



SUTTER COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
**FOOD AS MEDICINE
TOOLKIT**

2026





WELCOME TO THE FOOD AS MEDICINE TOOLKIT

Want to improve your health and well-being? People in Sutter County shared that they want better nutrition and easier access to healthy foods. To support this need, Sutter County Public Health created the Food As Medicine Toolkit. It includes helpful, science-based information to encourage healthy, balanced eating and improve overall well-being.

What is Food As Medicine?

Food as medicine means the foods we eat can help prevent illness, improve health, and support how we feel each day. It also means that healthy food should be easy to find, affordable, and simple to prepare.

This toolkit includes four main sections:

Food As Medicine to promote health and well-being

The foods we choose can affect our energy, mood, and overall health. This section shares tips for choosing nutritious foods, making simple meals, shopping on a budget, and finding helpful recipes and videos.

Food As Medicine to improve access to healthy foods

Some families have trouble getting healthy food. This can raise the risk of health problems like diabetes or heart disease. This section provides information about local food programs, CalFresh, and budgeting tips.

Food As Medicine for managing long-term health conditions

Healthy eating can help people manage certain health conditions. This section offers clear information, useful resources, and recipes designed for people with conditions like diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's Disease, or dementia.

Food As Medicine to promote food safety

Safe food is important for good health. This section includes easy-to-understand tips on keeping food safe at home and reducing food waste.

Click the boxes below to view more information about each topic:



Health & Wellbeing



Food Access



Managing long-term health conditions



Food Safety



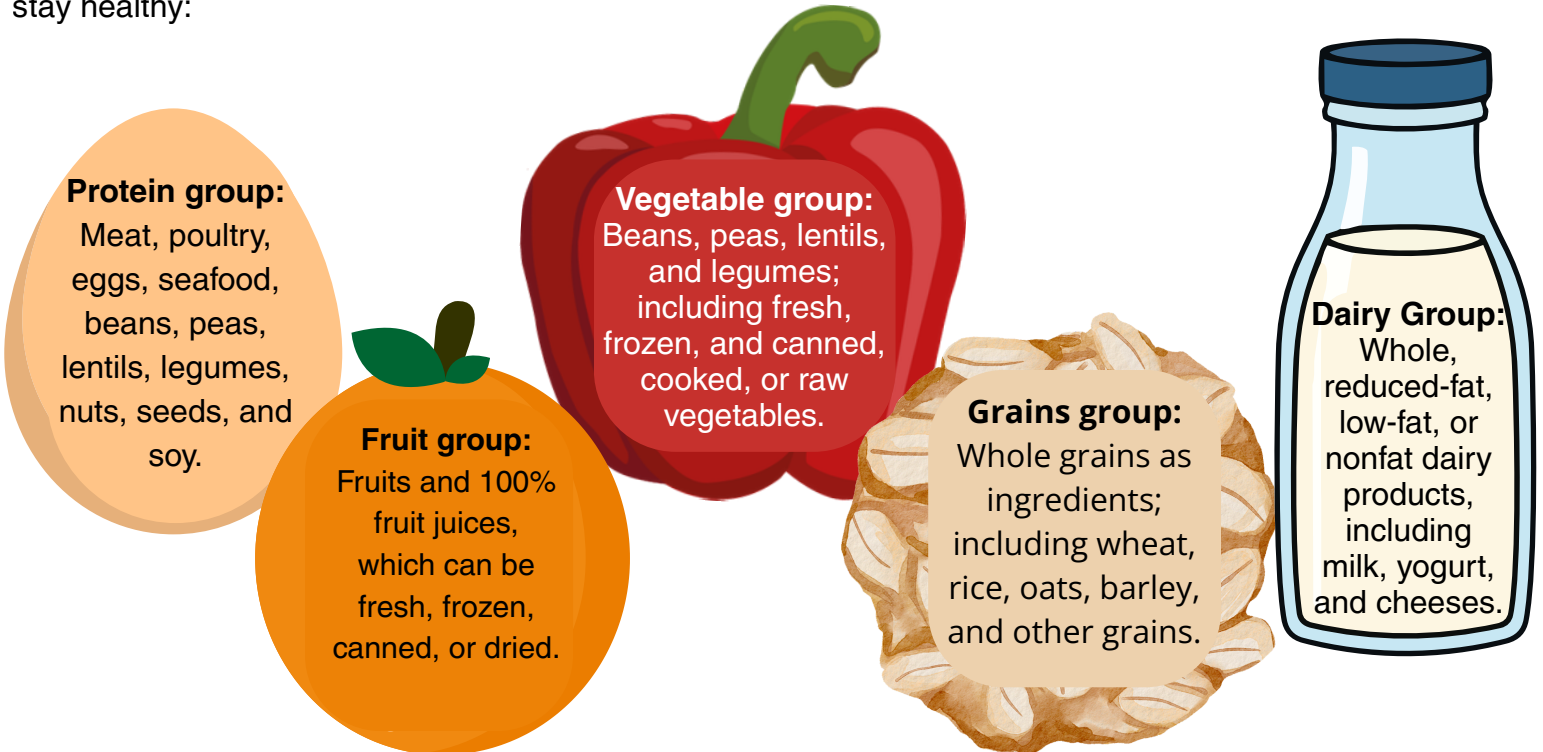
HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Choosing healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, whole-grains, dairy, and protein, helps your body grow, stay strong, and have energy to take on the day. Eating more balanced meals can also lower your chances of getting long-term illnesses and improve your overall health and well-being. This section includes information about cooking, recipes, shopping, budgeting for food, meal planning, portion size, and nutrition tips.

