

Smart Grocery Shopping Tips

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Eating healthy requires that you surround your self with healthy options. Going grocery shopping on a regular basis or as often as you can will help you stay committed to your weight loss program. Having the right foods in your kitchen is key to planning your next meal.

One of the most important strategies of saving money in the grocery store is to make a plan. Planning helps you to think about what

you need along with what your family may need. First, think about how many meals you are planning on cooking that week. Next, think about lunches, do you need kid's lunches, and your lunch. What items from your dinners may be used for lunches as well. Planning ahead will make your shopping trip an easier experience plus it will take less time.

Now that you have your shopping plan done you are ready for some smart grocery shopping. Here are some tips before you go shopping. If you are hungry have a snack before you go. Going shopping hungry will tempt you to buy unhealthy items. Also try not to go when you are tired you will pay less attention to what you are buying and choose quick convenience items instead of fresh products.

Shop the Perimeter

Have you noticed that when you go shopping the supermarket is set up so that all the healthiest food options are on the perimeter, or outer aisles: the produce section, dairy case, meat department, and bakery. All the prepackaged and processed foods are found on the inner aisles. These aisles are load with saturated fat, sugar, sodium and preservatives. The best way to

shop is by shopping the perimeter. Load up your cart with fresh products instead. Shopping in the outer aisles will help insure you are getting the healthiest choices.

Food Labels

To truly be a smart shopper you need to become “Label Savvy”. Almost every food product in the grocery store has nutrition information in a standard format. Labels include everything from the nutrition facts panel to list of ingredients. All of the information on a food label can help you compare foods and make choices that are the best for your health. There are certain foods that are not required by law to have food labels. These include fresh produce, seafood, poultry, and meat; and products that provide little or no nutrients, such as coffee, tea and water. Foods for children under 2 years of age use a different format based on the nutrients they need. Needless to say food labels are an important component to food shopping.

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size ½ cup (114g)		
Servings Per Container 4		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 30	
	% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3g		5%
Saturated Fat 0g		0%
Cholesterol 0mg		0%
Sodium 300mg		13%
Total Carbohydrate 13g		4%
Dietary Fiber 3g		12%
Sugars 3g		
Protein 3g		
Vitamin A 80%	•	Vitamin C 60%
Calcium 4%	•	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		
	Calories:	2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g 375g
Dietary Fiber		25g 30g
Calories per gram:		
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4		

What the Nutrition Facts mean on a label

Look at the food label. You will see the serving size and the servings per container. This information is very important to the rest of the label. This tells you how many servings are in the product you are eating plus what the serving size is. So for example the package says the serving size is a ½ cup and if you eat the entire container you will be eating 4x's the calories and nutrients that are listed.

The next part of the label list nutrients, their % Daily Values, and how much of each nutrient is in each serving. The % Daily Values is an estimate of an appropriate daily amount of that nutrient. It is based on a 2,000-calorie daily diet. Items that contain 0-9% of the Daily Value are not a good source of that nutrient, if it has 10-19% percent of the Daily Value it is a good source and if it exceeds 20% or more it is an excellent source of that nutrient. A good rule of thumb

is not to exceed more that 100% of the Daily Value for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, or sodium. Check food labels and look for items that contain less than 10% of the Daily Value for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. To prevent certain disease and good health it is a good idea to try and meet 100% Daily Value of fiber, vitamins and certain minerals.

As you are reading food labels there are certain numbers that will be helpful as you shop. These include:

Fat

- Calories from fat should be < 30%
- Snacks < 3g, Entrees < 10g

Fiber

- Goal 25-35 grams per day
- 3-5 grams per serving is a good source of fiber

Sodium

- Daily need 2400-2500 mg/ per day
- 1 tsp of salt or 1 oz of cheese contains 2000mg of salt
- Look for products with < 140 mg per serving

Sugar

- No more than 10% of calories from sugar
- For a person eating 2000 calories this = 200 calories of 13.3 tsp per day~ a soda
- 4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon
- Current average intake is 42.5g per day or 6 cups per week!

Descriptive Phrases for Nutrient Content Claims

Often times as you are browsing the food isles things that say “ Fat Free” or “Low-Fat” jump out at you. This can help make your shopping experience easier but you really need to know what these phrases mean before you fill your entire cart up with sugar and food additives! Here are some common product label nutrient claims and their meanings:

Calorie Free: less than 5 calories per serving

Fat-Free or sugar-free: less than ½ gram of fat or sugar per serving

Low-Calorie: 40 calories or less per serving

Reduced Calorie: reduced by at least 33.3%

Low-Sodium: less than 140 milligrams of sodium per serving of most foods.

Low- Cholesterol: 20 milligrams or less cholesterol and 2 grams or less saturated fat per serving

Reduced: altered to contain 25% less of the specified nutrient or calories than the usual product

Good Source (of vitamins and minerals): provides 10-19% or more of Daily Value of that vitamin or mineral per serving

High in: provides 20 percent or more of the Daily Value of the specified nutrient per serving

High Fiber: 5 or more grams of fiber per serving

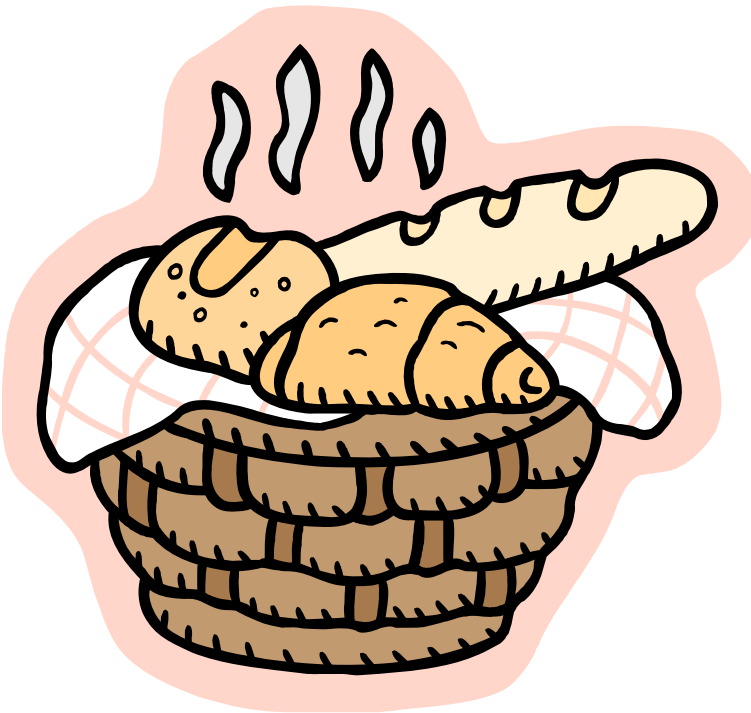
Light: foods are altered so they can claim they contain 1/3 fewer calories or 1/2 of the fat of the usual food.

Lean: meats, poultry, seafood, and game have less than 10 grams of fat, less than 4 1/2 grams of saturated fat and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3.5 ounce per cooked serving

Extra Lean: meats, poultry, seafood, and game have less than 5 grams of fat, less than 2 grams of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligram of cholesterol per 3.5 ounce cooked serving

* source The Supermarket Guide by Marry Abbott Hess

Shopping aisle by aisle.



Bread and Bread Products.

Bread and bread products are apart of a healthy diet. Many people fear bread and bread products due to their high carbohydrate content. Yes breads and bread products are a very good source of carbohydrates but if you choose the right ones and eat them in moderation they can fit into any healthy eating plan. Carbohydrates should count for almost half of your diet. They

are the first fuel your body uses throughout the day. When picking bread and bread products you want to choose complex carbohydrates instead of simple carbohydrates like soda or candy. Complex carbohydrates are lower in fat and higher in fiber, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. Research suggests that those who follow a diet high in these nutrients are more likely to prevent heart disease and certain forms of cancer.

