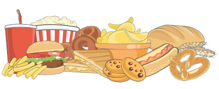
HOW TO EAT HEALTHY ON A BUDGET

Nutritious food doesn't have to drain your wallet. Here are 5 real-world strategies to prioritize healthy foods while reducing cost — plus 3 delicious recipes to get you started.

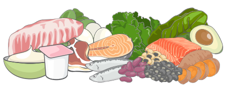
1 PRIORITIZE NUTRIENTS

We need calories to meet immediate energy needs — but it's nutrients that keep us healthy long-term.

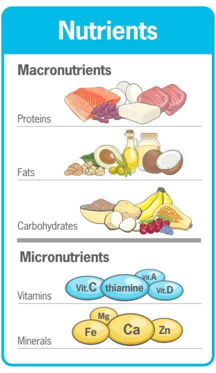
NUTRIENT-POOR **NUTRIENT-RICH**



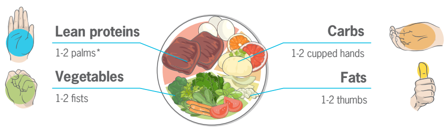
Nutrient-poor foods may be cheap and filling, but they can lead to deficiencies and health problems.



Nutrient-rich foods may cost a little more, but they keep us satisfied and help protect our health.



AIM FOR A BALANCE OF NUTRIENTS AT EACH MEAL

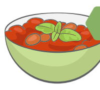
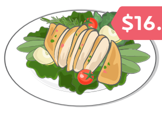
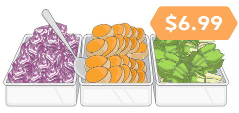
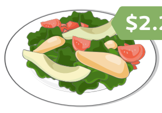


*Scale portions up or down according to activity levels and body composition goals.

For how to build balanced, appropriately-portioned meals:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/calorie-control-guide-infographic
For more information on nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/color-chart
For delicious ways to prep veggies:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/dont-like-vegetables-infographic

2 MAKE MOST OF YOUR MEALS

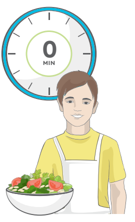
Buying ready-to-eat prepared foods is generally much more expensive than buying whole ingredients, which you can then prepare yourself.

RESTAURANT	GROCERY	MAKE IT FROM SCRATCH
$4.19 TIM HORTONS CHILI	$3.49 AMY'S ORGANIC CHILI - CAN - 398ML	 $2.25 DR. JOHN'S CHILI*
$8.99 BOOSTER JUICE 16OZ SMOOTHIE	$2.49 BOLTHOUSE FARMS B-LINE SMOOTHIE 15OZ	$2.00 PN SUPER SHAKE
 $16.99 SPINACH SALAD WITH GRILLED CHICKEN	 $6.99 WHOLE FOODS SALAD BAR	 $2.25 SPINACH SALAD WITH LEFTOVER ROASTED CHICKEN

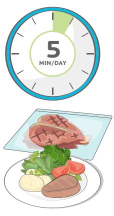
For more ideas on how to build simple, delicious meals from scratch:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/create-the-perfect-meal-infographic
***For Dr. John's Chili recipe:**
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/weekly-meal-prep-infographic

3 PRE-PREP YOUR MEALS

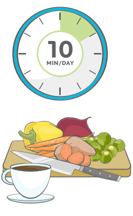
A little more time in the kitchen can yield big money-saving results by keeping you out of your take-out app or the drive-thru lane.



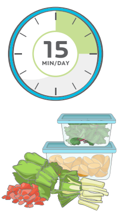
Ask roommates, a partner, or older kids to help. (They may even enjoy the meal more after chipping in!)



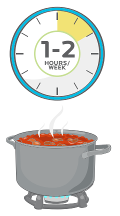
For most meals, cook more food than you need so you have leftovers for eating and repurposing.



Pair extra food prep with other tasks, like listening to the news or drinking your morning coffee.



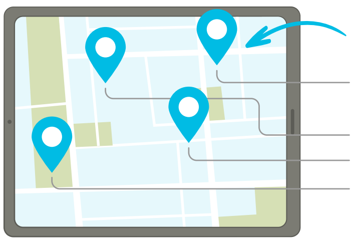
Do quick-prep batches, like hard-boiling eggs, chopping veggies, soaking beans, freezing herbs, etc.



Cook big batches of more time-intensive foods like stew, casserole, granola, grains, beans, meat, etc.