The resources below provide easy tools to help anyone eat healthy. They include simple pictures and tips that show balanced portions and the main food groups you need to build a healthy, tasty meal.

- [CalFresh Healthy Living](#): discover how simple shifts can go a long way on the road to healthy living for you and your family.
- [Healthy Eating Plate Recommendations](#): learn more about creating a healthy and balanced plate from [Harvard Nutrition Source](#).

By focusing on the food groups below, you can make sure your meals have the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy:



[Click the tiles below to view more information about each topic:](#)

[Eat the Rainbow](#)

[Meal Planning](#)

[Cooking & Recipes](#)

[Smart Shopping & Budgeting](#)

[Recipe & Food Videos](#)

[Portion size](#)

[Healthy Plates with the Tastes You Know](#)





EAT A RAINBOW:

A COLORFUL WAY TO STAY HEALTHY!

Below are examples of foods that contain nutrients that can support your health.

Red foods have a nutrient called lycopene, which protects your cells from damage. Eating red foods may help keep your heart and lungs healthy. You can find lycopene in: strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, tomatoes, cherries, apples, beets, watermelon, red grapes, red peppers, and red onions.

Green foods have special nutrients that help protect your body from chemicals that may cause cancer. These nutrients help your cells stay healthy. You can find them in: spinach, avocados, asparagus, artichokes, broccoli, alfalfa sprouts, kale, cabbage, brussels sprouts, kiwi, collard greens, green tea, & green herbs like mint, rosemary, sage, thyme, & basil.

White and brown foods from the onion family have components that help protect our bodies and keep our cells healthy. You can find these in: onions, cauliflower, garlic, leeks, parsnips, daikon radish, and mushrooms.

Whole grains are a great source of fiber and contain vitamins, minerals, and other helpful nutrients. Eating whole grains can lower cholesterol and protect against heart disease and diabetes. You can find them in: whole grain bread, oats, brown rice, quinoa, barley, and more.

Fish contains omega-3 fatty acids that are good for your heart.

Orange and yellow foods have a nutrient called beta-cryptoxanthin. It helps your cells communicate and may help keep your heart healthy. You can find it in: carrots, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers, oranges, bananas, pineapple, tangerines, mango, pumpkin, apricots, winter squash (butternut and acorn), peaches, cantaloupe, & corn.

Blue and purple foods have strong antioxidants called anthocyanins. These help protect your cells from aging too fast and may help your heart by stopping harmful blood clots from forming. You can find them in: blueberries, blackberries, elderberries, Concord grapes, raisins, eggplant, plums, figs, prunes, lavender, and purple cabbage.

Beans and Legumes are an excellent source of fiber, folate, and plant protein. Studies show they can help lower the chance of heart disease. Some examples include: beans like kidney, black, red, garbanzo, and soybeans, as well as peas.

Nuts are a good source of plant protein. and contain nutrients, which may help reduce the risk of heart disease. Add a handful to oatmeal, yogurt, salad, or have as a snack.

Olive oil is a healthy fat that gives you vitamin E and other helpful nutrients. These can lower your risk of heart disease. You can drizzle it on vegetables, use it as a dressing, or cook with it.



FOOD AS MEDICINE

COOKING & RECIPES

Discover simple, delicious recipes and cooking tips that can support your health and well-being. This section offers easy-to-follow meal ideas and guidance to help you prepare nutritious meals at home.

