - CT scan.
 - MRI.
- Tests to check thinking ability (*cognitive tests*).
- Activity tests. Your health care provider may want to see if you can do tasks such as bathing and dressing and if you can move around safely.

You may be referred to a specialist.

How is this treated?

Treatment for this condition depends on the cause. It may be treated by:

- Treating a disease or disorder that is causing symptoms.
- Having talk therapy or taking medicine to treat depression.
- Improving diet, such as by eating more often or taking nutritional supplements.
- Changing or stopping a medicine.
- Having physical or occupational therapy.

It often takes a team of health care providers to find the right treatment.

Follow these instructions at home:

- Take over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as told by your health care provider.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Make sure to get enough calories in each meal. Ask your health care provider how many calories you need.
- Be physically active. Include strength training as part of your exercise routine. A physical therapist can help to set up an exercise program that is right for you.
- Make sure you have access to food and are able to prepare meals.
- Have a plan for what to do if you become unable to make decisions for yourself.



Contact a health care provider if you:

- Are not able to eat well.
- Are not able to move around.
- Feel very sad or hopeless.

Get help right away if:

- You have thoughts of ending your life.
- You cannot eat or drink.
- You do not get out of bed.

- Staying at home is no longer safe.
- You have a fever.

Get help right away if you feel like you may hurt yourself or others, or have thoughts about taking your own life. Go to your nearest emergency room or:

- **Call 911.**
- **Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or 988. This is open 24 hours a day.**
- **Text the Crisis Text Line at 741741.**

Summary

- Symptoms include loss of appetite and weight loss.
- Take over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as told by your health care provider.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Make sure to get enough calories in each meal. Ask your health care provider how many calories you need.
- Be physically active. Include strength training as part of your exercise routine. A physical therapist can help to set up an exercise program that is right for you.

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