

Smart Shopping

Some food choices are better than others. Next time you're buying groceries, remember these smart-shopping tips.

Produce Section

- Fresh vegetables are always a good choice; when you prepare them, you control the added fat and salt.
- Citrus isn't the only good vitamin C choice. Peppers, tomatoes, broccoli, cabbage, potatoes, greens (collard, mustard and turnip), cantaloupe, honeydew melon, kiwi-fruit, mango, papaya and strawberries are all rich in vitamin C.
- Edible skins of fruits and vegetables and seeds (berries, tomatoes, sunflower seeds) are good sources of fiber.
- Fruits and vegetables that are deep-colored green, yellow or orange throughout are high in vitamin A.

Deli-Counter

- Sliced roast beef, turkey and lean ham are good low fat choices.
- Pressed meats, lean ham and Canadian bacon are low fat but high in sodium.
- Turkey and chicken franks do not always have less fat than beef franks; some are merely smaller. Check nutrition label for sodium and fat content.
- To limit fat, try salads made without creamy dressings.
- If processed lunch meats are used, select those marked 95% fat free.

Dairy Case

- Look for part-skim mozzarella, scamorza and string cheese; part-skim or low fat ricotta; and "light" and reduced-calories cheeses that contain less than 5 grams of fat per ounce.
- Choose milk, buttermilk, cottage cheese and yogurt that are low fat and have less than 200 calories per serving.
- A little sharp cheese has more flavor and less fat than a larger amount of milder cheese.

Bread and Cereal Shelves

- Look for cereal with at least 2 grams of fiber, 8 grams or less sugar and 2 grams or less fat per serving.
- Compare portion sizes and calories on cereal labels; servings range from 3/4 to 1 cup.
- Look for the words "whole wheat" or "whole grain" at the beginning of the ingredient listing. "Wheat flour" is nutritionally equal to white flour.

Canned Food Aisles

- Choose 100% pure fruit juices instead of fruit "drinks" or "punches".
- The edible bones of canned salmon and sardines provide calcium. Canned beans, peas, corn and vegetables are quick and easy sources of vitamins, minerals and fiber.
- Check sodium levels of canned foods if your sodium level is restricted.

Packaged Products

- Limit products with palm, palm kernel or coconut oil high on their ingredient lists.
- Thick, unsalted pretzels are lower in fat and sodium than most other packaged snacks.
- Graham crackers, animal crackers, gingersnaps and fig bars have less sugar and fat than most other cookies.
- Most microwave popcorn is high in fat and sodium. Make your own in an air popper or with a limited amount of oil and butter-flavored substitute or cooking spray.
- Rice and pasta mixes are high in sodium; use only one-half the seasoning packet.

Fat, Oil and Dressing Selections

- Soft, tub margarines and spreads are made with unsaturated oils.
- Regular butter and margarine have 100 calories per tablespoon; spreadables have 80 calories per tablespoon; whipped varieties have 70 calories per tablespoon.
- Some "light" oils are light only in color and flavor, not in fat or calories. "Light" mayonnaise has about half the calories of regular mayonnaise.
- To cut fat, use diet dressings with less than 10 calories per tablespoon on salad and as a marinade for meat, poultry or vegetables.

Meat Counter

- Select lean, well-trimmed cuts: flank steak, round steak or roasts, sirloin or tenderloin, loin pork chops or 85% lean ground beef.
- Meat graded “Select” has less fat than “Choice” or “Prime” grades.
- Lean beef, pork and lamb are not much higher in dietary cholesterol than poultry or fish, but they have more saturated fat.
- Beef liver is very high in iron, zinc and many vitamins but also high in dietary cholesterol.
- Limit high-fat meats: ribs, corned beef, sausage, and bacon.

Fresh Fish and Poultry Section

- Half of chicken’s calories are in the skin. Buy skinless parts or remove skin of cooked poultry before eating.
- Fish from deep waters have heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids: salmon, tuna, mackerel, sea trout, bluefish, herring, bonito and pompano.
- Most chicken and turkey nuggets, patties and rolls are made with ground skin and have a lot of salt.

Frozen Food Cases

- Purchase frozen fish and poultry without breading to limit fat and sodium.
- Look for frozen dinners with less than 15 grams of fat, 400 calories and 800 milligrams of sodium.
- Frozen concentrates are often the least expensive form of fruit juice.
- Ice milk and low fat frozen yogurt have less fat than ice cream.
- Plain, frozen vegetables have less fat and salt than those in sauces.
- Frozen juice and fruit bars with no added sugar or cream are good choices.
- Portion-packed frozen desserts help curb the tendency to eat large helpings.