Eating on a Budget—the 3 P’s

**PLAN**

* Plan meals and snacks for the week according to an established budget.



* Find quick and easy recipes online.
* Include meals that will “stretch” expensive food items (stews, casseroles,

stir‐fried dishes).

* Make a grocery list.
* Check for sales and coupons in the local paper or online and consider discount stores.
* Ask about a loyalty card at your grocery store.

**PURCHASE**

* Buy groceries when you are not hungry and when you are not too rushed.



* Stick to the grocery list and stay out of the aisles that don’t contain items on your list.
* Buy store brands if cheaper.
* Find and compare unit prices listed on shelves to get the best price.
* Purchase some items in bulk or as family packs which usually cost less.
* Choose fresh fruits and vegetables in season; buy canned vegetables with less salt.
* Pre‐cut fruits and vegetables, individual cups of yogurt, and instant rice and hot cereal are
* convenient, but usually cost more than those that require a bit more prep time.
* Good low‐cost items available all year include:
* Protein — beans (garbanzo, black, cannellini) o Vegetables — carrots, greens, potatoes
* Fruit — apples, bananas

**PREPARE**

* Some meal items can be prepared in advance; pre‐cook on days when you have time.



* Double or triple up on recipes and freeze meal‐sized containers of soups and casseroles or divide into individual portions.
* Try a few meatless meals by substituting with beans and peas or try “no‐cook” meals like salads.
* Incorporate leftovers into a subsequent meal.

**Resource:**

ChooseMyPlate.gov

* Be creative with a fruit or vegetable and use it in different ways during the week.