- Check out these helpful recipe links! Visit the links below to find tasty, healthy, and budget-friendly recipes for you and your family.
 - [Recipes - eatright.org](#)
 - [Recipes - WIC YouTube](#)
 - [Recipes - CalFresh Healthy Living](#)
- **Cooking resources:**
 - **Cooking Skills:** Cooking at home is good for both your health and your wallet. People who cook more meals at home usually eat more fruits, vegetables, and fiber, and less saturated fat and salt.
 - Below are some simple cooking tips to help you get started:
 - [Live Cooking Classes](#): Register for free, virtual, live cooking classes each month with the American Diabetes Association.
 - [Tips and Videos](#) to help you learn to cook, cut, prepare, plan, and store foods.
 - [Learn to cook at home](#) with these easy tips.



RECIPE & FOOD VIDEOS

Welcome to our Food as Medicine Toolkit Recipe Videos!

Food can help us feel good, stay healthy, and bring our community together. This recipe collection is intended to make healthy eating easy, fun, and something everyone can enjoy. Each recipe uses simple, affordable ingredients and provides helpful tips to support your health one meal at a time.

These recipes were made with the entire Sutter County community in mind. They are budget-friendly and include foods from many cultures. Take a look, try something new, and share the recipes you like best.

Click the options below to watch the recipe and food videos in English, Spanish (Español), and Punjabi (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ).



Smart shopping starts with a plan: Healthy & affordable tips

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Join us for healthy, smart, budget-friendly shopping

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Join us at the Yuba-Sutter Food Distribution to access healthy food in our community

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Let's make cinnamon apple raisin oatmeal

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Let's make fish in foil (Pescado Empapelado)

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Let's make vegetarian paneer wraps

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



Let's make three bean chili

[English](#)
[Español](#)
[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ](#)



SMART SHOPPING & BUDGETING



Smart shopping helps people select healthy foods while saving money. These tools give simple tips and guides to help you shop with confidence, waste less food, and choose items that support good health over time.

Eating healthy within your budget: Click [here](#) for tips from the California Department of Public Health.

Click below!

Fit fruits and vegetables into your budget:

- When choosing fresh vegetables and fruits look for ones that are in-season. They are easier to get and less expensive. But remember that they don't last long so buy small amounts to avoid food waste!
- Frozen and canned vegetables and fruit may cost less than fresh out-of-season produce and are just as healthy
- Check out the [Seasonal Produce Guide](#) to learn more about what's in-season.
 - **Pro tip:** check out your local Farmers' Markets to find fresh in-season fruits and vegetables.



Look around for better deals:

- Stores usually put the most expensive items at eye level. Look high and low on the shelves for better deals.
- Get more for less by looking around for coupons, making a list, and planning your shopping trip based on these items.
- Join membership clubs at your local grocery stores. Signing up is often free and they offer special coupons and discounts on food for members.
- Look at bulk bins for cheaper options for packaged grains, rice, and more.
- Store brands are often less expensive than the name brands.



Protein for less: Use beans or tofu as a cheaper alternative to meat or poultry in dishes.

Use leftovers: Eat what you cook - save leftovers in the refrigerator or store in the freezer.

Buy only what you need:

- Don't shop hungry! Shopping hungry may contribute to impulse buys and choosing less healthy options.
 - Make a list - plan ahead and make a list of what you need before heading to the grocery store to help avoid buying products you don't need or already have in your home.
- [Click here to find grocery stores accepting EBT in your area.](#)
- [Click here to find Sutter County Farm Stands.](#) This page provides information on current certified farm stands, where they are located and hours of operation.



MEAL PLANNING



Life can be busy, but taking some time to plan ahead makes mealtime faster and easier. When you plan your meals ahead of time, you are more likely to choose more balanced meals instead of grabbing something less healthy at the last minute. Meal planning can also help you waste less food, save money and time, and make it easier to decide what to eat each day. With a plan in place, your meals can be more balanced and enjoyable, and busy days can feel less stressful.

Looking for easy ways to make healthy meals? Check out the tips and tricks below to help you plan tasty, nutritious dishes for you and your family.

