

Fit & Lean in 2014

3.2: Eating Healthy on a Budget

Follow these tips for how to eat the most nutritionally beneficial foods while staying within your grocery budget:

- Plan ahead. Using the tips we've shared with you about meal planning, you should be able to build a specific list of food items you need for the week. Never shop without the list and buy only what is on your list!
- Consider no-name brands. These are often the exact same product as the brand name but for less money. Compare the nutrition facts and don't pay more for the same item just for the branding.
- Buy in bulk. A great place to save money is to purchase items like grains in bulk. You not only save money by getting the item without the packaging but you are also helping the environment at the same time!
- Start a Meatless Monday in your house! Meat tends to be a big budget item on most grocery lists and simply cutting it out one day per week can have big impacts on your health, your budget & the environment.
- Avoid convenience foods and make your own! Pre-packaged foods are priced higher due to their convenience factor. Making your own is almost always less expensive plus you have the benefit of knowing exactly what you are feeding yourself & your family.
- Shop the perimeter of the grocery store first. The healthiest foods are placed on the outside of the grocery store while the middle aisles tend to be full of pre-packaged, convenience foods. Avoid the middle aisles and you won't be as tempted to buy things that aren't on your list.



Source: www.webmd.com, www.eatrightontario.ca

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These foods are healthy & cost-effective for households on a budget:



- Legumes – buy dry and cook them yourself for the most cost savings. They also make a nutritious alternative to meat and are packed with protein, iron & B vitamins.
- Brown rice – great for side dishes, rice salads, casseroles, soups & stews.
- Whole wheat pasta – great for hot & cold pasta dishes. Watch serving sizes and always serve with vegetables!
- Nonfat plain Greek yogurt – makes a great snack or breakfast and works great as a smoothie ingredient. Save money by purchasing the large container over the individually sized cups.
- Old-fashioned oats – a great multi-purpose item: eat hot or cold for breakfast, make your own granola, or use it in recipes like meatloaf or muffins!
- Frozen vegetables – an easy side dish, easy to add to soups & stews and once thawed, can be kept in the fridge for snacking on! Cost works out to about \$0.25 per serving and is a great way to enjoy produce even out of season.
- Fresh, bagged spinach – ditch the iceberg lettuce and start using spinach in your salads for an awesome dose of vitamin A, C, calcium and folic acid. Added to a smoothie, it will affect the colour but not the taste!
- Canned tuna – delicious on a salad, in a casserole or in a whole-wheat wrap. A great low-cost protein, but make sure you are buying tuna that is canned in water and not oil!
- Eggs – so versatile and another great low-cost protein! Keep a few hard-boiled in the fridge for a quick snack anytime!

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