

Healthy Eating Can Be Affordable

Whole grains, vegetables, fruits, fish, low-fat milk. These foods are basic to good health, yet most children and their families don't eat enough of them. Here are some tips to get you started.

Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.

***Know when fruits and vegetables are in season
(<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-through-seasons/seasonal-produce>).**

***Frozen or canned vegetables and fruits may be less expensive than fresh, especially when not in season. Choose frozen vegetables without sauces, and fruits canned in juice to reduce fat and sugar.**

***Buy only the foods that your family will eat before they spoil. Throwing away food is equivalent to throwing away money.**

***Keep fruits and vegetables where they can be easily seen. For example, put fruit in bowls on tables or countertops so they are more visible and more likely to be eaten. Cup up vegetables like carrots, cucumbers and green peppers when you bring them home so they are readily available as snacks and to use in recipes.**

***Grow some of your own vegetables. Even a few tomato plants in containers on a porch can yield a bounty of tomatoes in the summer.**

Choose 100% whole grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, and pasta.

***Brown rice, oatmeal and unsweetened whole-grain cereal bought in bulk is usually a good buy. Look for whole-grain breads, tortillas and whole-grain pasta that are a good price.**

***Be willing to spend a little more time preparing foods. In most cases, the more processed a food is, the more it will cost. For example, popcorn that is already popped or in a convenience form usually costs more than popcorn that needs to be popped in a kettle or popcorn popper.**

Vary your protein sources---eat more seafood and beans.

***Canned tuna, canned pink salmon and some frozen fish are a good buy. Tuna salad, salmon patties, and fish tacos are a quick and tasty way to eat fish.**

Dry beans and peas (black beans, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, lentils, pinto

beans, split peas) are a great buy whether purchased dry or canned. Drain and rinse beans with water to remove most of the sodium.

***Use dry beans in place of some or all of the ground beef in recipes. Cooked lentils are a great meat extender or substitute for meat in spaghetti sauce and meatloaf. Similarly, cooked pinto beans work well in burritos, enchiladas and taco.**