For more smart strategies to work food prep into your busy schedule:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/weekly-meal-prep-infographic
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/make-time-for-exercise-and-nutrition-infographic

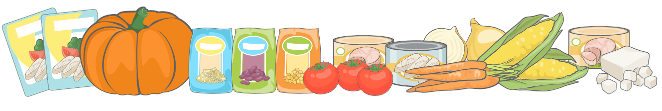
4 BECOME A SAVVY SHOPPER



MOST COST-EFFECTIVE PLACES

- Family-run urban neighborhood fruit and vegetable stores
- Bulk food stores
- Discount grocery stores
- Farmers / community supported agriculture (CSA)
- Your own garden

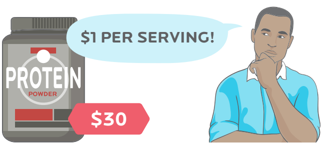
MOST COST-EFFECTIVE FOODS



- Dried beans / grains
- Seasonal produce
- Frozen fruit & vegetables
- Less popular cuts of meat (like organ meats or bone-in cuts), canned fish, or plant-based proteins (like tofu, tempeh, or beans / lentils)

CONSIDER THE UNIT COST

Some items might have a higher price, but the cost per serving is very low.



THE LOW-COST, NUTRIENT-RICH ALL STAR CAST

PROTEINS	CARBS	VEGETABLES	FATS	FRUITS	FLAVOR UPGRADES
EGGS ($0.35 / portion)	**BROWN RICE** ($0.90 / portion)	**CABBAGE** ($0.20 / portion)	**SUNFLOWER SEEDS** ($0.45 / portion)	**BANANAS** ($0.15 / portion)	**ONIONS** ($0.10 / portion)
CANNED FISH ($1.00 / portion)	**LENTILS** ($0.55 / portion)	**CARROTS** ($0.15 / portion)	**PEANUTS** ($0.15 / portion)	**SEASONAL APPLES** ($0.50 / portion)	**GARLIC** ($0.05 / portion)
WHOLE CHICKEN ($1.90 / portion)	**POTATOES** ($0.30 / portion)	**BEETS** ($0.15 / portion)	**GHEE/BUTTER** ($0.20 / portion)	**MELON** ($0.50 / portion)	**SPICES** ($0.05 / portion)
TOFU ($0.90 / portion)	**BEANS** ($0.40 / portion)	**ROMAINE LETTUCE** ($0.30 / portion)	**FULL FAT MILK/YOGURT** ($0.35 / portion)	**ORANGES** ($0.65 / portion)	**HERBS** ($0.15 / portion)
FLANK/TRI TIP STEAK ($2.00 / portion)	**OATS** ($0.20 / portion)	❄ **FROZEN SPINACH** ($0.50 / portion)	**EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL** ($0.20 / portion)	❄ **FROZEN BERRIES** ($0.90 / portion)	**CITRUS** ($0.15 / portion)

5

AVOID FOOD WASTE

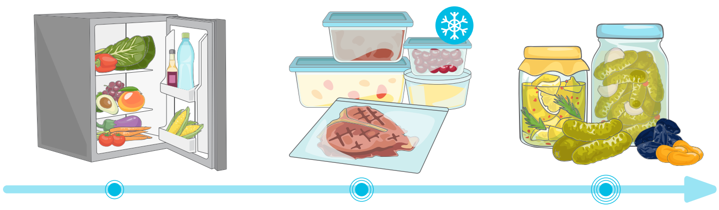
When perfectly good food rots in the fridge, it's like throwing money away.

PLAN BEFORE YOU SHOP

Look at the week ahead to see how many meals you'll need, and how much time you have for food prep. Make a list and stick to it to avoid overbuying and impulse purchases.

LEARN TO PRESERVE FOOD

Extend the life of foods from days to months (or even years) with these tips.



DAYS

When whole fruits or vegetables on the counter get ripe, transfer them to the fridge to extend their life by a few days.

MONTHS

When food in the fridge won't be eaten soon, transfer to an airtight, freezer-safe container or re-sealable bag and store in the freezer for 3-6 months. Lightly steam or boil veggies before freezing.

YEARS

Learn how to make jams, pickles, dehydrated / fermented goods, smoked / cured meats, etc. Some of these methods can preserve foods for years.

3 DELICIOUS, BUDGET-FRIENDLY RECIPES

Here are 3 easy, nutritious recipes to try, using items from the Low-cost, Nutrient-rich All-Star Cast.

ROAST CHICKEN WITH ROOT VEGETABLES & YOGURT DILL SAUCE

20 MIN PREP

1.5 HOURS TOTAL

4 SERVES

$5.00 PER PORTION

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium potatoes, cut in half
- 2 medium beets, peeled and cut in half
- 2 large carrots, peeled and cut in half
- 1 red onion, peeled and cut into quarters
- 1 whole roasting chicken
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- Rosemary, sage, thyme, whole sprigs (optional herbs)
- Whole garlic cloves, husk on (optional)
- 1 cup plain lowfat yogurt
- 1 Tbsp finely chopped fresh dill
- Salt & fresh pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS:

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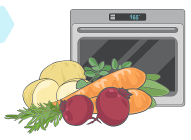

Preheat oven to 375 degrees fahrenheit. Prepare vegetables.

