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## Healthy Food Shopping

The items we put in our grocery shopping carts week after week can boost kids' health — and give them a positive attitude toward nutritious food. But those tempting displays of tasty snacks and fruity drinks can make it easy to end up with a cart overloaded with stuff that doesn't offer much nutrition.

These tips can help you keep the focus on healthy options:

### Make a List

A list can keep you on track, especially if you base it on a meal plan for the week. Focus your week's menus on wholesome, nutritious ingredients such as fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, lean meats, poultry, and fish, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.

When feeding your family:

- Serve vegetables and fruits every day.
- Limit juice and sugary drinks.
- Use vegetable oils, such as olive and canola, instead of butter, shortening, or lard.
- Choose whole-grain rather than refined-grain breads, cereals, pasta, and rice.
- Choose nonfat or low-fat milk and dairy products.
- Serve more fish.
- Reduce salt.

### Other Healthy Options

OK, fruits and veggies are on your shopping list. What else? Consider adding these staples:

**Protein foods:** Fish (fresh and frozen, also canned light tuna and salmon) or shellfish; lean chicken and turkey (no skin); lean beef and pork. Non-meat choices include tofu, cooked beans and peas (like black beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas), nuts and seeds, and eggs.

**Grains and cereals:** Whole-grain bread, tortillas, pasta, and cereals; oatmeal; brown rice; bulgur (cracked wheat); barley; and quinoa.

**Dairy:** Low-fat or nonfat dairy products, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and calcium-fortified milk alternatives like almond and soy milk.

### Follow a Healthy Path in the Store

If you shop in a grocery store, focus your shopping on the store's outer aisles. These usually contain the healthiest foods — produce, dairy products, and fresh meat and fish.

Next, move to the inner aisles, where you'll find important items like canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, cereals, and baking supplies. But those inner aisles also contain less healthy foods and snacks. When it comes to making healthy choices, visit these aisles later in your shopping trip and avoid snack aisles altogether.

### Choosing and Storing Produce

When possible, choose fruits and vegetables that are in season. Buying in-season produce is often a bargain in taste and price. Visit farmer's markets and produce stands in your area for the best that local growers have to offer, but try not to buy more than you can use or store before it spoils.

A good way to teach your kids about seasonal produce is by visiting a farm, orchard, or berry patch where they

can pick the fresh goodies themselves.

When you don't pick it off the vine yourself, how do you know produce is fresh? From green beans to cantaloupe, all fruits and vegetables give hints about their ripeness and freshness:

- Choose vegetables that look fresh and colorful. Most should be crisp and firm. Don't buy vegetables if they're limp or showing signs of decay.
- When choosing fruits, avoid bruised pieces, but remember that a perfect exterior doesn't necessarily mean the best quality.
- Careful storage means that fresh produce will last longer. Some vegetables will keep in the refrigerator for a couple of days. Others, including cabbage and root vegetables like carrots, will keep even longer. Store potatoes and onions in a cool, dark place for maximum freshness. Plan to use delicate fruits and vegetables first, and hardier ones later in the week.

### **Frozen and Canned Fruits and Veggies**

Fresh produce is delicious, but frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are convenient. Frozen and canned fruits and veggies last longer and are as nutritious as fresh. Choose products without sauces or added sugar. With canned fruits, look for ones that are packed in juice, not syrup.

And just as you wouldn't buy fruit that's bruised, don't buy a package of frozen vegetables if the bag is ripped or the box is soggy or torn. With canned products, watch out for any can that has a large dent, looks swollen, or leaks.

### **Make Room for a Treat**

As you focus on a healthy lifestyle for your family, you might be tempted to ban snacks and treats. But completely cutting out sweets and favorite snacks can backfire. If kids feel deprived, they might overeat off-limits foods when they're not home.

Instead of taking a hard line or completely giving in, find a balance. Try not to talk about "bad foods," and let your kids choose an occasional treat at the grocery store or at home. A child who likes chips and dip, for instance, could choose a lower-fat bag of chips and a jar of salsa at the store. When you get home, put out small bowls of chips and salsa and it's snack time!

**Reviewed by:** Mary L. Gavin, MD

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# Healthy Food Shopping

Post Test – November 2022

**Please keep this test and certificate in your files for Licensing.  
You do not need to send it in to our office or the State.**

1. The items we put in our grocery shopping carts week after week can boost kids' health and give them a \_\_\_\_\_ attitude toward nutritious food.
2. Focus your week's menus on wholesome, nutritious ingredients such as fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, lean meats, poultry and fish, whole grains and \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ dairy products.
3. Do not use vegetable oils, such as olive and canola, instead of butter, shortening or lard.  
True or False?
4. When feeding your family, choose whole grains rather than \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ breads, cereals, pasta and rice.
5. Non-meat protein choices include tofu, cooked beans and peas, nuts and seeds and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. When possible, choose fruits and vegetables that are in \_\_\_\_\_.
7. A good way to teach your kids about seasonal produce is by visiting a farm, orchard or berry patch where they can pick the fresh goodies themselves.  
True or False?
8. Store \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in a cool dark place for maximum freshness.
9. Fresh produce is delicious, but \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ fruits and vegetables are convenient
10. With canned products, watch out for any can that has a large dent, looks \_\_\_\_\_ or leaks.

October 2022 Quiz Answers. 1.Immunization 2.Vaccinated 3.True  
4.Schedule 5.Healthy 6.Side Effects 7.False 8.Whooping Cough 9.Booster  
10.Everyone



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Quality Child Care as demonstrated by completion of this course

Given this date \_\_\_\_\_

Elizabeth Curtis  
Training Coordinator  
Southwest Human Development Services