

HEALTHY EATING ON A BUDGET

BY NICK ROSE, M.S., PCC NUTRITION EDUCATOR

It's no surprise the healthiest foods at the supermarket usually are not the cheapest. But with some smart planning and culinary creativity, you can eat well and save some dough.

BEFORE SHOPPING



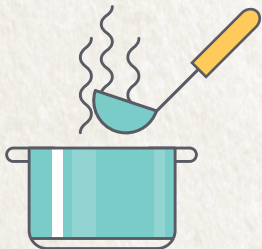
- Plan ahead: Use a list when grocery shopping to prevent impulse purchases and to ensure you buy enough food for several meals.
- Consider purchasing a case of pantry staples like canned tomatoes, beans, pasta or soups to get a case discount (10 percent).
- Don't shop when you are hungry. Research confirms hungry people spend more money and purchase less healthy foods. New research from Cornell University finds that eating an apple right before shopping leads to healthier food purchases.

AT THE STORE



- Buy in bulk, not in boxes. Bulk foods usually cost 25 to 50 percent less than equivalent packaged products.
- Consider the 3-pound bag of potatoes, onions, carrots and apples. These staple items are about 25 percent cheaper per pound when pre-bagged.
- Buy frozen produce. It's usually cheaper and has a much longer shelf life. Bonus: It's also prepped, washed and ready to go!
- Look for value packs of meat (larger packages) for the best price per pound.
- Whole chicken is a better value than other cuts.

AT HOME



- Cook from scratch whenever possible and always make enough for leftovers.
- Keep your fridge organized: label/date leftovers and place them at eye level so you'll grab them first, rather than something new/fresher.
- Turn leftovers into something new. Last night's rice can become tonight's fried rice, roasted chicken makes great chicken tacos, mashed potatoes can become potato pancakes, and sautéed kale goes into a veggie frittata.
- Stretch your meat with grains or veggies. Add mushrooms to chicken and beef dishes and grains to your meaty stews. A little meat can go a long way.
- Get flavor from bulk herbs and spices rather than pre-made sauces.

ECONOMICAL ALTERNATIVES FOR POPULAR FOODS

These easy food swaps save money without losing the nutritional benefits. Amaranth has as much protein as quinoa, and cabbage is almost as nutritious as kale.

POPULAR FOOD	ALTERNATIVE	PRICE SAVINGS (% SAVINGS)*
Bulk quinoa	Bulk amaranth	80%
Kale	Cabbage	75%
Grilled chicken (salad topper)	Hard-boiled egg	75%
Salmon fillet	Canned salmon	55%
Canned beans	Dry beans	55%
Boxed lettuce/salad greens	Head of lettuce	38%
Extra virgin olive oil	Bulk EVOO	35%
Yogurt (6oz) x5	Yogurt (32oz carton)	35%
Fresh berries	Frozen berries	30%
Chicken breast	Chicken thighs	18%

*All prices are for organic items (except salmon), matched based on weight or serving size.

Nick Rose has taught nutrition courses at Bastyr University and Virginia Tech. As a PCC Nutrition Educator, he teaches free "Walk, Talk and Taste" classes at PCC.