

Fruits and Veggies on a Budget

Fruits and vegetables don't need to break the bank. Try these tips.

Eat Fresh Produce First Make sure you enjoy fresh produce before it spoils. Follow this plan – eat fresh produce a day or two after you shop. Save the canned and frozen options for later in the week. Before you shop, plan your meals to fit this strategy.



Shop Sales Check grocery flyers for sales on fruits and veggies. Remember to check all departments because all forms count – fresh, canned, frozen, dried, 100% juice, and beans.

Buy in Bulk Try a big bag of fresh apples or oranges for snacks. Big bags of frozen vegetables are handy for a quick side dish at dinner. Frozen mixed veggies are also a great addition to your favorite canned soup or casserole.

Shop and Chop Buy fresh produce, chop it yourself, and store it in the fridge. That way, you can quickly throw together a salad or snack. It's just as convenient as pre-chopped veggies, but it costs a lot less.

Cook Once – Eat Twice Save some time and cooking fuel – make a double batch! The extra food can be frozen for an easy meal next week.



Buy In-Season Produce Fresh produce is less expensive when you buy in-season. Good choices for winter are winter squash, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage, root vegetables (sweet potatoes, carrots, parsnips, turnips), pears, apples, and citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit, tangerines). Remember to try canned, frozen, and dried fruits, too. When spring arrives, look for snow peas, peapods, asparagus, and strawberries.

Multiply and Divide When you cook dinner meals, double the veggies. This will stretch the meat, which is often the most costly part of a meal. And, the extra vegetables will make you feel fuller.

From the Fridge to the Freezer Dice and freeze fresh onions, peppers, and celery. For other vegetables, blanch them quickly before freezing. These frozen vegetables are great in western omelets, tomato sauce, stews, or a casserole.

Beans Count, Too Replace some of the meat in your favorite recipe with beans. This works really well for Mexican and Indian recipes.

Curried Cauliflower

Cauliflower takes on a different flavor when seasoned with Indian curry. Serve over brown rice.

Serves 4 (1 cup veggies per person)

From www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications

→ [Adult Recipe Cards](#)

1 tablespoon canola oil
¾ cup chopped onion
¾ cup frozen green peas
1 head fresh cauliflower chopped (or 15 ounces pre-cut fresh cauliflower or 1 large bag frozen cauliflower)
1 tablespoon curry powder
1 teaspoon cumin
¼ teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

- Steam the cauliflower.
- Heat canola oil in large skillet. Add onion and sauté one minute.
- Add remaining ingredients. Stir until vegetables are coated with spices.
- Cook on medium heat 10 minutes, stirring often.

Helpful Tip For a milder flavor, use turmeric instead of curry.

Nutrition Facts Serving size: ¼ of recipe. 110 calories; 4g fat; 0.3g saturated fat; 0mg cholesterol; 15g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 5g protein; 120mg sodium.



Butternut and Ginger Soup

Chase away the winter chill with a zesty soup that warms you from the inside out! If you don't have butternut squash, other winter squashes can be used instead.

Serves 6 (1 cup veggies per person)

From [National Cancer Institute](http://NationalCancerInstitute.gov)

1 teaspoon mild olive oil
1½ cups chopped onion
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 teaspoons chopped fresh ginger
1½ pounds (6 cups) peeled (fresh or frozen) butternut or other winter squash (such as turban, acorn, hubbard, or pumpkin)
½ pound (1 cup) new potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 cup unsweetened 100% apple juice
3 cups water (or broth)
½ cup skim milk
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup chopped Granny Smith apple
2 tablespoons chopped parsley

- Heat the oil in a high-sided skillet or large saucepan on medium high.
- Sauté the onions 3 minutes or until tender.
- Add the garlic and ginger and cook 1 minute longer.
- Add the squash, potatoes, 100% apple juice, and water or broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer 35 to 40 minutes or until very soft.
- Puree in a blender or processor, in batches, until smooth.
- Pour back into the pan and stir in the milk and salt. Reheat.
- Serve topped with chopped apple and parsley.

Nutrition Facts Serving size: 1/6 of recipe. 190 calories; 1g fat; 0g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 45g carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 5g protein; 220mg sodium.

Diabetic Exchanges: 6 vegetable.

