



Your guide to

Eating healthy on a budget

Eat
healthy
for less!

- ✓ 5 Simple, scrumptious recipes
- ✓ 3 Favourite meal makeovers
- ✓ 6 Money-saving hacks
- ✓ Tips for easy meal planning
- ✓ Fast food dos & don'ts





Welcome!

Go you. You're here because you want to take control of your diabetes, and know that eating well is at the center of good health. Bravo!

Just like you, we love good food. Shopping for it, cooking it, ordering it at restaurants, and most of all, enjoying it with family and friends. But we also need to stay within a budget — and to stick to our healthy eating goals. And it can be hard to find the time, resources, and energy to make all of that a reality.

To make it easy for you, we've unlocked the secrets of blood sugar-balancing foods that won't bust your budget — plus give you great tips for planning your meals and wallet-friendly shopping. This booklet gives you the tools you need to affordably eat right, stay balanced, and live a vibrant, healthy life.

Are you ready to make nutritious, diabetes-friendly eating delicious, affordable, and fun? Us too. Let's go!

Sneak peek inside

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7 Ways to make meal planning easy & fun!

Plan ahead

Trying to eat healthy on a budget without a meal plan is like setting out on a road trip without a map. Planning ahead can help you create a healthy, well-balanced diet that stretches your dollars to their max.



Write it out

It may seem obvious but so many of us don't do it! Put a week's worth of meals on paper so you can get creative and see how they stack up.



Prep ahead

After you shop, spend an hour or so getting ahead for the week — chop veggies, cook grains, and store in portions. The less you have to do during the week, the better!



Love your list

Check what you have so you're not buying extra — and stick to it! You won't be as tempted to grab impulse purchases. List by grocery section for faster shopping.



Consider the season

Hearty root veggie soup or a crisp tomato-cucumber salad? Fresh produce in-season is always a better value than high-priced off-season foods — and much tastier!



Plan a theme-a-day

Match meals to days of the week. Try Meatless Mondays, Taco Tuesdays, Breakfast-for-Dinner Wednesdays, Pasta Thursdays, and Stir Fry or Fish Fridays.



Scope the sales

Check store circulars, websites, or apps. Different deals give meals delicious twists. Halibut and zucchini on sale? You just set the menu for Taco Tuesday: grilled fish with summer squash!



Get ready to repeat

Have Favourite go-to breakfasts, lunches, and snacks two or three times each week — like fresh fruit with yogurt for breakfast. Add repeat perishable ingredients like tomatoes and strawberries in more than one weekly recipe — so you use them up and reduce waste.

3 Easy meal makeovers

Sure, ready made meals are convenient — but they can do a number on your blood sugar and your budget. Cooking at home helps save money and keeps you in the driver's seat, meaning no hidden ingredients or supersized portions.

Love banana nut muffins?

Make this easy banana-cinnamon oatmeal

*\$0.44 / serving**

Calories	353
Total fat	18g
Saturated fat	4g
Sodium	13mg
Cholesterol	0mg
Total carbs	38g
Fibre	6g
Sugars	10g
Protein	12g
Potassium	627mg

½ cup rolled oats
1 cup water
½ banana, mashed with fork
Cinnamon to taste
2 tablespoons peanut butter

Mix oats and water in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 2 minutes, or until cooked. Mix in banana, peanut butter, and a dash of cinnamon.

Love frozen cheese enchiladas?

Make this quick 'n' easy chicken tacos

*\$2.94 / serving**

Calories	401
Total fat	12g
Saturated fat	2g
Sodium	547mg
Cholesterol	72mg
Total carbs	40g
Fibre	11g
Sugars	3g
Protein	36g
Potassium	889mg

¼ cup no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed
85 g cooked chicken breast, prepared ahead of time and cut into strips
15 cm corn tortillas
¼ cup mild salsa
¼ small avocado

Gently warm beans and chicken in microwave. Divide ingredients evenly on two tortillas: Beans, chicken, salsa, avocado.

Love Chinese takeout fried rice and kung pao chicken?

Make this Asian stir fry

*\$2.81 / serving**

Calories	366	Total carbs	39g
Total fat	18g	Fibre	8g
Saturated fat	4g	Sugars	2g
Sodium	168mg	Protein	29g
Cholesterol	73mg	Potassium	1728mg

2 teaspoons vegetable oil (divided, 1 teaspoon + 1 teaspoon)
115 g raw chicken breast, cubed
1 340 g bag frozen Asian stir fry veggies
1 teaspoon low-sodium soy sauce
½ cup low-sodium vegetable broth
2 teaspoons roasted unsalted peanuts
½ cup cooked brown rice

In a nonstick pan, heat 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil over a medium-high flame. Add chicken and cook until browned evenly, around 4 minutes, and remove from pan. Heat remaining teaspoon of oil. Add frozen veggies and cook until tender, around 5 minutes. Add chicken back in, along with soy sauce and vegetable broth. Stir until veggies and chicken are coated. Top with peanuts and serve with brown rice.

