



TAKE CONTROL

for Your Future

Save money on your food bill and still eat smart

We all know how important it is to eat healthy, but you may ask "How can I eat healthy and still feed my family on a limited budget?" Here are some tips that will help you do both.

Prepare and eat more meals at home

Eating at home is one of the best ways to save money on your food bill. Don't be fooled by dollar menu or all-you-can-eat deals. They may sound good, but cooking simple foods at home is less expensive and better for your waistline. When you cook at home, you are in control of what you cook, how it is prepared and how much is served.

Plan — Set aside 30 minutes a week to plan what you will serve each night for dinner. Make a shopping list based on what you need to carry out your plan. Get the whole family involved.

Keep it simple — Select simple recipes with few ingredients that use simple cooking techniques.

Turn leftovers into planned-overs — Cook larger quantities of one or two entrees and plan to serve the leftovers at a meal later in the week.

Shop smart

When you are watching your food dollars, you have to be a smart shopper. This is especially true if you and your family also want to eat smart.

Buy local and in-season — Support your local farmers and buy produce from farmers' markets, farm stands or community-supported agriculture (CSA).

Take advantage of specials — Look for specials in the newspaper or online. Plan your week's menu around what is the best buy.

Clip coupons — Use coupons on foods you normally buy. Choose a store that offers double or triple coupons. This can be a real money saver especially if you use coupons on foods that are already on sale.

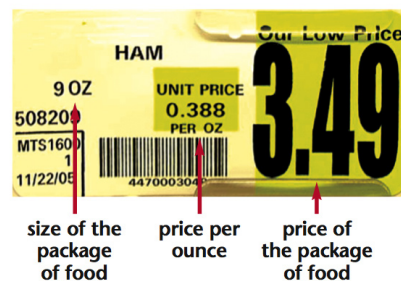
Use store loyalty cards — These cards are free and will offer even more sale items each week.

Buy generic or store brand — Compare prices of store and/or generic brands. If quality is similar, purchase the cheapest brand.

Buy in bulk — Check the price of bagged produce such as apples, oranges, potatoes or onions, they may be cheaper than buying single items. Make sure you plan your menu to use all that you buy. Purchase large portions of meats — whole chickens, large bags of chicken parts and family packs. Divide these into smaller meal-sized containers and freeze.

Use unit pricing — Unit pricing will help you see what is the best value by giving you the price per ounce of an item. You can eas-

USE UNIT PRICING TO SELECT THE BEST VALUE.



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ily compare prices of different sizes and brands. The largest size is not always the cheapest.

Skip single-serving packages — Single-serving packages are convenient, but are very costly. Purchase large containers of crackers, yogurt, cottage cheese, carrots, etc. and make your own single-serving size packages using reusable plastic containers.

Choose healthy and budget-friendly items

Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables — Fresh fruits and vegetables are great low-calorie choices in a healthy diet. However, fresh may not always be budget-friendly. Purchase fruits and vegetables that are in season. When fresh produce is too expensive, purchase canned

or frozen fruits and vegetables with no added sugar or sauce.

Dried beans — Beans are a great source of protein and fiber. They are a low-cost meat alternative. Canned beans are a time saver, but for a real budget-friendly meal choose dried beans. Look on the package for cooking instructions.

Skip the snack isle and choose tap water over bottled water — Snacks and beverages can really wreck your food budget. Limit snacks to healthy items, not chips and cookies. Water should be your number one beverage of choice. Bottled water is convenient, but can be expensive. Purchase reusable water bottles, and use tap water instead. Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator so you have cold water anytime.

For more information on the Web, go to:

www.nctakecontrol.com

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