- [Plan weekly meals and make a solid grocery list:](#) This section provides information on creating grocery lists by incorporating food groups and purchasing the following healthy pantry staples so you have healthy basics on hand, such as:
 - Beans, peas, and lentils
 - Oats and whole-grain ready-to-eat cereals
 - Tuna, sardines, or salmon in cans or pouches
 - Whole grain pasta and other grains, including brown rice, quinoa, and more
 - Canned tomatoes, broth, and pasta sauce
 - Canned vegetables and fruits
 - Peanut butter or other nut butters
 - Frozen fruit or vegetables for the freezer



- [Make menus and keep a running grocery list:](#) Whether you are starting small by planning 1-2 per week or planning menus for the entire month, the tips below can help you get started:
 - Browse recipes for ideas that fit your needs, cooking times, and skill level.
 - Look at your schedule to plan meals around your busy schedule.
 - Check out sales and coupons to ensure meal planning fits your budget.
 - Leftovers - think about incorporating leftovers or how you can stretch meals throughout the week, or pick a day to prepare meals for a few days.
 - Aim for variety in meals, but don't feel like every day must be different. It's okay to have oatmeal or low-fat yogurt with berries several times a week for breakfast.
 - The same goes for lunch; pick a few options and rotate them across a week.
 - Keep a running grocery list. Have a pen and pad of paper somewhere convenient or keep a running list on your phone and, as you use up grocery items, put them on the list.



FOOD AS MEDICINE

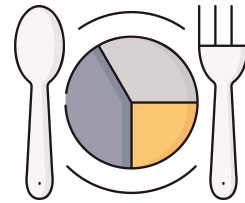
PORTION SIZE



Portion sizes matter! Eating the right amount of food helps your body get what it needs without too many extra calories. It also makes it easier to notice when you're hungry or full, so you don't overeat. By keeping portions in balance, you can enjoy all your favorite foods and build healthy habits that last.

Food Label information and resources:

- [Know your serving sizes on the new Nutritional Facts label Video](#)
- For more information, visit the [Serving Size on the Nutritional Facts Label Webpage](#)
 - [The new Nutritional Facts label goes big on calories Video](#)
 - [Interactive Nutrition Facts Label](#)
 - [FDA Nutrition Education Resources & Materials](#)



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories From Fat
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	%
Saturated Fat	%
Trans Fat	%
Cholesterol	%
Sodium	%
Total Carbohydrate	%
Dietary Fiber	%
Sugars	%
Protein	%

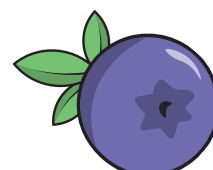
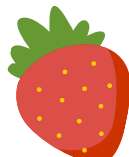
*Percent Daily values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Serving size vs. portion size: Healthy eating starts with knowing how much you're actually eating. Portion size is the amount of food you choose to eat, while serving size is the recommended amount we eat. This guide offers easy tips to help you keep serving sizes in mind and make more balanced food choices.

- **Use the plate method:** [Use the healthy eating plate to help you plan your portions.](#)
- **Avoid eating directly from large packages:** [CDC Healthy Weight & Growth Tips](#) suggests portioning snacks into individual containers or bowls instead of eating from the bag.
- **Mindful eating tips:** Learn how to make each bite a meditation with mindful eating information from the American Heart Association.

Swap sugary drinks for water! Choosing water instead of sweetened beverages can save you hundreds of calories each day. Plus, drinking water before meals can help you feel full faster, making it easier to eat just the right amount.

- **Mix up new flavors:** elevate your hydration game by adding berries or slices of lime, lemon, or cucumber to your water.
- **Get fizzy with it:** mix sparkling water with a squeeze of juice from your favorite fruit or low-calorie drinks that's still sweet without the added sugar.
- **Refresh your refrigerator:** instead of stocking up on sugary drinks, keep a jug of cold water that's always ready.
- **Check-out** the links below for more recipes and ideas on how to sip smarter with water:
 - [Recipes](#)
 - [Water Beverage Card](#)
 - [Rethink Your Drink Cards](#)



HEALTHY PLATES WITH THE TASTE YOU KNOW

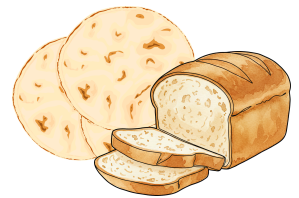


Tips to help you enjoy your cultural foods by making small, healthy swaps that keep all the flavor you love.

Eating the foods from your culture and family is something to be proud of. These meals connect you to your history and the people you love. You can still enjoy your favorite dishes by making small changes that help make your meals more balanced.

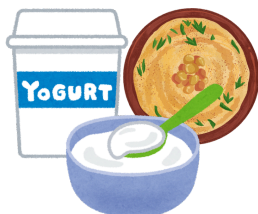
• Grains (breads, rice, cereals, and more)

- You don't need to give up rice and grains - try whole-grain options like brown rice, wild rice, farro, or quinoa.
 - **Tip: Mix white rice with brown rice until you get used to the flavor.**
 - **Tip: Add cauliflower rice, chickpeas, or lentils for more fiber and protein.**
- Bread - replace white bread with 100% whole-wheat bread.
 - **Tip: Try whole-grain pita, roti, naan, or wraps instead of options made with regular flour.**
- Tortillas - choose corn tortillas instead of flour or try whole grain versions.
- Cook grains in low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth for more flavor.
 - **Tip: Season with herbs or garlic instead of salt. Try adding lime or cilantro.**
- Pasta - Pasta is comforting and can be a busy weeknight staple.
 - Whole-wheat or legume-based pasta boosts fiber, protein, and minerals, helping keep you full and your blood sugar steady. Paired with veggies, olive oil, or lean protein, it's an easy, nutrient-packed upgrade to a comforting meal.
 - **Tip: To get more vegetables, blend them into the pasta sauce.**



• Protein (meats, dairy, and more)

- Beef and poultry - choose lean meats like chicken or turkey instead of fatty cuts.
 - **Tip: Add plant-based proteins like beans, chickpeas, and lentils.**
- Add beans to soups, salads, or rice dishes instead of extra meat.
- Cooking: grill, bake, or air-fry meats or fish instead of frying in oil.
- Dairy: Choose low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, or plant milk.
 - **Tip: Pick low-fat or unsweetened versions instead of full-fat or sugary ones.**
 - **Tip: Swap Greek yogurt or hummus instead of mayonnaise in sauces or on sandwiches.**

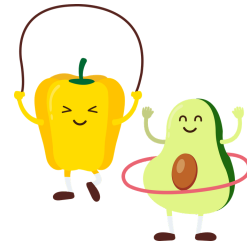


HEALTHY PLATES WITH THE TASTE YOU KNOW



• Vegetables and Fruits

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables
 - **Tip: Use fruit as a side instead of chips or sugary snacks.**
 - **Tip: Add veggies to sauces, stews, and rice to stretch portions.**
 - **Tip: Roast vegetables with olive oil and spices instead of frying.**



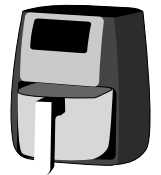
• Spices, Herbs, and Flavorings

- Add flavor with spices, herbs, and lemon or lime juice instead of salt.
 - **Tip: Try garlic powder, paprika, chili, or turmeric instead of extra salt.**
- Use healthy oils like olive or avocado oil instead of butter.
- Keep cultural flavors strong with fresh herbs and spice mixes.
 - **Tip: Choose lower-salt blends like Italian seasoning, curry mixes, adobo, or soy sauce.**



• Cooking Methods

- Choose fresh foods often and limit packaged meals.
- Bake, grill, air-fry, roast, or steam instead of frying foods.
 - **Fried foods can be enjoyed with far less fat by using an air fryer, which recreates the crispness of traditional frying without excessive oil. This simple swap helps cut down on trans and saturated fats, supporting heart health while still satisfying cravings.**



• Delicious Drinks and Beverages

- Mix up new flavors: elevate your hydration game by adding berries or slices of lime, lemon, or cucumber to your water.
- Get fizzy with it: mix sparkling water with a squeeze of juice from your favorite fruit or low-calorie drinks that's still sweet without the added sugar.
- Refresh your refrigerator: instead of stocking up on sugary drinks, keep a jug of cold water that's always ready.
- Check out the links below for more recipes and ideas on how to sip smarter with water:
 - [Recipes](#)
 - [Rethink Your Drink Cards](#)



For more healthy and delicious substitutions and swaps, [check out these tips from the American Heart Association.](#)





FOOD AS MEDICINE

MANAGING LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITIONS

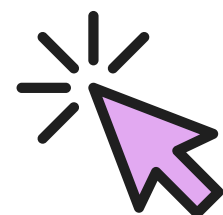
Food is more than something we eat to stay full. It helps keep our bodies healthy and can even help manage certain diseases. The foods we choose each day can help control blood sugar, lower blood pressure, reduce inflammation, and strengthen the immune system. This is especially important for conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. When we use food as part of our health care, we focus on preventing sickness and supporting long-term health.

Click below to learn more about managing heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, and other dementias.

[Heart Disease & Hypertension](#)

[Diabetes](#)

[Alzheimer's disease and other dementias](#)



HEART DISEASE & HYPERTENSION





Heart Disease:

Heart disease is the term for group of problems that affect the heart and blood vessels. This happens when sticky plaque builds up in the arteries, making them narrow and harder for blood to pass through. This can lead to serious issues like heart attacks or strokes.

While we can't control factors like age or family history, lifestyle choices, especially what we eat, can make a big difference. A heart-smart diet includes:

- Colorful fruits and vegetables 
- Whole grains like brown rice and oats 
- Lean proteins such as fish, beans, and poultry 
- Healthy fats like olive or canola oil 
- Limiting salt, added sugars, and unhealthy fats

Along with eating well, people can build in healthy activities into their daily lives to help manage heart disease, such as:

- Staying active 
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Avoiding tobacco
- Getting regular check-ups to help protect the heart
- Managing stress 

Hypertension:

Hypertension, also called high blood pressure, happens when the force of your blood pushing against your blood vessel walls stays too high. This makes your heart work harder and can lead to serious problems like heart attacks and strokes.

To help manage high blood pressure, it's important to eat healthy foods, use less sodium, and make more balanced lifestyle choices. For more information about managing heart disease, the DASH eating plan, how to check your blood pressure, recipes, and tips, click the link [here to view resources from the American Heart Association](#).

It's not about one meal; it's about consistent habits over time. By making these choices, we can reduce risk, manage disease, and support longer, healthier lives.

For more resources and tips on how to manage heart disease and coronary heart disease, please visit the American Heart Association links below:

- [Heart Healthy Recipes](#) and [DASH Diet Recipes](#)
- [Heart check foods](#)
- [Cooking, meal planning, and shopping skills](#)
- [Heart healthy swaps](#)
- [Eat healthy: heart healthy resources](#)
- [5 easy ways to find healthier options while grocery shopping](#)



FOOD AS MEDICINE

DIABETES



Diabetes is a long-term condition where the body cannot control blood sugar the right way. With diabetes food is medicine. This page will focus on information to help you manage your diabetes.

As part of healthy eating, everyone needs the same type of things, such as vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, protein, and fat. These are called nutrients. Together, nutrients in food help the body work. Carbohydrates are part of a healthy diet. Focus on choosing complex carbs like whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats), beans and lentils, fruits, vegetables, and starchy veggies like sweet potatoes, which provide fiber and are digested more slowly. Simple carbs, refined grains, and other sugars digest quickly and can cause rapid blood sugar spikes. By focusing on fiber-rich complex carbs, limiting simple carbs, and being mindful of portions, carbs can fit into a healthy eating pattern for everyone!

Focus on these foods:

Complex Carbs: On the Diabetes Plate, these foods should fill about one-quarter of your plate

Non-starchy vegetables: fill half your plate with non-starchy veggies like broccoli, lettuce, cucumbers, cauliflower, and more!

Fruits: You can still eat fruit! It counts as a carbohydrate food but is full of nutrients and can satisfy a sweet tooth!

Lean meats & plant-based proteins: Choose lean cuts of meats and poultry. Beans, hummus, and lentils are also great options.

Fats: Add healthy fats to help lower your cholesterol and protect your heart. Healthy fats can be found in foods like olive oil, nuts, avocados, some types of fish.

Food nourishes your body, but it's also shaped by culture, memories, and community. [Check out our "Healthy Plates with the Tastes You know"](#) in the [Health & Wellbeing section](#) for tips on how to make healthy swaps and how to fit your favorite meals or staples into your lifestyle.

Tips for eating well - healthy eating can be simple. Whatever foods you enjoy, small, smart swaps, like adding more veggies or choosing lean proteins, can make a big impact on your health.

- [Fast-food dining](#)
- [Shopping at the grocery store](#)
- [Diabetes plate](#)

Understanding Food and Blood Sugar - The food we eat plays a huge role in balancing blood sugar. Learn more about managing your blood sugar, including healthier options, and eating better on the go.

- [Food and Blood Glucose Tips](#)
- [Superstar food for diabetes](#)
- [Tips for eating healthy on the go](#)

Recipes for diabetes management - click to view diabetes-friendly recipes, meal planning resources, live cooking classes, and more.



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & DEMENTIA



Dementia and Alzheimer's disease are conditions that affect memory, thinking, and problem-solving over time, gradually making everyday activities more challenging. With early awareness, supportive care, and community resources, individuals and families can better navigate these changes and maintain quality of life for as long as possible.

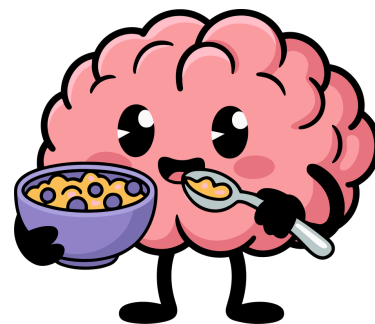
Eating well is important for staying strong and healthy. For someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, not getting enough good nutrition can lead to weight loss and make behavior problems worse.

