

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR

EATING HEALTHY ON A BUDGET



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The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and resources for individuals and healthcare providers who assist persons with prediabetes and diabetes on how to eat healthy on a budget. It was initially developed as a resource and information listing for the Prediabetes Learning Collaborative in 2023.

Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

Find local help with food, transportation, housing, employment, finances, physical and mental health: **Kynect Resources**

Addressing Diabetes and Food Insecurity

The prevalence of food insecurity among people with diabetes was much higher among Medicaid enrollees than those with other types of insurance. Nearly one-third (32%) of Medicaid enrollees with diabetes were food insecure, 24 percentage points higher than their counterparts with private insurance (7%). Food insecurity was highest among Medicaid enrollees with insulin-dependent diabetes; 44% were food insecure, over six times higher than their counterparts with private insurance. Research shows that food and nutrition insecurities put people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Adults who experience food and nutrition insecurity are 2 to 3 times more likely to have diabetes than people who do not experience food and nutrition insecurity. Source: [The Prevalence of Food Insecurity Is Highest Among Americans for Whom Diet Is Most Critical to Health](#)

OFTEN THOSE WHO WOULD MOST BENEFIT FROM NUTRITIOUS AND HEALING FOODS ARE LEAST ABLE TO AFFORD THEM

A Call to Action:

Having access to nutritious food is a basic human need.

- Food security means having access to enough food for an active, healthy life.
- Nutrition security means consistent access, availability and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being, prevent disease and, if needed, treat disease.

Healthcare providers can identify persons with food insecurity. If they say yes to one or both of the questions on the Food Insecurity Assessment Tool linked below, you can help with problem-solving.

Food Insecurity Assessment Tool and Resource List

References:

- [Strategies to Reduce Food Insecurity for People With Diabetes: A Call to Action](#)
- [Food and Nutrition Insecurity and Diabetes: Understanding the Connection](#)
- [NIH Food Accessibility, Insecurity and Health Outcomes](#)

Food Insecurity Resources

- [National Farmers Market Directory](#)
- [USDA's CSA Directory](#)
- [USDA Food Assistance Programs](#)
 - [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#)
 - [SNAP-Ed programs](#)
 - [Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#)
 - [Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [USDA National Hunger Hotline and Clearinghouse](#)
- [Find a Local Food Bank](#)
- [WhyHunger Hotline](#)
- [Meals on Wheels Find Meals Tool](#)



Eating on a Budget Resources

- [Plan Eat Move- Kentucky Nutrition Education Program](#)
- [MyPlate Kitchen](#)
- [Healthy Eating on a Budget MyPlate](#)
- [Spend Smart Eat Smart](#)
- [Smart Shopping on a Budget](#)
- [Tasty Recipes on Your Budget](#)
- [SNAP Recipes](#)
- [SNAP Ed Connection](#)
- [Canned Beans- Open the Possibilities Recipes](#)
- [Nutrition on a Budget USDA](#)



6 Tips for Eating Healthy on a Budget from CDC

1. Plan Your Recipes

ADAPT RECIPES TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

Consider special diet needs for those with diabetes or heart disease. Modify recipes to add more non-starchy vegetables or lower fat ingredients when possible.

USE RECIPES WITH COMMON INGREDIENTS

Using the same ingredients for multiple meals doesn't mean they all have to taste the same. Using different herbs and spices can turn common ingredients into meals with different flavors. If your favorite protein is chicken, cook one whole chicken and use it for several different dishes. You can have chicken and vegetable stir fry one night and chicken fajitas another night.

FIND WAYS TO STRETCH A RECIPE

You can stretch meals by making dishes that freeze well. Search online for delicious healthy recipes like soups and casseroles that are budget-friendly and easy meals to stretch. For example, make a large batch of vegetable soup or white bean chicken chili that lasts throughout the week, or freeze the leftovers to have later. You'll also spend less time in the kitchen than if you make a different meal every night.

2. Shop with a List

Once you've planned your meals for the week, create a shopping list with the ingredients you need. Having a shopping list makes shopping easier and faster, which helps you reduce impulse buys and take home only the items you need. It also helps you avoid extra trips to the grocery store to buy forgotten items.

If your shopping list includes nuts, beans, or grains, consider buying in bulk to save money and keep your pantry well-stocked for future meal planning.

3. Buy Frozen or Canned

When it comes to fruits and vegetables, frozen and canned options can be healthy alternatives to fresh produce. Additionally, they cost less and last longer. Many frozen veggies and fruits have resealable packaging that allows you to use what you need and store the rest. This way you can enjoy your favorites even when they aren't in season.

When choosing canned options, choose those in water, not syrup, and avoid added sugar or salt.

Skip frozen options that have added butter or cream sauces. Choose options without sauce or look for packaging that reads "lightly sauced" to avoid extra sugar, salt, and empty calories.

