



The Right Food — It Does a Body Good

Whether it's fruit, veggies, or meat, all foods play a role in how your body operates. Foods are made of nutrients — vitamins, minerals, carbs, proteins, and fats — that help your body operate at its best for as long as possible.

But when you're trying to eat something quickly between patients, it's easy to reach for the inexpensive, and usually less nutritious, goodies. While it's true that nutritious foods can cost more, that extra investment pays off big time when it comes to your health. Here's how to get a worthwhile return.

Fresh Produce

If possible, go organic! Organic foods have been shown to offer significantly greater levels of vitamin C, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus compared with nonorganic foods. Another thing to look out for: harvest time. After three days, nutrient content might already be declining.

Check out your local farmers market. These foods haven't traveled thousands of miles, and you can speak directly to the farmer about how they're grown. It's a good nutrition option, and often reasonably priced. If these aren't options for you, still choose the fruits and veggies at your local grocer. It's better than skipping them altogether.

Packaged Food

It's all marketing. Just because it says healthy doesn't mean it is. Read the label, front and back, to see all of the ingredients. If the ingredient list reads more like a book (and a hard one), do your body a favor and pick something else. Our faves: dry beans, peas, whole grain pasta, and lentils from bulk bins, which are usually more cost-effective.

Animal Proteins

Do you know what's in the meat you eat? Animals in feedlots are largely fed corn, soy, and vegetable oils, leading to fluctuating hormones and poor immune systems. The result: lower amounts of B vitamins, iron, zinc, vitamin D, and omega-3 fatty acids that we need. In the meat aisle, look for grass-fed meat, cage-free / pasture-raised eggs, and wild-caught fish. You can save a bit by choosing less expensive cuts of grass-fed, sustainably raised meats and use them to make stews.