

Smart Choices

Nutrition News

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Shopping Tips—Eat Better for Less!

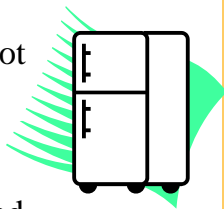
- Plan meals and snacks for several days at a time to reduce impulse buying and help you have better nutrition.
- Prepare an organized shopping list. Check to see what foods you already have on hand. You may want to keep a notepad and pencil in the kitchen so you can jot down things you need when they come to mind.
- Check advertised specials. Use coupons only for things you really need, and check to make sure the coupon brand is really cheaper. 
- Replace some of the meat in your diet with meatless sources of protein such as dry beans and soy foods. This will help you save money and cut back on the amount of fat in your diet.
- Cut back on high-cost convenience foods and “junk food” snacks in favor of more fruits, vegetables, nuts, yogurt and low-fat popcorn.
- Shop when you are not hungry or rushed.
- Read nutrition facts labels and ingredient lists to make smart food choices. Select foods that are low in sodium, cholesterol and saturated fat and high in fiber.
- Compare prices of store, generic and national brands as well as different size packages. Look for the unit pricing label on the shelf below each product to compare the real cost per pound, ounce or quart.
- Choose breakfast cereals wisely. For example, store-brand oats in the larger containers are much cheaper than cold cereals or individual oatmeal packets. Aim to make at least half of your grains whole. Look for high-fiber, whole grain cereals such as oatmeal, shredded wheat, raisin bran, wheat flakes, bran flakes and toasted oats cereals. 
- Canned vegetables are often high in sodium so choose ones labeled “low sodium” or “no salt added”.
- Select 100% fruit juice rather than juice drinks. Fruit juice concentrate costs less than ready-to-drink juice. If you don’t drink milk, try calcium-fortified orange juice for stronger bones. 
- Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products since they are lower in unhealthy saturated fat. Save money by buying blocks of cheese to grate yourself rather than purchasing grated cheese.
- Compare cost per serving on meats rather than cost per pound. Chuck roasts and bottom round roasts are usually good buys.

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- **Food Safety for Leftovers**
- **Stretching Food Budgets: Food Stamps**

Keep Leftovers Safe to Eat

The number one rule for food safety is to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Serve food as soon as it is prepared, and refrigerate any leftovers within two hours. Wrap leftovers in foil, plastic wrap or zipper sealed bags or place in covered containers before refrigerating. Reheat leftover foods until steaming hot before serving.



Most leftover foods, if properly wrapped and refrigerated, are safe to eat two to three days after they are prepared. Foods that need to be stored for a longer period of time should be wrapped and frozen in the freezer section of your refrigerator. It is a good idea to label and date them.

Veggie Bites

2 (8 ounce) packages light cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup light mayonnaise or salad dressing
1 package dry Ranch style dressing mix
1 1/2 to 2 cups finely chopped fresh vegetables (such as broccoli, celery, cauliflower, carrots and bell peppers)
1 cup low fat grated cheddar cheese
16 flour tortillas (whole wheat if available)

Blend together the cream cheese, mayonnaise and dry dressing mix. Finely chop the vegetables. Combine the cream cheese mixture, vegetables and grated cheese. Spread each tortilla with filling and roll up tightly.

Wrap with waxed paper or plastic wrap and chill. Cut in slices and serve with toothpicks.



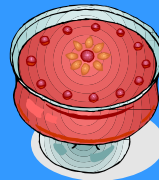
Yield: 32 servings

May also be served as a spread with wheat crackers or as a dip with baked chips.

Calories: 128; Fat: 38% daily value (based on 2,000 calorie diet); Saturated Fat: 2 grams; Sodium: 221 mg

Orange Sherbet Treat

1 large can fruit cocktail, canned in its own juice
1 large can pineapple chunks, canned in its own juice
2 small boxes dry sugar free orange gelatin
8 ounces fat free sour cream
16 ounces fat free whipped topping
(Use sugar free whipped topping to lower the grams of sugar.)



Drain fruit. Sprinkle drained fruit with dry gelatin. Mix well. Add the sour cream and whipped topping and blend. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Yield: 8 servings

Calories: 221; Total Fat: 0 g; Saturated Fat: 0 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium: 455 mg; Carbohydrates: 30 g; Dietary Fiber: 1 g; Sugars 23 g; Protein 12 g

What's the Purpose of Food Stamps?

The goal of the Food Stamp Program is helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. Food stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper.

The Food Stamp Program can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact 1-888-LAHELPU or visit www.dss.state.la.us.

Provided by LSU AgCenter Community Nutrition Programs

Visit our Web Site: www.lsuagcenter.com

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To find out how to apply, call 1-888-LAHELPU or visit: www.dss.state.la.us to download an application for Food Stamps

Information Adapted From: NutriNews from University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension