Food selection when going to the supermarket

Shopping at the supermarket store can be overwhelming, with so many options and labels that can be confusing to understand. Learning how to make healthy, balanced, and safe food choices when shopping will help you improve your health, save money, and avoid ultra-processed foods that can be harmful to your health.

Plan Before You Go

Planning, reading labels, and selecting healthy foods can significantly improve your diet and help prevent disease.

Preparation can go a long way in helping you stay focused, avoid impulse purchases, and make healthier choices.

- Make a shopping list based on the week's meals.
- Avoid going to the supermarket hungry; this helps reduce unnecessary purchases.
- Set a budget.

Inside the supermarket

- Fresh foods are usually found along the edges of the supermarket.
- Processed products are usually located in the central aisles.

Check product dates and conditions

To ensure food safety:

- Check the expiration date
- Make sure packages are not open and that cans are not dented or damaged.
- Keep foods like meat, cheese, and milk cold.

Prioritize fresh and natural foods

Choose foods that are as fresh as possible and in their natural state:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Legumes (beans, lentils, and chickpeas)
- Lean meats, fish, and eggs
- Dairy products

The less processed a food is, the better it is for your health.

Learn how to read nutrition labels

Reading labels at the supermarket can help you choose the best option. Avoid buying products just because of the brand or advertising.

- Pay attention to:
  - Serving Size
  - Calories
  - Added sugars
  - Sodium and saturated fats
- Avoid products high in sugar, trans fats, and excessive sodium.

Reduce ultra processed foods

Ultra-processed foods often contain additives and excessive amounts of salt, sugar, or fat. Some examples include:

- Potato chips
- Fast food
- Candy
- Sodas

Choose healthy proteins:

- Fish
- Skinless chicken
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds

Buy fewer processed meats, such as ham and deli meats.

Basic products you should have in your pantry

- **Grains:** brown rice, oats, quinoa, and whole-wheat pasta.
- **Canned foods**: beans, lentils, tomatoes, tuna, pumpkin.
- **Oils and vinegars**: olive oil, avocado oil, and apple cider vinegar.
- **Spices and seasonings**: garlic powder, cumin, paprika, and turmeric.
- **Nuts and seeds**: almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, almond butter.
- **Shelf-stable milks:** UHT milk, oat milk, almond milk, coconut milk.
- **Basic baking ingredients**: flour, cocoa powder, maple syrup, and vanilla.

Frozen food

To extend the shelf life of certain foods, such as fish, fruits, and vegetables, consider frozen options

These options help extend the shelf life of foods.

The nutritional value of the food is not affected by freezing; it will be just as nutritious as a fresh one.

Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line
1-844-347-7801
TTY/TTD 1-844-347-7804
APS Health
787-641-9133

References:

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