

# Eat Healthy Foods for Less

## Free Online Seminar at [azblue.com](http://azblue.com)

Do you try to eat healthy, but find that healthy foods are just too expensive? Log in to [azblue.com](http://azblue.com) and watch the “Eat Health Foods for Less” seminar to learn how a smart shopping strategy can help you put healthy foods on your table all the time.



Urban myth spoiler alert! Cracking your knuckles doesn't give you arthritis. There are no alligators in the sewer tunnels in New York City. And, most importantly, you don't have to be as rich as a king to enjoy a healthy diet. Below are some myths, tips, and tricks to an affordable healthier diet, check out these and much more in the “Eat Healthy Foods for Less” Seminar.

### Myth: Fast Food Is Cheaper

Do the math: A fast-food budget for a family of four costs about \$50 a day. And that's the cheapest fast food. Upgrade your experience to a sit-down restaurant and you'll spend a lot more. Yes, grocery shopping and cooking are more time-consuming than grabbing a meal at the drive-thru. Ultimately, though, you'll end up with more money in your pocket by eating healthy meals at home.

### Make a Shopping List

Plan a week's worth of meals in advance, then make a detailed list of the ingredients you need. A paper list is fine, yet your mobile phone can make your trip to the supermarket even more convenient. A grocery app can help you create your list, give you coupons and offer you discounts, and some even tally your total as you shop.

### Buy Fewer Prepared Foods

A little extra time in the kitchen can save you big money in the long run. You'll also be able to save on calories, salt, sugar and fat by making your own meals. Here are a few ways to make it happen:

- Shred your own lettuce.
- Brew your own tea or coffee for iced drinks.
- Make your own pizza.
- Pop popcorn instead of buying salty, fatty chips and crackers.
- Add flavor to plain yogurt with fresh or frozen berries.

In addition, a well-stocked pantry makes healthy cooking that much easier. Stock up on dried or canned (low-sodium) beans, no-salt-added canned tomatoes, whole-grain pasta, your favorite spaghetti sauce and other items you reach for often. To save on fruits and veggies, buy them at their peak season. Fruits and vegetables that are in season are nearly always less expensive and generally of higher quality.

### Buy Store Brands

Grocery retailers are expanding options in their private labels. Whole-wheat crackers, brown rice pilafs, whole-grain breakfast cereals — the selections extend to every aisle. More and more shoppers are finding that store brands are as good as if not better than their national brand counterparts.

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## Buy in Bulk

The cost of packaging can be up to one-half of the total cost of a particular food. Cut out the packaging and you can cut down on the price. Shop the self-serve bulk section where you can buy dried fruits, nuts, grains and other staple ingredients.

## Beans Aren't Just for Chili

Beans and lentils have it all — protein, fiber, flavor and value. They're versatile too. Keep a few cans of your favorite variety of beans in the pantry to quickly turn a side-dish salad into a main course. Make your rice pilaf interesting by adding some lentils. Puree chickpeas or white beans for a tasty dip.

Look for canned beans with the lowest amount of sodium. If you have the time to cook them, dried beans are an even better value than canned beans.

## Cook Once, Eat Twice

Save time and money by preparing plenty of food at dinnertime so you can have enough for a second meal. Try some of these tempting suggestions for repurposing leftovers:

- Shredded leftover chicken adds protein and interest to canned veggie soup.
- Grill extra peppers and onions for a tasty omelet at breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- Toss flaked, grilled salmon with baby spinach for a super salad.

## Go Meatless

A pound of lean ground beef costs about \$4. You can buy three cans of beans for that price. Or two packages of tofu. Or more than a dozen eggs. Eating a meatless meal one or two nights a week is a simple way to cut down high grocery bills as well as on saturated (animal) fat. Stir-fried extra-firm tofu and veggies make a satisfying low-cost meal. Caramelized onions and a little goat cheese turn beaten eggs into a gourmet frittata.

## Affordable Seafood

Fish and shellfish are good for our brains and veins. It's low in fat and rich in protective omega 3 fatty acids. But too often fresh seafood is expensive. The real bargains are in the freezer case. Large fishing vessels flash-freeze their catch on board ship to ensure freshness. This keeps prices cheaper by as much as 40 percent. Check out the three frozen favorites when shopping:

1. Pacific halibut (mild and firm-fleshed)
2. Sea scallops (choose vacuum-packed)
3. Shrimp (choose American)

## Summary

Diet improvements should not cost more than not-so-healthy eating. Healthy eating on a budget is totally possible. It does require more awareness when shopping for groceries and a willingness to spend a little more time in the kitchen. You'll soon find that the delicious, healthy, affordable meals are worth the extra effort. Log in at [azblue.com](http://azblue.com) to hear more about cost saving healthy options in the "Eat Healthy Foods for Less" seminar.