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WELCOME!

Use this as a guide to fill your home with the healthiest food options possible.

Here are 6 simple tips for success at the grocery store:

1. Before you set out for the market, plan your meals for the week and create a list to shop from. This will save you time, money and set you up for healthier meals options throughout the week.
2. Shop the perimeter (the outer section) first where fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat and fish are usually located.
3. Avoid the center aisles where the junk food is lurking.
4. Choose "real" foods like 100% whole-grain items that are as minimally processed as possible. You can always add a little healthy sweetener and salt and spices yourself.
5. Steer clear of foods that are targeted for children. It's hard to eat the junk food if it's not in the house.
6. Avoid foods that contain more than five ingredients, artificial ingredients, or ingredients you can't pronounce.

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Go Seasonal whenever possible

Fall – Great choices include: sweet potatoes, apples, turnips, squash, brussels sprouts, chard, pumpkin, apples, pears, cranberries, pomegranates, artichoke, arugula, beets and beet greens, bok choy, bell peppers, carrots, cauliflower, corn, eggplant, garlic, radishes, sweet potatoes, yellow and green squash, apples, cranberries, figs, limes, melon, peaches, pears, plums, raspberries, tomatoes, etc.

Winter - Hearty fruits and vegetables help us get through the cold weather, including: Turnips, mushrooms, potatoes, pumpkin, onions, garlic, squash, parsnips, cauliflower, carrots, sweet potatoes etc.

Spring - Light and refreshing foods, sprouts, asparagus, peas, snap beans, fennel, collard, lettuce, lemons, limes, cherries, apricots, mustard greens, etc.

Summer - Cool down from heat with cucumbers, watermelon, cantaloupe, peaches, blueberries, strawberries, kiwi, etc.

Produce

100% certified organic whenever possible, begins with #9 on the label. Choose a rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables since they hold many important vitamins and minerals. Combine different textures in salads and dishes. Look for firm and colorful fruits and always go for seasonal first, then add on.

Animal Protein

Be sure to choose lean cuts of meat (like round, top sirloin, and tenderloin), opt for skinless poultry, and watch your portion sizes. Quality is important. Go for organic, grass fed, free-range, organic as often as possible. Keep portions to the size of your palm.

Vegetarian Proteins

Tofu, seitan, tempah, beans, legumes. Stock up on canned, organic low-salt beans for preparing quick, healthy protein packed meals.

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Foods made from soybeans (non GMO) are some of the highest vegetarian sources of protein and contain about 15-20 grams per half cup. A soft tofu can be mashed with a fork or a firm tofu will be more substantial in texture and stand in for meat. There are many good options of seitan/tofu/tempeh varieties like strips and crumbles that are excellent to replace meat in chilies, burgers, etc.

Fish

Salmon is a popular choice because most people like it, Salmon is widely available and it's a good source of omega-3 fatty acids. Cod, tilapia and fish that swim near the surface have less mercury.

Eggs

Great source of protein, carbs and fat. Choose organic, free-range and vegetarian feed diet.

Breads

When shopping for breads, choose the least processed brands that are made from whole grains or sprouted grains and stay away from white breads. Many of the sprouted grain breads are found in the freezer section. Try a brand like Ezekial. Keep in freezer or store in fridge if consuming fairly quickly. Since they don't have all the "shelf-life" added chemicals they can go bad quickly if left out.

Canned and Dried Foods

Keep a variety of canned vegetables, fruits, and beans on hand to toss into soups, salads, pasta, or rice dishes. Go for organic and purchase the "no sodium added" or "low sodium" versions and opt for fruit that's packed in it's own juice without added sugar or syrup. Fresh water albacore tuna, healthy low-fat soups and nut butters are great to have on hand.

Dairy/Nut Milks

If you consume dairy, organic whole milk is an excellent source of bone-building calcium and vitamin D. Try switching to unsweetened almond or coconut milk. It's delicious in cereals and substitutes well for just about anything where you would use dairy milk.

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Cereals

The list of ingredients should be short and have no more than 6 grams of sugar and at least 4 grams of fiber. Carefully check granola labels as even the “low-fat” variety tend to have more fat and sugar than other cereals.

