

Smart Choices

Nutrition News

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Are Coupons Worth It!

Coupons are one way to help lessen the cost of buying groceries. But are coupons always worth the savings at the checkout?

The actual amount you will save by using coupons may be less than you think.

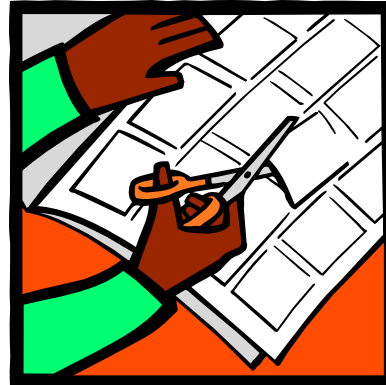
Most coupons we see in magazines or circulars are for national brands which typically cost about 25 percent more than store brands.

Plus, coupons are most often for higher-priced convenience foods that may still not be good buys even after the coupon discount is taken.

Some grocery stores give coupons with register receipts and those are usually a better deal, but there are additional and more effective ways to cut your grocery bill while actually improving your diet.

You can usually eat better for less by using more

prepare from scratch foods, eating out less and cutting back on less healthy items such as sodas, juice drinks, chips, doughnuts and candy.



◆ Frozen orange juice concentrate costs about half as much for a prepared cup as carton juice.

Let's take a closer look at these tips.

Prepare from scratch foods are usually healthier than the more convenient form of the same food because they are free of added fat, sugar and sodium. Most are at least 50 percent cheaper.

- ◆ Healthier brown rice—10¢ per cooked cup vs. instant rice 20¢ a cup or seasoned rice mixes—30¢ a cup.
- ◆ Plain oats in the 42 ounce container costs three times less per cooked cup than instant, flavored oats.

The average family spends almost half of its food budget on eating out. Healthy, home-cooked meals can be less than half the cost of eating out and can provide more nutrition for the money.

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Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup prepared lasagna,
1/7 of recipe (256g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 200 Calories from Fat 50

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 6g 9%

Saturated Fat 2g 10%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 40mg 13%

Sodium 440mg 18%

Total Carbohydrate 23g 8%

Dietary Fiber 3g 12%

Sugars 4g

Protein 15g

Vitamin A 15% • Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 10% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less Than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less Than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less Than	300mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less Than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Quick Skillet Lasagna

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1 can (16 ounce) tomatoes
- 1 can (6 ounce) tomato paste
- 1 Tablespoon fresh parsley (optional)
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
- 2 cups cooked egg noodles
- 3/4 cup cottage cheese, lowfat
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese



Instructions:

1. Chop onion. Cook beef and onion, in a medium skillet until beef is brown and onion is tender. Drain off excess fat.
2. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, parsley, water, and garlic powder to the beef mixture. Bring to a boil and simmer until sauce is thick, about 25 minutes.
3. Cook noodles in the saucepan according to package directions. Drain.
4. Add cooked, drained noodles to the beef mixture. Stir to prevent sticking.
5. Mix cheeses and drop by spoonfuls over the mixture.
6. Cover and heat over low heat about 5 minutes. Refrigerate leftovers.

Serves: 7

Serving Size: 1 cup

Choosing A Healthy Frozen Meal

Frozen meals are big sellers in the grocery stores. The variety has gone far beyond the traditional TV dinners. The challenge is to select frozen meals that you will not only enjoy but will satisfy your hunger and are healthy. Make sure you read the "Nutrition Facts" panel on the package when making your selection and check the serving size listed on the label. One meal may supply you with more than one serving. As a general rule, look for meals that include plenty of vegetables as those will provide more nutrition. Go for meals that include brown rice or whole grains when possible and choose those made with leaner cuts of meat, fish or chicken.

1. Aim for those that have calories per serving between 250 and 300.
2. Choose frozen meals with less than 4 grams of saturated fat per serving.
3. Select meals with less than 600 milligrams of sodium per serving.
4. Look for meals which provide at least 3 to 5 grams of fiber.

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. The program is available to all eligible persons. 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. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using food stamps. 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.

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