

Feeding Your Family



With a little extra planning, your family can eat healthy snacks and meals while sticking to your budget. Here are some budget-friendly and healthy ideas.

Helpful Tips

- Always make a shopping list before you shop. Planning ahead saves time and money.
- When shopping, kids may argue or ask for things that are not on your list. To stay focused, try to shop without them. Take the kids with you when you have more time.
- Shop when you are not hungry. You will be less likely to buy things that are not on your list.
- Purchase pre-packaged foods (like frozen dinners, packaged rice mixes, cookies, and cakes) sparingly. They can be costly. Also, most are high in salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats. Instead, find a few simple and healthy recipes that your family enjoys.
- Save time and money by making one meal for the whole family, instead of cooking for each family member.
- Grow your own herbs and vegetables in your garden or window box.
- Have your kids help plan and prepare meals.

Healthy Snacks

- **Fruit:** Fruits cost less when they are in season. For example, eat oranges in the winter and berries in the summer. Find a local farmers market to save even more money. Keep fruit in a bowl on the countertop so it is within reach.
- **Yogurt:** Buy large tubs of low-fat yogurt. Then divide it into 1-cup servings. Top with whole grain cereal, fresh fruit, or 2 tablespoons chopped nuts or granola. Remember, kids younger than 4 years should not eat nuts.
- **Eggs:** Keep hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator for an easy grab-and-go snack.
- **Trail mix:** Combine nuts and dried fruits with whole grain pretzels or whole grain cereal. Keep small portions in airtight containers.
- **Popcorn:** Air-pop popcorn for a low-calorie, high-fiber, and cheap snack.





Meal Ideas

- **Beef stew:** Cook an inexpensive cut of beef, like chuck or shank, with potatoes, onions, and other vegetables from your pantry or freezer. Make a double batch, and freeze half for another week.
- **Pasta:** Mix whole grain pasta with frozen or in-season vegetables and a tomato sauce. To save money, use canned tomatoes when fresh ones are not in season.
- **Soup and sandwich:** Dish up warm bowls of bean, tomato, or chicken soup. Serve with grilled cheese or turkey sandwiches on whole wheat bread.
- **Pizza:** Purchase or make your own dough. Top with tomato sauce, vegetables, and low-fat cheese. To save more money, use leftover vegetables and buy a block of cheese to grate at home.
- **Tuna casserole:** Make this family favorite with tuna packed in water. Save money by buying large (12-ounce) cans of tuna instead of several small cans. If you use cheese, use just a little (no more than 2 tablespoons per serving). This saves money and limits unhealthy fat.



Find Healthy Recipes

Try these Web sites for healthy recipes:

- **Cooking Light:** www.cookinglight.com
- **Eating Well:** www.eatingwell.com
- **Small Step:** www.smallstep.gov (Click “Eat Better” to get to recipes.)
- **Food and Health:** <http://foodandhealth.com>
- **Meals Matter:** www.mealsmatter.org