*All prices are estimates, may vary by region and store, and are subject to change.

6 Money saving home-cook hacks



Prep your pantry

Stock up monthly on staples like grains, beans, oil, vinegar, and nuts for easier weekly shopping.



Make Monday (or Tuesday) meatless

Choosing vegetarian protein like beans and tofu in place of beef or chicken will save you dollars and is a heart-healthy choice.



Survey your stores

Remember that the nearest big box grocery isn't your only option. Ethnic markets, smaller chains, and warehouse clubs all offer deep discounts and are worth hitting up from time to time.



Love leftovers

Whip up extra items from dinner for tomorrow's lunch. Add a new flavour for a fresh spin. For example, shred an extra suppertime chicken breast, and toss with lemon vinaigrette and spinach for a zesty salad. Dinner chili makes a flavourful, protein-packed, baked sweet potato topping.



Follow FIFO

That's shorthand for 'first in, first out.' Organize your fridge and pantry the FIFO way, so you use the oldest items first before they spoil.



Reimagine food scraps

If you only want half a banana on your cereal, freeze the other half for tomorrow's smoothie. Celery tops, onion skins, and carrot peels make delicious vegetable broth when simmered.

Go generic. Buy store brands and save as much as 25%!

4 Great freezer fruits & veggies

Ice it!

Fresh isn't always best. Frozen fruits and veggies are often more nutritious. They're blanched — briefly scalded in boiling water then plunged in ice to stop the cooking process — which locks in all the nutrition and flavour goodness.



Blueberries

Blueberries are little antioxidant powerhouses. These plant chemicals help prevent your cells from being damaged. Blueberries are also linked with better brain health.

Enjoy: In smoothies for a hint of sweetness and appealing purple hue. Around $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of blueberries provides 15 grams of carbohydrates.



Cherries

The substance that makes cherries red also help reduce inflammation. The cherry on top? Unlike sweetened cherries in a can or jar, frozen cherries usually don't contain any sugar.

Enjoy: Add to breakfast oatmeal or yogurt for a naturally sweet twist. See our Cherry Almond Parfait recipe (p. 7). Around $\frac{2}{3}$ cup will give you 15 grams of carbohydrates.



Cauliflower rice

Companies are now taking cauliflower — which is naturally low-carb — and cutting it into small pieces before freezing for a rice-like look and texture.

Enjoy: Mix with ground beef or turkey to make your Favourite meatballs or substitute for rice in any recipe. Each cup of cauliflower rice will set you back just 4 grams of carbohydrates. See our Easy Cauliflower Fried Rice recipe (p. 7).



Spinach

Spinach helps your cells' mitochondria — their power generators — work more efficiently. Scientists suspect that mitochondrial dysfunction plays a role in insulin resistance.

Enjoy: Mix into scrambled eggs, omelets, and frittatas. Each cup of frozen spinach is equal to around 6.5 grams of carbohydrates.

Frozen delights



Cherry almond yogurt parfait

Serves 1

½ cup **frozen cherries**

½ cup lowfat Greek yogurt

2 tablespoons sliced almonds

Defrost frozen cherries. In a parfait glass, layer ¼ cup cherries, ¼ cup yogurt, 1 tablespoon almonds, and repeat layers.

Calories	Total fat	Saturated fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Total carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
80	1g	0g	17mg	2mg	14g	1g	12g	6g	177mg



Easy cauliflower fried rice

Serves 4

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

2 additional tablespoons vegetable oil

680 g **frozen riced cauliflower**

2 eggs, beaten

¼ cup soy sauce

2 cloves garlic, crushed and chopped

½ cup **frozen peas**

½ cup **frozen carrots**

½ cup roasted, unsalted cashews

In a skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil on medium heat. Scramble eggs until cooked and set aside. Add 2 tablespoons of oil, garlic, and red pepper flakes to skillet and heat until softened. Add frozen cauliflower and soy sauce. Turn up heat and cook on high for about 3 minutes, stirring regularly. Add frozen peas and carrots and cook until heated through. Turn off heat and add eggs to rice mixture. Divide into four bowls and top with 2 tablespoons of cashews.

Calories	Total fat	Saturated fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Total carbs	Fibre	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
260	20g	3g	659mg	95mg	12g	3g	5g	10g	117mg

4 Healthy canned foods

Yes, you can!

Did you know there's an entire section of the supermarket dedicated to healthy, budget-friendly foods that won't spoil? You guessed it — canned goods can be as nutritious as fresh and frozen foods, and in some cases even better. The canning process high-heats food, making certain nutrients more available to the body.



Artichoke hearts

Even canned varieties are antioxidant-rich and full of fibre and potassium. Plus, they're available year-round and require no prep work.