What to buy:

- Whole grain or multigrain breads and rolls with whole wheat, cracked wheat, spelt, oat, millet or other grains. These ingredients should be list first on the ingredient label.
- Label should say “ 100% whole wheat” or “ whole grain, not just “ wheat flour”
- Enriched white breads and rolls
- Products with 3 grams of fat or less per serving. Examples: bagels, bialys, English muffins, flat breads, matzo, pita bread and flour tortillas.
- Breads and muffins made with wheat bran, oat bran or labeled “ high in fiber” or “ good source of fiber.”
- Ready made pizza crust with less than 3g of fat per serving
- Frozen low-fat waffles and pancakes, including whole grain varieties
- Whole wheat pastas
- Pick enriched breads.
- Whole grain crackers with less than 3 grams of fat per serving such as, melba toast, saltines, flavored crisp breads

Things to know:

- Rye and pumpernickel breads are not whole-grain breads. They contain primarily white flour.
- Challah and egg breads contain egg yolks and are sources of dietary cholesterol
- Skip high fat items like: biscuits, croissants, scones, doughnuts, sweet rolls, cheese breads, focaccias.
- Watch out for super sized muffins and bagels. They often contain four times the calories and fat of regular size ones.
- When you buy bread in the grocery store pay attention to the color twist on the package. They represent the day the bread was delivered. They are: Monday- Blue, Tuesday-Green, Thursday- Red, Friday- White, and Saturday- Yellow. Pay attention so you buy the freshest product.

Storage and Cleaning

Bread should be stored in a cool, dry, dark area. Breads can have a long shelf life if held in the proper conditions. For example, never place bread in the refrigerator—it makes it go stale faster. Smaller, thinner breads become stale even faster and should be eaten the same day as purchased.

Baking mixes

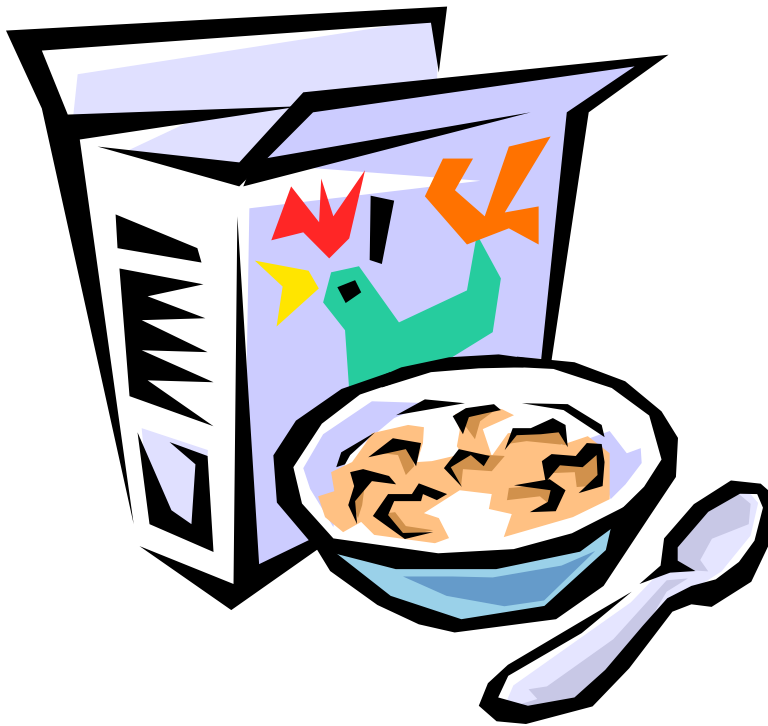
What to buy:

- Angel food cake mix
- Light or reduced fat mixes for cakes, brownies, cookies and other desserts
- Whole grain breads and muffins
- Waffles and pancakes that you can prepare with applesauce or puréed fruit.

Things to know

If love to bake but are trying to cut back on fat and calories try substituting ingredients or only adding half of the recommended ingredient. Here are some good tips to reduce fat and calories while baking:

- Sub two egg whites or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup egg substitute for one egg.
- Use fruit such as mashed bananas, applesauce, prune puree or tofu to replace oil or eggs



Cereal

What to buy:

- Whole-grain cooked and ready to eat cereal
- Cereals with at least 3 grams of fiber and 3 grams or less of fat per serving
- Vitamin-and-mineral fortified cereals
- Cereals that have a grain listed as the first ingredient
- Toasted wheat germ, wheat bran, or oat bran. This is a great topper on yogurt and also is great for recipes to add extra fiber.