Sweeteners

To satisfy a sweet tooth increase sweet fruits and vegetables: carrots, yams, sweet potatoes, berries, melon, etc.

SUGAR ALERT!

One level teaspoon of sugar is 4 grams. Refined sugar draws vitamins out of our body in order to be digested. Refined sugar is hidden in so many things (sauces, ketchup, beverages, etc.) and is detrimental to our health. Read labels and look for low sugar content - aim for no more than 5-10 grams sugar per meal/snack (the less the better!)

Raw honey and maple syrup in moderation are good sweeteners and barley malt/molasses and brown rice syrup are good for buttery flavor.

Pure stevia or coconut palm sugar is also a better choice than white sugar and good for sweetening coffee and teas.

Oils And Fats

Cold pressed, unrefined and organic. Low temp: sesame and olive oils. High temp; coconut or grape seed.

For baking and high heat canola oil is a more heart friendly choice than vegetable oil. It also has cross uses ranging from salad dressing to baking and frying. However, care should be taken when choosing between different brands of canola oil. Canola oil is made from rapeseed, which is often sprayed with pesticides. Find a brand that is organic and pesticide free.

Use organic butter sparingly (try cooking with healthy oils instead.) Choose organic and no salt added.

Stocks and Broths

Low-sodium, organic vegetable broth is a great way to season and add moisture to many dishes and for soup bases. Stock up on boxed broth (or cubes since they are more economical and take up less space).

Pasta, Flour and Grains

Choose whole-wheat bread and pastas, brown rice, grain mixes, quinoa, bulgur, and barley. If your family isn't used to whole grains, start out with whole-wheat blends and slowly transition to 100% whole-wheat pasta and breads.

Try oat, spelt, buckwheat and almond flours. Try brown rice noodles, quinoa and couscous.

Cooking in vegetable broth can really add some flavor (choose a low sodium version, whenever possible).

Frozen

Stock your freezer with organic frozen fruits and vegetables. It's a convenient way to always have produce on hand, especially in the winter months, and very handy when you need a quick dish and the fruits are great for a quick-prep smoothie, and even to snack on if you're craving something sweet. Frozen veggies burgers are perfect for a quick sandwich or snack. Whole-grain waffles for the kids for snacks or meals can be jazzed up with fresh fruit.

Condiments

Condiments keep well in the fridge and usually last a few months or more. Stock up on Tamari for soups, grains, veggies and protein, Dijon mustard, balsamic and apple cider vinegar for salads/dressings. If using things like ketchup go for organic and low sugar/few additives.

Spices

So many flavors to choose from including: cumin, cayenne, turmeric, curry, sea salt, cracked black pepper and garlic to spice up vegetables and protein. cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg are excellent for teas and sweeter dishes.

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Herbs

Use fresh organic herbs when available to add aroma and flavor to warm dishes. Use organic dried herbs if fresh are not available: basil, garlic, oregano, rosemary, thyme and cilantro, parsley for salads, Asian and Italian style dishes.

Nuts and Seeds

Walnuts are considered the one of the healthiest foods full of anti-oxidants and high in omega-3 fats and other minerals. Choose raw walnuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts and chia, hemp and sesame seeds. They are great in many warm and cold dishes and sprinkled on salads and oatmeal/cereals and in smoothies. A quick handful is perfect for an energy boost and to quell hunger cravings.

Sea Vegetables

Seaweed is full of B vitamins and minerals. Kombu is great for soups. Store in glass jars. Nori strips (dried seaweed) are a tasty, crunchy snack.

Teas vs. Coffee

Teas are like a medicine cabinet, with green and black teas promoting digestion. Chamomile tea is wonderful for bedtime/relaxing. Go for herbal teas and make a pitcher of iced herbal tea with natural sweeteners. Organic and fair trade teas are the best.

Snacks

Handful of nuts (almond, walnuts, etc.), organic dried fruit (sparingly) trail-mix, low-sugar energy bars like Kind or Lara Bars. At least 70% dark chocolate, fresh veggies like carrots, celery, peppers with hummus, apple with smear of nut butter.

Liquids

Avoid soda/diet soda, super sugary “fruit” drinks or pre-made smoothies. Stock up on flavored seltzer water and make pitchers of herbal tea. Drink plenty of water with lemon.