



# Healthy Eating on a Budget for Older Adults

## Stretching Your Food Dollar

Many older adults have limited resources, coupled with escalating expenses that may be out of their control. After healthcare and basic living expenses, there may not be much left in the budget for food. Careful planning and use of available resources can make a big difference in getting the most nutrition for your dollar.

### Meal Planning

Planning ahead can result in great cost savings. Stay familiar with the items in your refrigerator, freezer and pantry, plus browse weekly coupons and store ads. Keep in mind the items you have and the items on sale when planning your meals for the week. Then make a grocery list, buy what you need, and enjoy healthy meals all week!

### Helpful tips

- Opt for less expensive sources of protein—like beans, canned tuna or salmon, peanut butter, and cottage cheese—that can provide a lot of protein for less money than meat.
- Choose frozen vegetables and light canned fruit more often. They keep longer, are easier to chew, and easier to prepare.
- Buy fresh produce when it is in season or on sale, but make sure you will use it. Look for items that have a longer shelf life like potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, celery, and apples.

### Resources

There are many resources out there to help. Some have eligibility requirements, and many are free or take donations only, so you can contribute whatever you can afford. Some also offer added benefits of socializing with others, or having someone check in with you every day. Here are a few examples:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Meals on Wheels
- Senior Nutrition Centers

Finally, remember that you are not alone. Share as well as get tips and ideas from your family members, friends and neighbors!

### Did You Know?

Dry beans freeze well after cooking? Pick up a bag of your favorite dried beans, then follow the instructions for the quick soak or traditional method.

Once cooked, store one or two-cup portions in individual containers in the freezer. Toss in one of these nutritious additions whenever you make soup, sauces, or stir fries.