Bonus: Canned artichoke hearts are pre-cooked, so they're delicious as-is in salads, pasta dishes, or topped on fish and chicken dishes.



Salmon

A top source of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. It's also a great source of blood sugar-balancing protein with zero carbs.

Bonus: Most canned salmon is wild caught, which costs top dollar at the fish counter and has far fewer contaminants than farmed salmon.



Tomato Sauce

Canned sauce is typically far cheaper than in jars, and tends to have simpler ingredients with little or no added sugar. (Always check the nutrition label for added sugar and total carbs.)

Bonus: Processed tomato products are the top food source of antioxidant lycopene, linked with lower rates of prostate and other types of cancer.



Beans

These little hunger-suppressors are a top source of resistant starch and prebiotic fibre that helps prevent colon cancer, among other health benefits.

Bonus: Rinsing beans for 10 seconds and draining for 2 minutes can cut sodium content by as much as 41%.

Look for 'low sodium' labels when you buy canned veggies to cut back on unnecessary salt.

Splurge worthy

Don't skimp

When you focus on healthy-foods-for-less, you'll have wiggle room in your budget for health-boosting foods where quality beats cost.



Nuts

Fibre- and protein-packed nuts can help keep blood sugar on an even keel by helping prevent blood sugar spikes. They can even help minimize the effects of a carbohydrate-rich food on blood sugar levels. The healthy fats in nuts also help keep your heart healthy. Just be sure to keep serving sizes to no more than ¼ cup since calories can add up, and stick with unsalted options.



Seeds

Many seeds — like pumpkin, hemp, and chia — are an excellent source of protein. Hemp seeds pack 11 grams per 3-tablespoon serving. Sprinkle them on carb-rich foods like oatmeal or pasta to add an easy nutrient boost and help keep blood sugar spikes in check.



Fresh fish

Heart-healthy omega 3 fatty acids and high-quality protein are just two reasons why fish should be a regular part of your diet. And since fish is pure protein, it has minimal impacts on blood sugar levels. Have with a low-impact carbohydrate like green veggies or beans for a perfect pairing. Around 85 g cooked equals 1 serving.



Extra virgin olive oil

EVOO helps reduce blood sugar and cholesterol more than other types of fats like corn oil. Olive oil has long been known for its anti-inflammatory benefits. Its rich flavour also helps make other healthy foods like leafy green vegetables and fish taste better.



Whole grain foods

It's worth paying a premium for more nutritious bread, pastas, and other foods made with unrefined grains. They're easier on your blood sugar thanks to their higher fibre content. Look at the ingredients list — if the first ingredient listed contains the word "whole," it's likely a better-for-you option.

Get your coupon on

Buying what's on sale at the supermarket isn't the only way to save. Here are more ways to take advantage of deep discounts and food brands offers.



App it up

Most grocery stores have an app you can download for in-store discounts and special savings.



Clip away

Old-school Sunday paper coupons are alive and well. So get out your scissors and snip away.



Get the card

Rewards or loyalty cards give you discounts every time you shop, and most spit out receipt coupons for foods you frequently buy based on your shopping history.



#GoSocial

'Like,' 'Love,' and follow your Favourite grocery stores and food brands on Facebook, Instagram, and X. They use social media to share news about discounts and special offers, as well as social-only deals.



Don't shop hangry

Hitting the supermarket hungry or hangry — aka hungry and angry — is a sure recipe for a #healthyfoodfail. Before you shop, eat one of these grab 'n' go blood-sugar balancing snacks.

Berries with yogurt

1 single-serving Greek yogurt with ½ cup of your Favourite berries.

A deli roll-up

Spread 1 slice low-sodium turkey with 1 teaspoon mustard and roll around a cucumber spear.

Apple with string cheese

A delicious grab-and-go snack.

Steamed edamame

1 cup in pods, sprinkled with chili powder (don't eat the shell).

Healthy dining out

We all love eating out — and it's OK to treat yourself now and then. Really. Don't feel guilty! Just don't overdo it. Grabbing fast-food and going to restaurants is one of the biggest challenges to healthy eating, costing your wallet and your waistline. Do a little homework ahead to steer you to the healthiest menu options, so you can enjoy your meal and keep your blood sugar balanced.

Skip

Switch

Burger King

Double Whopper with medium onion rings
1289 calories, 103g carbs

Whopper Jr. with apple sauce
385 calories, 43g carbs

Subway

Foot-long Italian B.M.T. sub
(pepperoni, salami, and ham)
820 calories; 92g carbs

6-inch turkey sub
on whole wheat bread
280 calories; 46g carbs

KFC

Classic Chicken Sandwich,
mashed potatoes with gravy, small diet soda
780 calories, 69g carbs

Chicken Littles, house side salad,
Sweet Kernel Corn
370 calories, 43g carbs

90% of restaurant chain meals have more calories than the total recommended daily allowance for the average person.

We're here to support your success

