



# Nutrition on a Budget

Eating healthy often seems to come with a high price tag. However, this doesn't need to be the case. Here are some tips to help you get the nutrients you need, while staying within your budget.



## What You Can Do

**Shop locally.** More and more, people want to know where their food comes from and how it is produced, and they also want to support their local economies. Opportunities exist in many communities for individuals to buy from local farmers, such as farmer's markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), networking sites and local food swaps. Buying directly from farmers not only eliminates the middle-market costs, but generally ensures fresher and more nutrient-dense food.

**If you want it, make it.** Try to make it a rule not to buy junk food, such as cookies and French fries. Instead, if you want them, make them. Not only is it cheaper, but you'll find that the time and energy it takes to make a batch of cookies may not be worth the craving.

**Check out serving sizes.** Americans have super-sized most meals, especially in restaurants. Return meals to their intended sizes to maintain health and weight, and save the rest for another meal. For more information on recommended serving sizes, visit: <http://www.mypyramid.gov/index.html>

**Grow, grow, grow.** Not everyone has the time or space to grow their own produce, but try to find at least one herb, vegetable or fruit that you can grow at home. For example, consider planting lettuce in a windowsill flower basket, or fresh herbs in a small flower pot. Not only will you find the taste of your homegrown fruits or veggies fresh and flavorful, but eliminating even one produce item for your weekly shopping list can add up in savings.

**Limit eating out.** Most people enjoy eating out for many reasons; however, eating out can be expensive compared with the cost of making a meal. Also, when eating out, you don't always know how healthy or unhealthy your food is. Try reserving one night a week or every few weeks for eating out and stick with your plan. This will save you money and will designate dining out as a special treat.

**Eat a variety of foods while focusing on whole grains, fruits and vegetables.** Sure, we all have our favorites, but switching to another vegetable or grain will keep you from getting stuck in a routine and not getting enough vitamins. For maximum variety and savings, consider incorporating only produce items on sale into your menu planning.

**Reinvent snack food.** Not only can snacks be costly but many products are marketed as 'healthy,' even though they contain empty calories, such as those from high-fructose corn syrup. An easy rule of thumb is to check the nutrition label and not buy anything that contains ingredients you do not recognize. As an alternative, buy fruit, vegetables and other healthy snacks in bulk or frozen and split with a friend or neighbor, while keeping them visible and ready to eat.

## To contact UW CareLink Faculty and Staff Assistance Program:



**Call:**  
1-866-598-3978



**Visit:**  
[www.apshelplink.com](http://www.apshelplink.com)  
(company code:UW)