As the disease progresses, regular meals can become harder. A person with Alzheimer's disease or dementia may feel confused by too many food choices, forget to eat, or think they've already eaten. The tips below can help improve health for both the person with dementia and you as their caregiver:

- **Nutrition tips:** Focus on nutrient-dense, brain-healthy foods like:

- leafy greens
- berries
- whole grains
- fish
- nuts
- olive oil
- limit processed foods, sugar, and excess salt.

- **Tip:** Keep meals small, frequent, easy to eat, and paired with hydration and routine to support appetite, cognitive function, and overall health.



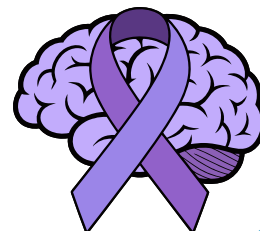
- **Possible causes of poor appetite:** People with Alzheimer's disease or dementia may have a poor appetite because of memory problems, medication changes or side effects, physical issues like trouble chewing or swallowing, or changes in taste and smell that make eating harder. Feeling sad, tired, confused, or being in a noisy or confusing environment can also make someone less interested in food.

Resources:

- [Alzheimer's Association](#) - Learn more about food and eating for those with Alzheimer's disease.
- [Alzheimer's Association Message Boards](#) - Exchange tips with other caregivers who are experiencing eating and mealtime challenges with a loved one with dementia.
- [Swallowing Problems in Adults](#) - Learn about swallowing problems from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Local resources:

- [Sutter County Public Health - Healthy Brain Initiative](#)
- [Aging and Disability Resource Connection \(ADRC\) Yuba and Sutter Counties](#)





FOOD AS MEDICINE

FOOD SAFETY

Access to safe, healthy food is important for good health. Food safety, nutrition, and food security are all connected. When food is not safe, it can cause sickness, poor nutrition, and long-term health problems.

Sometimes food has germs that can make you sick. Food poisoning can happen when bacteria, viruses, parasites, mold, toxins, or allergens get into food. This can occur during processing, harvesting, shipping, at the store, or even in your home. Not washing your hands before eating is one of the main ways germs enter the body. Practicing good food safety helps keep you, your family, friends, and community safe.

Click the items below to learn tips about basic food safety, staying safe during different seasons and emergencies, and how to make food safety fit your budget—and more.

Please click the topics below to learn more:

- [> Food safety basics](#)
- [> Prevention steps & strategies](#)
- [> Food safety - By Event, Season & Emergencies](#)



FOOD SAFETY BASICS



Food can sometimes be contaminated with germs. You may swallow these germs when:

- Food isn't cooked properly.
- Germs from food spread to your hands, surfaces, or other foods (cross contamination).
- Food isn't refrigerated properly.

Some foods are more likely to contain harmful germs including:

- Raw or undercooked poultry, meat, seafood, or eggs
- Raw or undercooked sprouts
- Unwashed fruits and vegetables
- Cut melon
- Unpasteurized milk, juice, cider, or soft cheese
- Raw dough or raw batter made with uncooked flour

Common symptoms of food poisoning:

- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting

Some groups are also at higher risk of developing symptoms of food borne illness including older adults, people with autoimmune diseases, those who are pregnant, and children under 5. Click [here](#) to learn more.

HOW TO STRETCH YOUR BUDGET WITH FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Save Money with Smart Food Safety

- [Safe Shopping](#): Learn how to shop smart and avoid contamination.
- [Proper Storage](#): Extend shelf life and reduce waste.
 - Safe Food Storage: Proper food storage can extend the shelf life of food while ensuring it remains safe to eat. Doing so can also save money and prevent food waste.
- [Where to store foods in the kitchen](#)- if you want to maximize the life of your food here are some tips from registered dieticians who are experts in food storage.
 - [Where to store foods two-pager](#)
- [FoodKeeper App](#): Use this webpage and app to help you use food while at peak quality and reduce waste.
- **Freezing 101:**
 - [Freezing 101](#)
- [Food Product Dating Tips](#)



FOOD SAFETY - PREVENTION STEPS & STRATEGIES



Practicing food safety can help prevent foodborne illness.