4. Cut Costs with Coupons

Coupons are a great way to save on your grocery bill, especially if you have your shopping list planned out. You can search for online coupons for the ingredients on your list. With over a billion coupons available each year, you will likely find a coupon that you can use. If you can't find a coupon for blueberries but find one for strawberries, consider swapping to save money. Even low-value cents-off coupons can add up. Just by using five 50-cents-off coupons a week, you can end up saving \$100 each year. Remember to only use coupons on items you will use.

5. Buy Store Brands

Buying generic or store-brand items can save you 20% to 30% on your food bill. Items like canned tomatoes, milk, olive oil, and frozen fruits and vegetables are usually available in a cheaper store-brand version.

Be sure to compare the ingredients list and nutrition facts panel to ensure you're not getting a product with added ingredients. Learning which store brands your grocery store carries can help you reduce your total at the cash register.

6. Try Growing a Garden

Growing fruits and vegetables is a great way to save money and have fresh produce at your fingertips. Even if you don't have a yard to grow a garden, many fruits, vegetables and herbs can grow in pots on patios or balconies. A constant supply of fresh produce at home can save you money at the store.



Tips for Supermarket Savings

- Plan out a few meals
- Consider meatless meals: plant-based proteins are generally more affordable than meat and fish. Think beans and tofu
- Check your pantry before shopping: use what you have before you buy more
- Purchase foods and snacks that are filling, like nuts and fruit
- Don't shop on an empty stomach
- Purchase items when in season or on sale
- Be flexible with meal plans
- Purchase nonperishable staple foods in bulk like; grains, rice beans, lentils
- Buy store-brand or generic when possible
- Scan discounted produce and store flyers for sales
- Join your store's loyalty program for more discounts and coupons
- Don't purchase more perishable items than you can use or have a plan to freeze items
- Practice mindfulness during meals: avoid distractions while eating and enjoy food



Understanding the Price Tag

Retail Price: is the price you pay for one single item.

Unit Price: is the cost of an item by its size or unit and is often listed as pound, ounce, quart or other measurement and is useful when comparing 2 items.

Total Price ÷ Size = Unit Price

UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
\$0.05 per oz	\$1.62
\$0.12 per oz	\$0.72

Example:

What is the unit price of a 6 oz. yogurt that has a retail price (the price you pay) of \$0.72?
 $\$0.72 \div 6 \text{ oz.} = \0.12

The unit price of this yogurt is \$0.12 per oz.

Handout Links

[Grocery Game Plan Weekly Calendar](#)

[Grocery Game Plan Grocery List](#)

[Eat Right When Money's Tight](#)

[Eating Healthy on a Budget](#)

[Order Team Nutrition Materials](#)

[Meeting Your MYPLATE Goals on a Budget](#)

[Baking Ingredient Replacements](#)

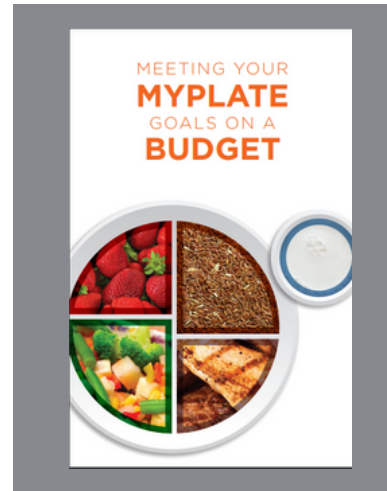
[Portion Sizes](#)

[Culinary Medicine Eating Healthy Handouts](#)

[National Nutrition Month 2023 pdf](#)

[Eating Right on a Budget](#)

[Aisle by Aisle Pocket Guide](#)



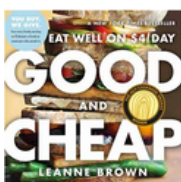
Cookbook Links



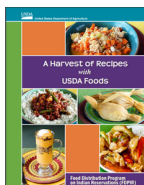
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[The \\$5 Chef – How to Save Cash & Cook Fast](#)
Cost 9 dollars



[Good Enough](#)
Cost 2-13 dollars



[Healthy Eating on a Budget](#)
Free pdf download

Shopping Tips

Fruits and Vegetables

- Buy in season [Seasonal Produce Guide](#).
- Choose fruit canned in 100 % fruit juice.
- Choose vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added".
- Rinse canned fruit and vegetables that are in heavy syrup or salt solutions.
- Stock up on frozen vegetables without sauces or added butter if you have the space.
- Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables last longer than fresh fruits and vegetables.

Protein

- Some low-cost protein foods include beans, peas and lentils such as kidney beans, lima beans, split peas and garbanzo beans (chickpeas).
- Beans, peas, and lentils cost less than a similar amount of other protein foods.
- To lower meat costs, buy the family-sized or value pack and freeze what you don't use.
- Choose lean meats like chicken or turkey. When choosing ground beef, make sure it's lean (at least 93% lean/fat-free).
- Seafood doesn't have to cost a lot. Try buying canned tuna, salmon or sardines. These items store well and are a low-cost options.
- Don't forget about eggs. They're a great low-cost option that's easy to cook.