Things to know:

First thing to look at is the date on the box. You want to make sure you are buying fresh cereal. The date will tell you how long of a shelf life it has.

Don't limit cereal just to breakfast. It is a great light meal or snack with or without milk. Picking a good cereal can be tricky because of all the choices you have. Really read the food label on the cereal to make sure you are getting the healthiest choice. Look on the ingredient label and if sugar, honey, corn syrup, fructose, molasses, fruit juice sweetener, or malt syrup is the first ingredient, that cereal has more sugar than grains. Not a good choice!

Also make sure you drink the milk in the bottom of the bowl. Many of the vitamins and minerals in fortified cereals are sprayed on and get washed off by the milk.



Pasta, rice, and grains

What to buy:

- Brown rice, wild rice, bulgur, quinoa, wheat berry, couscous, cornmeal buckwheat, kasha, barley, oatmeal, oat bran, tritcale.
- Lasagna, ravioli, tortellini, and manicotti filled w/ part skim ricotta
- Any form of pasta including whole-wheat, spinach and tomato

Things to know:

To reduce sodium intake omit the salt in the boiling water. You won't miss it. When cooking fresh pasta pay attention to the cooking times it only takes about 2 mins for fresh pasta to cook. Fresh pasta should be used in two-days of purchase to maintain freshness. Also so remember when pastas cook, it usually doubles in volume. A good trick to figure out how much is one serving or 2 oz of dry pasta is to use a nickel. The diameter of the nickel is how much dry spaghetti you will need to make one portion.

When rice cooks, it usually triples in volume. Brown rice has three times the fiber of white rice.

Watch out for quick cooking grains they often times are loaded with sodium and if you follow the directions are loaded with fat.



Produce

The National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics has challenged Americans to take the “5 a Day Challenge”, a campaign designed to encourage eating at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Rich in vitamins and minerals, fruits and

vegetables are a great source of fiber in the diet also. Not only does fiber add bulk to your diet, making you feel fuller longer, but it decreases your cholesterol level and risk for diabetes and colon cancer. Additionally, many fruits and vegetables also contain phytochemicals and antioxidants, two substances that fight against cancer-causing free radicals.

What to buy:

- Purchase pre-washed and pre-chopped vegetables such as lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots.
- Utilize your supermarket's salad bar – The salad bar is a great resource to use when you only need a little of something to add to a recipe.
- Buy frozen. Foods meant to be sold frozen are usually processed hours after being picked. The nutrients are stabilized through the freezing process so you don't have to worry about diminished quality or nutritional value.
- Choose canned products. When you're in a bind, canned fruits and vegetables work great but beware of added sodium, sugars and fat. Look for fruit packed in its own juice or light syrup. Choose vegetables that are packed by themselves, rather than butter or cream sauces.

Things to know

- **As a general rule of thumb, select bright colored fruits and vegetables.** The brighter and darker the food, the more nutrient dense the product.
- **Beware of wilted looking products** – Both time and light are enemies of produce so buy produce often and in reasonable quantities. The longer produce sits out the less nutritious it is.
- **Look out for out-of-season crops** – Usually those foods out of season are waxed more and stored longer. Although wax is not toxic, it can trap the pesticides found on food. Produce that has been stored for significant amounts of time may also have diminished nutrient density. It may be best to choose frozen out-of-season foods to ensure nutrition quality.
- **Frozen is ok**- they are packed at their peakness and therefore are of equal nutritional value as fresh produce
- **Variety is key**- each market visit try to pick 5-8 choices, vary each shopping trip
- **Organic and Natural** – You may have seen these words in the produce section of your local grocery store. By definition:
 - **Organic** states that the product is free from pesticides.
 - **Natural** tells the consumer that the food is free from added food colors, artificial flavors, or other synthetic substitutes.

