



Shop Smart, Shop Healthy!

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Grocery shopping can be overwhelming, time consuming, confusing and expensive. To help sort through the aisles, try following these tips to *Shop Smart and Shop Healthy*.

Shop Smart:

By being organized before you go to the store you will be more efficient, and save money once you are there.

- **Start with an organized pantry and refrigerator.**
Having an organized pantry will let you know what you have on hand. This will help you to avoid spending money on items that you do not need.
- **Read the weekly food ads so that you know what is on sale.** Choosing sale items is a smart way to save money. Compare brands to get the best bargain. Generic or store brands may be cheaper than national brands. Most bargains are found on the higher and lower shelves. Expensive brands are at eye level to get your attention. **Plan your meals and snacks before going to the store.** Try to incorporate sale items when planning your meals.
- **Make a Shopping List.** People who shop with a list usually are more successful at stretching their food dollar. Grocery lists will help you save time and eat healthier. Stick to your list; only make changes if you are sure you will make good use of the item. Some people like to arrange lists according to how foods are found in their grocery store such as: meats, fruits, vegetables, frozen items, canned goods, paper products, and cleaning supplies. Keep your list in a convenient place. Add items as you run out so you do not forget to pick them up when you go to the store.
- **Don't shop when you are hungry.** This will help you to avoid impulse buys, which are usually expensive.

Shop Healthy:

Healthy eating begins with what you put in your shopping cart. Grocery shopping can be a way to explore new foods and to eat delicious meals.

- **Use food labels to compare different food products.** The food label tells you how much fat, protein and carbohydrate a serving of the food offers and how many servings are in the package.
- **Choose most of your products from the perimeter of the store** (fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meat, fish and poultry, low/non fat dairy, whole grain breads). Be sure that the foods you pull out of the cooler are truly cold. Shop for perishable foods like milk, cheese, yogurt or meat last. This will make sure that they stay cold longer. These should be the groceries that you put away first when you get home.
- **Always check the "use by" or "sell by" date.**
- When possible **choose fresh fruits and vegetables** instead of canned or frozen and choose a variety of colors.
- **Meat is a good source of protein**, but can be expensive. Cheese, poultry, eggs, peanut butter, dried peas, beans, lentils, and some types fish are less expensive and are excellent source of protein. If you do choose meat, lean red meats, skinless chicken or turkey, or fresh, non-breaded seafood are your healthiest options. Limit portion sizes of meat to 4oz. per serving.
- **Choose whole grain products** such as brown rice, whole wheat bread, oatmeal, and bran cereals. These are a good source of fiber.
- Try skim or 1% milk and low or non-fat yogurt, cottage cheese and sour cream instead of whole milk products. **Skim or low fat varieties are lower in saturated fat.**
- Set a goal for yourself to **buy one new healthy food each time you shop.**

Shopping does not have to be overwhelming. We hope these tips help make shopping easier, healthier and less expensive.