



Be Smart!
Be Active!
Be a Leader!

Who Says Healthy Has to Be Expensive?

Creating Affordable and Healthy Meals

Hurried meal selections can often be unhealthy and unnecessarily expensive. However, by following some basic steps, eating healthily on a budget is possible. Meal planning, smart shopping, and low-stress cooking options can help to make mealtime convenient, affordable, and nutritious for the whole family.

To create balanced meals without breaking the bank, consider the following suggestions:

Plan your meals. Select the meals you would like to prepare for the week, while keeping in mind the foods you already have in your kitchen. Healthy and affordable meal and recipe ideas from the USDA and other resources are available in the references section at the end of this publication. Next, create a list of groceries that includes not only the ingredients you will need to prepare the meals, but also other healthy foods for snacking, such as milk, fruits, and vegetables.

Shop smart. Several tips can save money when shopping for food:

- Use coupons and sales flyers.
- Buy store brands and participate in your store's loyalty program.
- Buy large sizes of canned or frozen foods, and purchase meats and dairy items on sale when possible.
- Buy produce that is fresh and in season from local farmers' markets or the grocery store.
- Avoid going to the grocery store hungry, which can lead to poor choices.

Use low-stress cooking practices. To keep meal preparation simple, have an organized and clutter-free kitchen, cook extra food, and freeze leftovers, and include meals that don't have to be cooked, such as salads. When cooking for your family, enjoy time with family members by asking them to help, and for gatherings with extended family, have potluck dinners where everyone pitches in and brings a dish.



Reference Links

- [My Plate: Healthy Eating on a Budget](#)
- [At the Store — Save Money and Shop Healthy](#)
- [Save Money by Cooking Smarter](#)
- [My Plate: Eat Healthy on a Budget](#)



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