

Transcript

Making healthy food choices often begins here, in the aisles of the supermarket or local farmers market. Your goal, when shopping, should be to select foods that will help you reach your recommended daily nutrition goals. You want to shop, not just limit your choices to the foods that are familiar to you. Look around for delicious healthy foods. Be adventurous, try something new.

These smart healthy choices include fresh fruits and vegetables, breads and pastas, lean meats and fish. Buy fresh foods instead of canned or packaged versions. Fresh foods are usually healthier choices because they have less fat and sugar than packaged foods. Choose fresh foods that are in season, so they aren't too expensive. Picking fruits and vegetables that are in season can help you to add variety to your meals.

If buying fresh vegetables takes too big of a bite out of your food budget, opt for frozen fruits and vegetables. Most have the same nutrients and will keep longer. Just because vegetables and fruits are frozen doesn't mean that they are a bad food choice. In fact, many of them are frozen at their peak so they haven't lost any nutrients. It can be a good idea to keep some frozen vegetables to use for times when you don't have any fresh available. Read the food label and make sure the fruit isn't packed with a lot of added sugar to add sweetness, or the vegetables aren't covered in a cheese or cream sauce.

When buying grains, like breads, rice, or pasta, a great step toward healthy is to choose whole grain products. Whole grain is one of the best ways to get more fiber into your diet. Look at the food label and pick the one with the higher fiber. Remember your goal of 20-25 grams per day!

Maybe pick a new grain that you haven't had before, for instance you could give quinoa a try. Or pick wild or brown rice; or steel cut oatmeal. And if you are eating gluten free, read the food label or find the gluten free section of your local grocery store.

When you don't have the food label handy, or you are preparing foods without a label, try to select foods that are lower in fat. Fat has more calories than protein or carbohydrate, so higher fat foods also give you extra calories.

For example, meat can be high-fat, medium-fat, lean and very lean. Each package of ground beef has two numbers to look for. They are the percentage of lean meat to fat content of the package. Pick the ground beef with the lower amount of fat.

Compare the nutritional values of a three-ounce hamburger made from 80/20 ground beef to the leaner hamburger made from three ounces of 95/5 ground beef. As you can see, choosing lean or medium lean most times will reduce the amount of fat and calories you eat.

And instead of going to your normal grocery store you can also try out the local farmers market for fresh fruits and veggies that are local to you. The people selling the foods often have great suggestions for healthy ways to prepare the foods they grow.

When you are food shopping you can make healthy food choices. Choose fresh foods or buy them frozen. Avoid fats and added sugars. Choose whole grain products. Cut down on the amount of processed foods you buy. Choose lean or very lean meats. Read the food label.

Once you begin putting your food shopping skills to work, you'll find there are many healthy choices available for you to eat healthy, and still enjoy it. You'll be able to fill your cart with delicious and healthy foods.