Storage and Cleaning

Always wash fruits and vegetables when you return from the store and before use to free food from dirt, chemicals and microorganisms that may be present. Consider the cleaning product, FIT® to ensure a clean and safe product. This is usually found in the produce aisle at the supermarket.

Store fresh vegetables in the refrigerator in loose, “breathable” plastic bags. Store tomatoes and apples away from lettuce. Both of these products emit ethylene gas as they ripen which causes lettuce and other delicate vegetables to rot faster.

What are my Options?

It is time consuming to cut, wash and peel all of these foods, especially when our schedules have us on the go. Here are a couple of short-cuts to decrease your time in the kitchen without sacrificing the important nutrients your body needs.

Nutrition Tips

- Fruits and vegetables hidden in the bottom drawers of the Refrigerator can be easily forgotten. Place a bowl of fruit in the very front of your refrigerator so it’s the first thing you see (and the first thing you grab).
- Add low-fat dips made with low-fat sour cream or yogurt to add taste to your produce.
- Make homemade smoothies with seasonal fruits, yogurt and ice cubes.



Dairy

Dairy products are the main source of calcium in our diets and help keep our teeth and bones healthy. When shopping in the dairy section it is recommend to pick low-fat or non-fat items due to the fact that dairy products can be high in saturated fat and cholesterol. Adults should try to consume at least 2 servings of dairy products a day. One serving of dairy equals 1 cup of milk or yogurt or 1.5 ounces of cheese. Children and pregnant or lactating women should add an extras serving per day.

What to buy:

- Fat-free and low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Soy milk and cheeses
- Part-skim ricotta and mozzarella cheese

- Lactose intolerant individuals should try – nonfat, 1%, 2% lactose-reduced, or lactase-treated milk.
- Rice milk
- Non-fat dry milk or dry buttermilk
- Evaporated fat free milk
- Low-fat Cream cheese and sour cream

Things to Know:

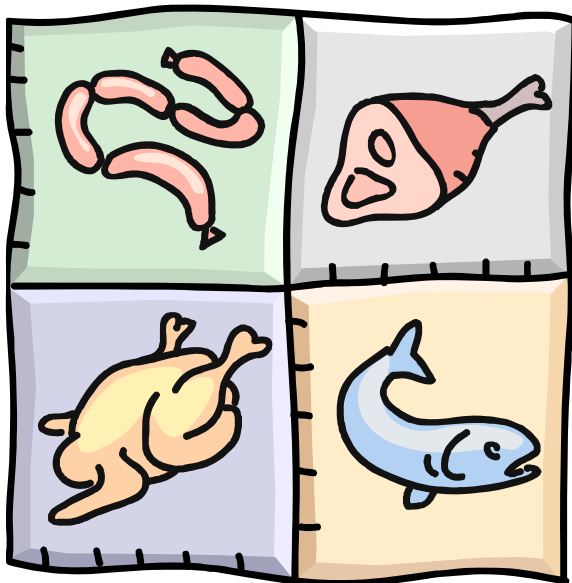
It is always important to check the date of milk. Milk containers are labeled with a “sell by” date. Consuming products before the sell by date will ensure the best quality. Always discard milk after the sell by date. The best way to store milk is in the coldest part of your refrigerator.

Yogurt also has a “sell by” date. If the yogurt is unopened it can stay in the refrigerator for up to 10 days and then must be discarded.

Cheeses are very sensitive to spoilage and should be discarded after certain periods of time. Below is a time line for how long you can keep cheese before it spoils.

- Cottage Cheese, Ricotta and Cream cheese- 1 week after sell by date.
- Brie, Camembert, Muenster, Gorgonzola, Roquefort and Mozzarella- 1-3 weeks.
- Cheddar and Monterey Jack 1-3 weeks or longer
- Shredded Cheese – by sell by date

Basically the harder the cheese the longer it will keep.



Meats (Beef, Pork, Chicken, Turkey)

Beef, Chicken, Turkey, and Pork are a great source of protein, iron, zinc, vitamin B12, niacin, potassium, phosphorous, and other minerals. When choosing these meats there are several things you need to keep in mind to ensure you are buying fresh and healthy items, which are listed below. It is suggested to consume between 2-3, three ounce servings per day. A three ounce serving of cooked meat is similar to the size of a deck of cards.

