

CHEAP *AND* HEALTHY



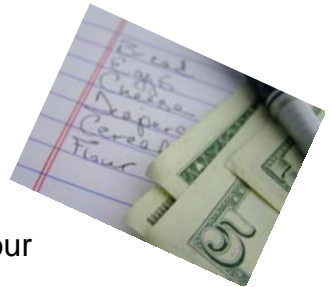
There is a common misconception that eating healthfully — including lots of fruits, vegetables whole grains, lean meat and low-fat dairy products — is beyond your budget. You can make your healthy lifestyle work for you, even in hard economic times!

Here are some easy ways to stretch your food dollars while sticking to your healthy lifestyle after surgery:

- Stock up on **non-perishable staples** like beans, brown rice, whole grain pasta, oatmeal, barley, and canned beans and vegetables
- **See what is on sale**- browse sale ads, or visit your supermarket online before you go shopping
- Take the time to **plan your meals** for the week and make a grocery list
- Use **generic or store brands**
- Look for bigger containers or boxes that you can **portion out at home**
- Use the **unit price** to compare prices of similar items
- Find **coupons**, but use them only for things that you would normally buy
 - Shop the **perimeter of the store** for fresh products (produce, lean meats, low fat dairy)
 - Remember that shopping in the store for ingredients for a meal will almost always be cheaper than buying that meal in a restaurant
- Become familiar with **freezing** as a method of storage. You can save by buying in bulk at stores like Costco or Sam's Club and eat at your leisure Check out: <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/uga/FreezingPreparedFoods.pdf>
- **Shop the Seasons!** Check out this site to see what is fresh in South Carolina each month: <http://www.epicurious.com/articlesguides/seasonalcooking/farmtotable/seasonalingredientmap>
 - November: apples, cucumbers, lettuce, lima beans, peppers, scallions, tomatoes, sweet potatoes
 - December: apples, lettuce, sweet potatoes
- If an item is not in season and you can't freeze it for later use, it is often cheaper to buy **frozen or canned** versions of the food. (Keep in mind that you want to use canned fruits in water or their own juice and canned vegetables with no added salt).
- You will always pay a price for **convenience!** If you can buy something and portion it out at home in Tupperware or glad ware, you can make your own convenience foods and save!



SALE



Here is our list of the top healthy foods you can find in the grocery store

Beans

Dried beans and peas are just as nutritious as the fresh or canned varieties. They take longer to prepare, but you get a greater volume of beans. You can cook a large batch, portion them out and freeze them for later. Or, use canned beans. Canned beans are a cheap protein and fiber source. Remember to rinse off the salty brine and add beans to salads, use in chili or soup, or just heat and eat!



Eggs or egg products

Eggs are a great source of protein any time of day and can typically be bought cheaply in bulk. Try hard-boiling 2 dozen eggs and using on green salads, in tuna or chicken salad, or just sliced with a dash of salt and pepper. Remember that eggs can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.



Canned tuna

There's no denying that fish is good for your brain and your heart, but buying fresh fish can be a little tough on the budget. Cans of chunk light tuna are less expensive than albacore and deliver just as much omega-3 with less potentially harmful mercury. In addition to mixing it up for sandwiches (using low calorie mayo of course), try tossing it into a tomato sauce or putting some on top of a salad.

Oats

High in fiber and complex carbohydrates, oats have also been shown to lower cholesterol. And they sure are cheap—a dollar will buy you more than a week's worth of hearty breakfasts. They cook great in the crock pot overnight so you can wake up to a hot, steamy breakfast. (These are real oats not the instant ones!)

Nuts

Nuts are packed with good-for-you fats—unsaturated and monounsaturated. They're also a good source of protein. Because they're so nutrient-dense, you only need to eat a few to get the nutritional benefits. Try peanuts, walnuts, and almonds for your best value and nuts bought in the shell are lower in cost. Nuts can be frozen in airtight containers for up to 6 months.



Tofu

Not just for vegetarians anymore, tofu is an inexpensive protein source that can be used in both savory and sweet recipes. It's high in B vitamins and iron, but low in fat and sodium, making it a healthful addition to many dishes. You can also buy on sale in aseptic packaging so it has a long shelf life.



Dairy

Although the cost of dairy is on the rise, remember that you can buy reduced fat cheeses in block form and shred or slice them at home. Try buying low fat cheeses in bulk and freezing them in 8-ounce blocks. Skim milk can also be frozen if you find a deal at the grocery store. Use coupons or store-brand versions and freeze away!

Fruits and Vegetables



Carrots

Carrots come in all sorts of sizes, and in various forms. If you don't mind doing some peeling and cutting of your own, you can buy whole carrots for cheap and cut them to "baby size" yourself!

Sweet potatoes

A giant sweet potato can cost under a dollar and can make a couple meals! Sweet potatoes are packed with beta carotene, potassium, fiber and calcium. Try baking them or slicing them into "fries" and then roasting them in the oven with a little PAM and chile powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, or any other combination of spices. Or nuke in the microwave in 5 minutes, mash with some applesauce and a dash of cinnamon.



Kale, Collards, and other greens

This dark, leafy green is loaded with vitamin C, antioxidants, and calcium. Like most greens, it usually costs a dollar a bunch. Chop and use in soups and chili, or sauté and season with garlic.

Apples

Apples are inexpensive, easy to find, come in portion-controlled packaging, and taste good. Slice and serve with peanut butter or low fat cheese. Or slice and bake in the oven and top with fat-free vanilla yogurt for dessert.



Broccoli

Broccoli contains tons of nutrients—calcium, vitamins A and C, potassium, folate, and fiber - plus, it's low in calories and cost. Cut up raw florets for a crunchy snack or toss into soup, stir fry or salad.

Butternut Squash (and other winter squashes)

This beautiful gourd goes both ways- savory or sweet. However you prepare the butternut, it will not only add color and texture, but also five grams of fiber per half cup and Vitamin A and C. When in season, butternut squash and related gourds are usually less than a dollar a pound.