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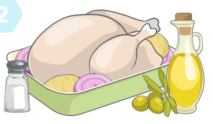

Season chicken with salt and pepper and place in a large roasting pan, scattering the vegetables evenly on the bottom. Drizzle everything with olive oil and add optional herbs and garlic.

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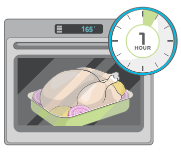

Roast for about an hour, turning vegetables after about 30 minutes.

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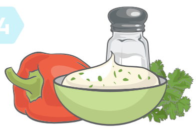

Mix dill and yogurt in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

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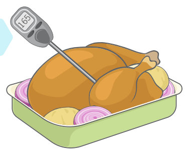
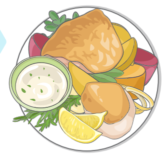


Remove pan when an instant thermometer placed in hip joint reads 165 degrees or when juices run clear.

6



Serve on a platter with dill yogurt and lemon wedges.

TUNA & RICE SALAD BOWL WITH APPLE SLAW & CARAMELIZED ONION VINAIGRETTE

20 MIN PREP

1 HOUR TOTAL

2 SERVES

$3.50 PER SERVING

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- ¼ head cabbage, grated
- 1 apple, grated
- 2 small onions, sliced
- 4 Tbsp apple cider vinegar, divided
- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, divided
- ¼ head romaine lettuce, finely shredded
- 2 small cans tuna, strained
- 2 Tbsp sunflower seeds
- Salt & pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:

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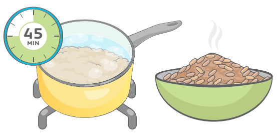

Boil 1 part brown rice in 6 parts salted water until tender, about 45 minutes. Strain and set aside.

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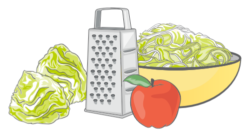
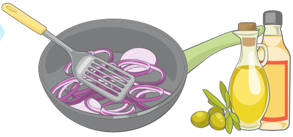


Place grated cabbage in a large colander. Season generously with salt and let sit for about 30 minutes. Squeeze out excess water and place cabbage into a clean bowl. Add 2 Tbsp of cider vinegar. Add grated apple and toss to combine.

3



Saute onions with 1 Tbsp of olive oil in a nonstick pan over medium heat until caramelized, about 15 minutes. Add 2 Tbsp of apple cider vinegar and remaining 1 Tbsp of olive oil. Stir to incorporate and set aside.

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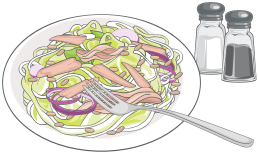


Build bowl from bottom up with shredded romaine, rice, cabbage slaw, and tuna. Spoon caramelized onion vinaigrette over salad and sprinkle sunflower seeds to garnish. Season with salt and pepper.

SPICED LENTIL-CARROT SOUP WITH YOGURT & CRISPY ONIONS

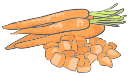
10 MIN PREP

50 MIN TOTAL

12 SERVES

$0.75 PER SERVING

INGREDIENTS:



4 carrots, diced

2 small onions, diced

3 cloves garlic, smashed

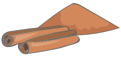
3 Tbsp olive oil

1 tsp ground cumin

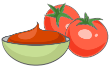
1 tsp ground coriander

1 tsp ground turmeric

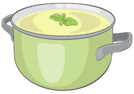
1 tsp ground ginger



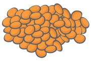
½ tsp ground cinnamon



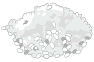
3 Tbsp tomato paste



3 quarts vegetable or chicken stock

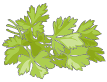


2 cups red lentils, rinsed



1 Tbsp kosher salt, plus more to taste

Yogurt to garnish (optional)



Cilantro to garnish (optional)

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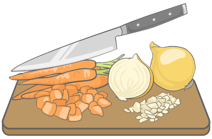

Peel and dice carrots and onions.

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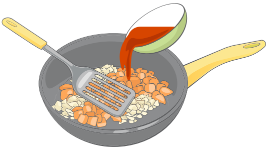

In a large pot set over medium heat, saute carrots and onions in olive oil until lightly caramelized and translucent. Add spices and tomato paste and stir well to incorporate.

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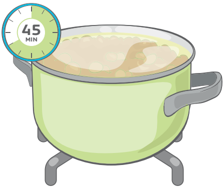

Add vegetable stock, lentils and salt and stir to combine. Bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring often, until lentils and carrots are soft and soup is thickened, about 40 minutes. Season to taste with salt.

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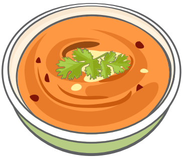

Puree with a hand blender or keep chunky if preferred. Garnish with a drizzle of yogurt and chopped fresh cilantro.

Developed in collaboration with Community Food Centres Canada.

For the full article explaining this infographic, visit:
https://www.precisionnutrition.com/eat-healthy-on-a-budget-infographic

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