What to buy:

- Beef: extra lean (at least 85 percent lean), hamburger, ground sirloin, well-trimmed cuts of beef top round, eye of round and round tip, rump, sirloin, tenderloin, flank or chuck arm roast.
- Pork: tenderloin, Canadian Bacon, loin chops, rib chops and roast
- Chicken and Turkey: skinless, unprocessed chicken or turkey, ground turkey and chicken breast.
- Lunch meats with less than 1 gram of fat per ounce
- Meatless options include products made with soy such as veggie burgers, meatballs, and bacon.
- Venison, Ostrich, and Bison are also good choices because they are low if fat but unfortunately they can be high in cost.

Things to know:

When buying any type of fresh meat you should always listen to your instincts. If it looks or smells funny don't buy. There are other ways you can check to make sure you are getting a fresh product and that is by doing the following:

- Check the "sell-by" date on fresh meats
- Refrigerate or freeze fresh meats immediately
- Look at the color. Beef should be bright red with no grayish areas.
- Poultry should not have any brownish or grayish colors.
- Do not buy products that have loose packaging or are leaking

Cook fresh poultry within 1 or 2 days or freeze it. Defrost and marinate any meat products in the refrigerator. To keep your meats healthy trim all excess fat of the products. Healthy cooking methods for meats are barbecuing, broiling, grilling, and roasting. To prevent food borne illnesses always cut fresh meats on separate cutting boards and cook them to the proper temperature. Here are the safe minimum cooking temperatures of common meat products:

- Ground beef and game animals.....155⁰ F for 15 sec.
- Beef, pork.....145⁰ F for 3mins.
- Poultry.....165⁰ F for 15 sec



Fish and Shellfish

Fish is another great source of protein that may provide 100-150 fewer calories than meats. Plus the fat in fish is a “good” type of fat where as the fat in animal products is “bad” kind of fat. The fat in fish is a unique poly-unsaturated fatty acid called omega-3. Consuming adequate amounts of omega-3 fatty acids has been linked to reducing blood clots, lowering blood cholesterol levels, and reducing risk for heart disease. The best sources of omega-3 fatty acids are sardines, herring, mackerel, Atlantic bluefish tuna, salmon, pilchard butterfish, and pompano. Shell fish are also great for options for low-fat proteins.

What to buy:

- Lean fish that has less than 2.5% fat such as cod, flounder, halibut and perch.
- Moderate fat fish which contain ~ 6% fat such as striped bass, catfish, swordfish and tuna.
- Higher-fat fish contain up to 60% of calories from fat. These include Mackerel, Salmon, Smelt, and Trout.
- Canned fish that is packed in water.
- Frozen fish that is intact and free of frost

Things to know:

When buying fresh fish there are several things you need to look for.

- First you should only buy from a reputable, commercial source.
- Always check the “sell by” or “use by” date.
- Pick up your seafood at the end of your shopping.
- Choose glistening, flawless fish that does not have a strong odor.
- When buying whole fish the eyes should be shiny, clear and bright.
- Flesh should be firm and spring back when pressed
- Usually fresh fish is approximately one week old when you purchase it at your local supermarket. Because of this delay, it is in your best interest to cook or freeze fish within one to two days of purchasing.
- Frozen seafood will keep for approximately 2-4 months.
- Cook fish to a minimum safe internal cooking temperature of 145° for 15 seconds
- Bottom line: cold equals quality!



Eggs

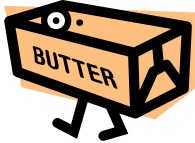
Eggs are an inexpensive source of high quality protein with vitamins and minerals such as A, D, B12 and iron. Along with these essential nutrients comes quite a bit of cholesterol so intake should be limited to 3 or 4 a week (the fat and cholesterol in eggs are only found in the yolk). One egg yolk equals 210 mg cholesterol – 70% of the recommended daily value.

