

should I choose organic foods, even when they cost more?

Experts disagree on whether or not organic foods are better for you, so spend your food dollars wisely! The following foods have the highest levels of toxin residues, so you should purchase organic versions of these foods when possible:

- ✓ Peaches, Nectarines & Apricots
- ✓ Apples & Pears
- ✓ Bell Peppers
- ✓ Celery
- ✓ Strawberries
- ✓ Cherries
- ✓ Imported Grapes
- ✓ Spinach & Lettuce
- ✓ Potatoes & Carrots
- ✓ Milk & Beef
- ✓ Peanut Butter
- ✓ Baby Food

Other things you can do to make your food healthy and nutritious:

- ✓ **Shop local!** Locally grown food is guaranteed to be fresh, and many local farmers use organic farming practices.
- ✓ **Wash your fruits & veggies!** If you cannot afford to go entirely organic, you can make conventionally-grown produce safer by washing them.
- ✓ **Grow your own!** The easiest way to afford organic products is to grow your own. Even in small spaces you can grow herbs and veggies in window boxes or containers.

save money make your own prepared foods

Hummus

An 8 ounce container of organic hummus can cost as much as \$4 in the grocery store. Make your own at home for a fraction of the cost.

Makes about 2 cups

- 1 clove garlic
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 15 ounce can garbanzo bean
- ¼ cup tahini (sesame seed paste)
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt (or plain yogurt)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
- Fresh ground black pepper, to taste

Drain garbanzo beans and rinse under cold, running water. Add beans to a food processor. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. Add the garlic clove and cook, flipping the garlic clove occasionally, until the garlic is golden brown but not dark. Add garlic with oil to the beans in the food processor and puree. Add tahini, yogurt, lemon juice, cumin, salt and pepper. Puree bean mixture until smooth. If the hummus is too thick, add water, one tablespoon at a time, until you reach the desired consistency. Taste as you go, and adjust salt, pepper, lemon juice and olive oil if necessary.

stocking a healthy pantry



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keep these pantry staples on hand, and you will always have a delicious and healthy meal at your fingertips!

Beans Canned beans are a great source of fiber, protein, and nutrients like magnesium, selenium, and copper. Eating beans three or more times a week may help to prevent cancer and heart disease. Beans are a great addition to salads, side dishes, soups and dips.

Broth Prepared stocks have come a long way—just make sure you choose the organic, boxed varieties. Some of the canned brands still contain MSG and other preservatives. Keep chicken, beef and vegetable stock on hand for making soups, poaching vegetables & meats and making sauces.

Cheese In small quantities, cheese is good for you, since cheese is a good source of calcium. Just don't overdo it. Keep an assortment of cheeses on hand for last-minute guests or for a quick grilled cheese sandwich for dinner.

Citrus Fruits Cooking with lemons, limes, grapefruits, oranges and other citrus fruits—using both the juice and the zest—adds a lot of flavor to food and drinks with very little added calories. Citrus fruits are also high in Vitamin C and other antioxidants. Substitute citrus juice for vinegar in your salad dressings, or just squeeze some into your ice water for an early-morning pick-me-up.

Eggs Eggs are the quintessential go-to fast food. Poached, boiled, fried, over-easy, over hard—they're all good. Poached eggs over spring greens makes a perfect summer supper.

Flaxseed Flaxseed is really good for you, with micronutrients that may lower blood cholesterol, prevent heart attacks and reduce the risk of cancer. Choose ground flaxseed instead of whole—its more easily absorbed by the body. Sprinkle on fruit and yogurt, blend into smoothies, or sneak it into baked goods.

Fruit Frozen berries and other frozen fruit make eating your 5-a-day easier and more affordable. Keep fruit in the freezer and you'll always have a healthy snack available, without the waste of spoiled fruit. Fruit is high in fiber and full of vitamins and phytochemicals that provide numerous health benefits. Blend frozen fruit with yogurt or soy milk into a fruit smoothie for an instant breakfast.

Greens Rich in flavor and full of nutrients, dark greens like kale, beet greens, collard greens, dandelion greens and swiss chard are versatile and delicious. And they may protect against cancer.

Honey Honey actually contains antioxidants and other micronutrients that are good for your health. Research suggests the darker honeys, like Buckwheat, are the healthiest. Honey may help the body to absorb calcium, improving bone health; and raw honey may help relieve allergies.

Olive Oil Olive oil is a monounsaturated fat that has been shown to reduce LDL, or the "bad" cholesterol. Be sure to choose a great-quality, cold pressed extra virgin olive oil.

Nuts Nuts make a healthy, satisfying snack or a crunchy, flavorful addition to salads and side dishes. While nuts are high in fat, it is the "good" kind of fat that can help to reduce blood cholesterol and protect against heart disease. Eat a small handful of nuts each day to add to your heart health.

Peanut butter Peanut butter is high in protein and energy, and contains elements that can help to reduced "bad" cholesterol, heart disease and cancer. Spread it on whole grain bread and you've got a complete protein and a filling snack. Mix it with some soy sauce and vinegar and other ingredients and you have an outstanding peanut dipping sauce. Just buy the natural peanut butter without added sugar or fillers.

Tomatoes Tomatoes are jam-packed with nutrients, filled with Vitamins C, A and K and are a precious source of lycopene, which research suggests prevents cancer and heart disease. Since ripe, fresh tomatoes are perishable and not always available, canned tomatoes are a good substitute.

Whole Grains Choose whole grains and your heart will thank you—they have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and obesity. And be adventurous—try Amaranth, Barley, Brown Rice, Buckwheat, Bulgur, Millet, Oatmeal and Whole Oats, Popcorn and Quinoa,

Should you choose organic versions of foods? Research suggests that organic foods may contain more vitamins, minerals and antioxidants than the same conventionally grown foods. Organic foods lower children's exposure to potentially damaging pesticides, and organically raised meat and milk have higher levels of omega-three fatty acids and antioxidants. Whether or not you choose organic, make sure your pantry is stocked with whole, unprocessed foods.