Grains

- Make half your grains whole grains. Look for whole wheat, brown rice, bulgur, buckwheat, oatmeal, whole-grain cornmeal, whole oats, and whole rye.
- Check ingredient lists and pick the items that have a whole grain listed first.
- Rice and pasta are budget-friendly grain options.
- Choose hot cereals like plain oatmeal or whole-grain dry cereal.
- Try new whole-grain snack ideas, like switching to whole-wheat crackers or popping your own popcorn.

Dairy

- Choose low-fat or fat-free milk. These have just as much calcium but fewer calories.
- Buy the larger size of low-fat plain yogurt instead of single flavored yogurt. Then add your own flavors by mixing in fruits.
- Choose cheese products with "reduced fat" or "low-fat" on the label.
- Check the sell-by date to make sure you're buying the freshest products.

Pantry Aisle and Check Out

- Drink water instead of sodas or other high-sugar drinks. Water is a cheap option and has zero calories. Take a reusable water bottle when on the go.
- Save time, money, and calories by skipping the chip and cookie aisles.
- Choose the checkout lane without the candy shelves, especially if you have children with you.

Healthy Lower Cost Foods

- Beans
- Lentils
- Frozen vegetable and fruit
- Canned vegetable and fruit
- Milk
- Yogurt tubs
- Oatmeal
- Corn tortillas
- Salsa
- Fruit in season
- Brown rice
- Pasta and sauce
- Peanut butter
- Canned tuna
- Soups-homemade or canned
- Chili

Keep Food Safe Resources

4 Steps to Food Safety.

1. **Clean:** Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces
2. **Separate:** Don't cross contaminate
3. **Cook:** to the safe temperature
4. **Chill:** Refrigerate and freeze food properly



Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label

- [Aisle by Aisle](#)
- [The Nutrition Facts Labels](#)
- [What's with the Nutrition Facts Label](#)
- [Using the Nutrition Facts Label and MyPlate to Make Healthier Choices](#)



Food as Medicine

Food as Medicine is a philosophy where food and nutrition aid individuals through interventions that support health and wellness.

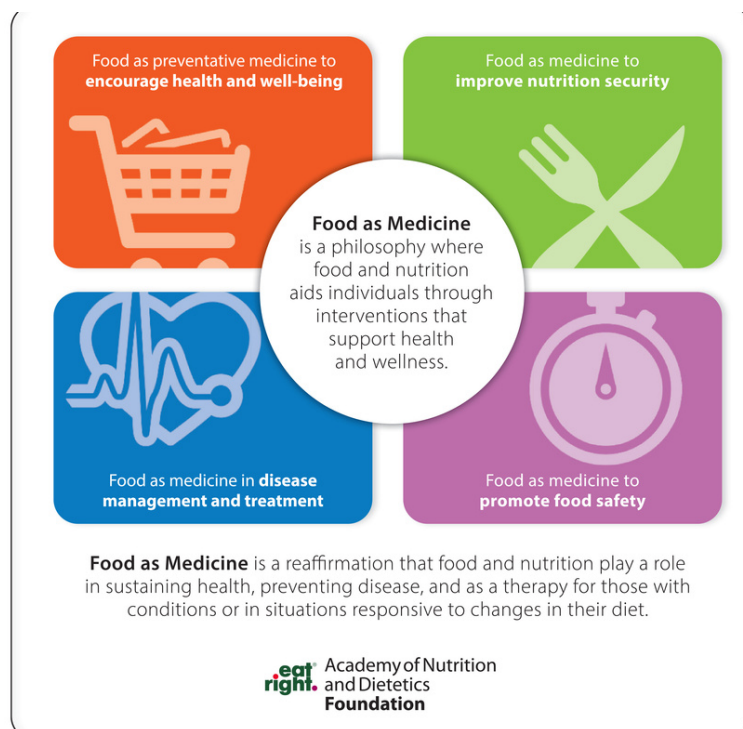
Focus areas include:

- Food as Preventative Medicine to encourage health and well-being;
- Food as Medicine in disease management and treatment;
- Food as Medicine to improve nutrition security; and
- Food as Medicine to promote food safety.

Food as Medicine is a reaffirmation that food and nutrition play a role in sustaining health, preventing disease, and as a therapy for those with conditions or in situations responsive to changes in their diet.

References:

- 1 Yoder AD, Proaño GV, Handu D. Retail Nutrition Programs and Outcomes: An Evidence Analysis Center Scoping Review. J Acad Nutr Diet. 2020; In Press.
- 2 Downer S, Berkowitz SA, Harlan TS, Lee Olstad D, Mozaffarian D. Food is medicine: Actions to integrate food and nutrition into healthcare. BMJ. 2020; 369: m2482.



**"Let Food Be Thy Medicine"
-Hippocrates (400 BC)**

[Download the "Food as Medicine definition" graphic](#)