

## Five Steps to Healthy Grocery Shopping for Your Waistline and Budget

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Grocery bills are elevating even for the most savvy shopper while food container sizes are getting smaller for the same price it used to be. If you are thinking about your health, let's not raise your blood pressure with these unfortunate facts!

**Fact:** Filling your shopping cart with healthy food will not blow the budget at the cash register!

**Step One:** Keep your grocery list healthy and skip the prepackaged high cost convenience foods. Benefit: This not only does this cut prices due to excess packaging, it reduces the carbon foot print (hence cuts pollution). Trans-fat filled muffins, microwavable popcorn, and cookies; salty chips and other packaged fat rich high calories (creamed spinach) boost the bill and can expand your waistline. You'll have plenty of grocery money to invest in high quality, healthy food and still stay within your budget. With a little practice, you can enjoy cheaper, delicious and healthier foods!

**Step Two:** Buy more grains and less animal protein. Change the bulk of what's on your plate. Instead of expensive meat, fish, and poultry replace them with whole grains such as beans, lentils, soy and whole grain wheat. Not only are grains cheaper but they offer more health benefits such as added fiber, no saturated fat and cholesterol. The USDA's Dietary Guidelines suggest a diet that is built around whole grains, vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy, accented by limited amounts of lean meats. Go to [mypyramid.gov](http://mypyramid.gov) to find the amounts of each food group for you. If you do eat animal protein on your plate, have about 2-3 fingers worth, then add about ½ of your plate should be filled with vegetables and fruits, the other ¼ filled with a whole grain such as rice, beans or pasta.

**Step three:** When buying fresh fruits and vegetables, go on Monday or Tuesday, often fresh sale items are available and staples such as ripened bananas, potatoes, onions and other vegetables are reduced to sell them quicker.

**Step Four:** Buy frozen and canned vegetables as an alternative, look for buy one get one free, before shopping cut and save coupons, make a list ahead of foods you need or recipes you want to prepare so you have all the ingredients. Nutrients are often higher in flash frozen vegetables.

**Step Five:** Variety is the spice of life and convenience is what everyone wants. Buy a different fresh and dried herb each week to add a different flavor in your meal. Examples: Rice, beans and cilantro, Rosemary and roasted potato, pasta, basil and tomato. Whatever fresh herb is leftover, freeze.

**Bottom Line:** Healthy grocery shopping is cheaper when you commit to buying healthy foods in place of packaged junk and plan ahead to reduce your intake of expensive animal protein and replace it with whole grains, vegetables and fruit. Bon Appetite! CALL (914)WEL-0123