What to buy:

- **Grade AA** – This is the highest quality egg you can buy. The egg yolk stands up and is firm. Use these eggs for poached eggs or any other egg dish where appearance is important
- **Grade A** – This egg has a slightly less firm yolk and is best for frying or baking needs
- **Grade B** – These eggs have a flatter yolk. Use these for scrambled eggs or for basic cooking needs.
- **Egg Substitutes** – can be a great way to cut fat and cholesterol.

Things to know:

- **Check the date** – Like other dairy products, eggs have an expiration date that should be adhered to.
- **Check the shells to see if they are clean, dry, and free of cracks**
- **Eggs should be placed small end down**
- **Eggs are graded for quality** – The higher the grade, the higher the quality and appearance of the shell and yolk.
- **There is no difference in quality between white and brown eggs** – The color difference is simply due to a different breed of hen.
- **Keep raw and cooked eggs at a temperature less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit** – Never store eggs in the door of your refrigerator for this is the warmest part of the refrigerator.
- **Do not get eggshells wet** – There is no reason to wash eggs, the manufacturer has done this previously. Water makes the eggshell more porous, which can give bacteria an easy entryway.
- **Never eat raw eggs in any form** – This includes eggnog and Caesar dressing made with raw eggs, which can carry the bacteria Salmonella. Always cook eggs for a minimum of 3 minutes.
- **After cooking eggs, serve or refrigerate immediately**
- **Use leftover cooked eggs within 4 days**
- **Never eat eggs that have been left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours** – Eggs are very sensitive to time-temperature abuse. Be cautious of egg salads and deviled eggs at picnics and in brown paper bag lunches.



Fats

Fat is an essential nutrient in a healthy diet. Contrary to what many people believe, fat should **NOT** be eliminated from your diet because it does provide many benefits acting as a major contributor to our body's energy supply, a transporter of fat-soluble vitamins, insulation to our bodies and protection to our major internal organs. Unfortunately, an excess of these foods is linked to obesity, high cholesterol and heart disease.

There are many forms of fat. Butter, margarine, lard, vegetable shortening, and oil are all considered sources of fat. However there are fats that are better than others.

Butter and Margarine – The Controversy Continues

Butter or margarine...which exactly is better for you? Although scientific studies are conflicting (not to mention confusing), this is what we do know.

Butter contains saturated fat, which is a type of fat that is hard at room temperature. It is found mostly in animal products, such as meats and dairy, and in palm and coconut oils. Saturated fats have been found to play a direct role in heart disease and elevated cholesterol.

Margarine contains just as much fat as butter, but it differs in that it contains trans-fatty acids. Trans-fatty acids are created in order to turn unsaturated fats (liquid fats) into a solid by the process of adding hydrogen atoms. Although cholesterol free, recent studies show hydrogenated fats can cause an increase in total cholesterol levels, increase LDL levels (the bad cholesterol), decrease HDL (the good cholesterol), and increase one's risk for cardiovascular disease and stroke. Tub margarine has been found to be lower in trans-fatty acids than stick margarines.

What to buy:

- **Use olive oil or canola oil in the liquid or spray form when cooking, sautéing or baking.**
- **Try Trans fat-free margarines** – specifically tub margarines such as *All Promise and Fleischmann's*.
- **Try special cholesterol-lowering margarines.**
 - *Take Control* (made from soy) – has been found to lower blood cholesterol by 10%.
 - *Benecol* (made from wood pulp) – must be used in prescribed amounts to achieve cholesterol-lowering benefits.
- **Brummel and Brown** - Spread that uses yogurt, but only the tub version contains 0 grams of trans fats

- Choose light margarines for spreads on bread. They contain more water and are slightly lower in calories.
- For baking and cooking, choose unsaturated oil (corn, olive, canola) or non-stick cooking sprays.

Things to know:

- **Butter should be bought in a refrigerated case held at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.**
- **Butter should have a sweet, uniform color and firm texture** – Check for signs of mold, specs, or other foreign matter if possible.
- Reduced fat margarines burn easily and are not recommended for cooking
- Try replacing fats in cooking with fruit purees

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