



Budget-friendly nutrition ideas for families

Eating healthy is essential for overall well-being and child development, but quality food options can come with a high price tag. However, with some planning and smart shopping, it is possible to eat well without breaking the bank.

Plan your meals

- Create a weekly meal plan:** If time allows, outline meals for the week, incorporating affordable and nutritious ingredients.
- Make a grocery list:** Stick to your list to avoid impulse buys that can drive up costs.
- Set a budget:** Determine how much you can afford to spend on groceries and track expenses to stay within limits.
- Use coupons and discounts:** Look for sales, coupons, and discount programs to reduce costs on essential items.

When shopping:

- Buy generic or discount:** Store-brand products often provide the same quality as name-brand versions but at a lower cost.
- Shop seasonally:** Fruits and vegetables are cheaper and fresher when in season.
- Know your benefits:** Be sure to understand the full benefits you may receive from SNAP and WIC to get the most out of your shopping.

Buy in bulk & choose affordable staples

- Grains (rice, oats, and pasta)
- Frozen and canned vegetables
- Eggs
- Peanut butter
- Potatoes
- Applesauce

Cook at home and reduce waste

- Prepare meals in large quantities and freeze portions for later use.
- Repurpose leftovers into new meals, such as making soups, stir-fries, or wraps.
- Store food properly, use scraps for stocks or composting, and be mindful of expiration dates.
- Prep ingredients in advance to save time.

Use government assistance programs

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program):** Provides financial assistance to purchase groceries. Visit their website to see if you qualify: <https://www.pa.gov/services/dhs/apply-for-the-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Program):** Available for pregnant women through a child's fifth birthday. Helps mothers and young children obtain nutritious foods. Visit their website to see if you qualify: <https://www.pawic.com/>
- Local food banks and pantries:** Many communities have community-based ways to access food on a weekly to monthly basis at no cost.

As you work toward building healthier habits for your family, continue planning ahead, shopping smart, and exploring creative ways to make nutritious meals affordable and accessible for everyone.

For more support and guidance, visit: chslearn.org/resources/for-families

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