

Nutrition Tips during COVID-19

1. ROUND-UP YOUR ROUTINE

Keep your normal routine, including when and what you eat – that means, eating meals and snacks at times that you typically eat meals and snacks, as well as eating foods that you typically eat. Additionally, remember to snack only when feeling physically hungry (i.e. when your stomach is growling), not when just feeling bored, stressed, or anxious.



TIP: If you find yourself eating when feeling bored, stressed, or anxious, try distracting yourself with another activity like cleaning your living space, engaging in a favorite hobby, playing a game, or taking a walk!

2. SAFE SHOPPING

Go to the grocery store half as much as you normally do – if you usually go once a week, try purchasing enough groceries and supplies for 2 weeks. This will help with social distancing as well as preparing for the possibility of a required self-isolation.



TIP: Try some of the following, to help reduce the amount of time you may spend at the store.

- ✓ Create a plan before you go by deciding on meals and snacks for the week(s) ahead.
- ✓ Take inventory of what you have on hand and what items you need to buy.
- ✓ Organize your list according to the sections of the store.

3. FOCUS ON THE FOOD GROUPS

While purchasing shelf-stable options, focus on the 5 food groups and remember to stay well-hydrated. Good nutrition – eating a wide variety of foods in the right portions – can promote overall well-being, support a healthy immune system, and even improve mood.



- ✓ Purchase long-lasting fresh fruits like apples, oranges, and grapes.
- ✓ Frozen options including berries are a great choice once you start running low on fresh fruits.
- ✓ If choosing canned options, try fruits canned in “100% fruit juice.”



- ✓ Purchase long-lasting fresh vegetables like onions, sweet potatoes, celery, and carrots.
- ✓ Frozen vegetable options without added sauces or seasonings are just as nutritious as fresh.
- ✓ If choosing canned options, try “low-sodium” or “no salted added.”



- ✓ Most grains are shelf-stable – so choose any of your favorite breads, rice, pastas, and tortillas.
- ✓ Be sure to choose 100% whole grain or 100% whole wheat to get beneficial nutrients like fiber.
- ✓ Freezing grains like bread loaves, cooked rice, or even tortillas, can extend their shelf life.



- ✓ After purchasing fresh meat, freeze in an air-tight package to extend the shelf life.
- ✓ If purchasing frozen meat choices, opt for un-breaded options to save on calories and sodium.
- ✓ Canned fish (in water), beans, lentils, nuts, and nut butter are all shelf-stable plant proteins.



- ✓ Dairy products are naturally, not very long-lasting or shelf-stable, so try not to over buy.
- ✓ Look at the sell-by date to guide your purchases of items like Greek yogurt, milk, and cheese.
- ✓ Instant or powdered, non-fat milk or some soy and almond milks are other shelf-stable options.



- ✓ Keep well-hydrated by drinking at least 64 ounces (or 8 cups) of water per day.
- ✓ Try to limit your intake of sugar-sweetened beverages like soda, sports drinks, and energy drinks.
- ✓ Choose 100% fruit juice and be sure to drink no more than 6-8 ounces per day.

4. TAKING FOOD SAFE STEPS

Practice proper food safety at home by following these guidelines:



WASH HANDS AND SURFACES OFTEN



SEPARATE RAW MEAT FROM
OTHER FOODS



COOK TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURES



REFRIGERATE FOOD PROMPTLY

For more information visit: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/4-steps-to-food-safety>

5. FREEZER FRENZY

Stocking up on food can be difficult when it comes to adequate space and desired freshness. However, freezing excess food can be a great solution! But what foods can you freeze? Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Fresh Fruits & Vegetables: You can freeze any fresh or cooked produce and it will keep its favor. However, some may lose their texture once thawed. If you do not want fruit or vegetable pieces to clump together, lay them out on a pan separated, freeze until solid, and then transfer into an airtight package or container.

Bread Loaves & Grains: As previously noted, you can freeze bread loaves and other cooked grains and beans. However, slice your bread or purchase pre-sliced loaves to avoid having to thaw the entire loaf.

Raw & Cooked Meats: You can freeze raw or cooked meats; just be sure to remove from the grocery packaging, store in an airtight option, and thaw safely in the refrigerator overnight.

Dairy Products: Did you know you can freeze all dairy products including milk, cream, cream cheese, sour cream, yogurt and shredded cheese? They may lose their emulsification and turn lumpy but just mix in a blender to resolve. Eggs also freeze well – just crack and store, whole or separated yolks and white, in a covered ice cube tray.

Whole Meals: Soups, sauces, baked pastas and casseroles, are some of the best whole meals to stock your freezer. Store in an airtight container, freezer storage bags, or two layers of foil to help extend the shelf life.

6. TIPS FOR TAKE-OUT

Mealtimes can be a challenge these days with disrupted routines and bare grocery shelves, but ordering take-out can save the day for you and your family as well as the local restaurants. However, take-out does not have to mean unhealthy if you remember to eat the 5 food groups and follow these helpful tips and tricks.



- ✓ Divide your meal in half to stretch one meal into two – be sure to add a fruit and vegetable!
- ✓ Add a side of steamed vegetables or a side salad to your dish instead of fries.
- ✓ Switch to whole grains and ask for brown rice, whole wheat pasta, or whole wheat pizza crust.
- ✓ Opt for vegetable alternatives to grains like cauliflower crust or zucchini noodles.
- ✓ Choose un-breaded, un-fried meats or plant-based options like beans or a veggie burger.
- ✓ Ask for cheese, cream, sauces, and dressings to be cut in half or simply put on the side.
- ✓ Rethink your drink and switch from sugar-sweetened beverages to water, tea, or milk.