4 Simple C's to Food Safety (Clean, Cross Contamination, Cook & Chill)

Follow these 4 steps to protect yourself and your family:

1. Clean: Wash Hands, Surfaces & Produce

- Wash hands for **20 seconds** with soap and water.
- Clean utensils, cutting boards, and counters with hot, soapy water.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water.
- Don't wash raw meat, poultry, or seafood—it spreads germs.
- With canned foods, remember to clean lids before opening.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Clean](#)



2. Cross-Contamination- Separate your food

- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and produce.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from other foods in your cart and fridge.
- Store raw items in sealed containers to prevent leaks.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Separate](#)



3. Cook: Use a Food Thermometer

- Cook food to the right internal temperature to kill germs.
- Don't rely on color or texture—**use a thermometer.**
- Reheat leftovers to **165°F.**
- Let microwaved food sit to finish cooking evenly.
- Keep food out of the temperature danger zone. Leaving food out too long at room temperature can cause bacteria to grow to dangerous levels that can cause illness. Bacteria grow most rapidly in the range of temperatures between 40 °F and 140 °F which is called the "Danger Zone."

[Safe Cooking Food Safety Quick Tips: Temperatures](#)

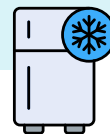
[Food Safety Quick Tips: Microwave Safety Temperature Danger Zone](#)



4. Chill: Refrigerate and Freeze Properly

- Refrigerate perishable food within **2 hours** of cooking or purchasing. Refrigerate within **1 hour** if the temperature outside is over 90°F.
- Keep fridge at **40°F or below**, freezer at **0°F or below.**
- Thaw food in the fridge, under cold water, or microwave. **Never defrost your food on the countertop or at room temperature**, the outside warms up into the temperature danger zone while the inside may still be frozen.
- Divide larger amounts of leftovers in shallow containers for quicker cooling in the microwave.
- Always marinate food in the refrigerator.
- Store leftovers in shallow containers to cool quickly.

[Food Safety Quick Tips: Food Storage & Freezing Tips](#)



FOOD SAFETY - BY EVENT, SEASON & EMERGENCIES



Food safety can change depending on the season and what is happening around you. Warm weather can cause bacteria to grow faster if food is not kept at the right temperature. Cold weather and indoor events can lead to food being stored the wrong way or leftover food not being handled safely. During emergencies, like power outages or bad storms, food safety becomes even more important because there may be little or no refrigeration or clean water. Paying attention to these risks helps keep food safe at all events and protects everyone's health all year long.

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage. **Before** a power outage, prepare for emergencies or natural disasters:

- Have a cooler handy
- Freeze containers of water and gel packs
- Buy dry ice or block ice

Click below for more Food safety information:

- [Food safety during emergencies](#)
- [Food safety by event and season](#)
- [Food safety by food type](#)
- [Food safety before, during, and after emergencies](#)
- [Safer food choices](#)

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

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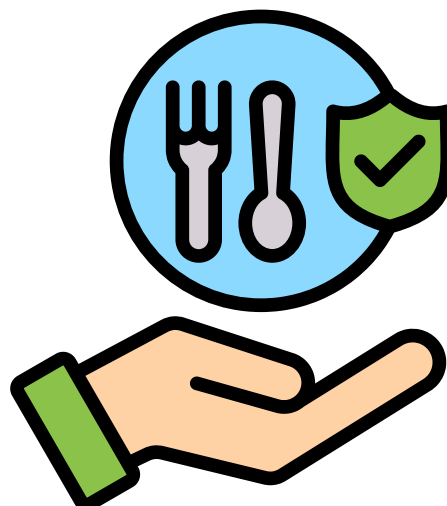
www.cdc.gov/foodsafety

FOOD SAFETY AT AN OUTDOOR BBQ

- KEEP HANDS CLEAN
- SEPARATE RAW AND COOKED FOODS
- COOK TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE
- REFRIGERATE PERISHABLES PROMPTLY

Food Safety reminders for outdoor BBQ's:

- Keep hands clean
- Separate raw and cooked foods
- Cook to the right temperature
- Refrigerate food promptly



FOOD AS MEDICINE

FOOD ACCESS

Access to healthy, nourishing food is essential for preventing long-term health conditions and supporting overall well-being. Food as Medicine uses simple, healthy eating approaches to promote health and reduce food insecurity. This toolkit is designed to connect every member of our community with the food-based resources they need to live healthier, fuller lives.

This section of the toolkit includes tips for eating healthy on a budget, smart shopping, and community food support (food pantries, food distributions, where to apply for Meals on Wheels, and more).



Please click the sections below to learn more:



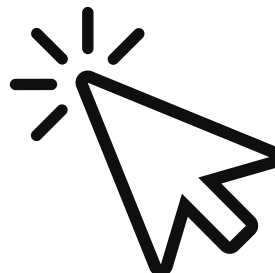
Healthy Food on a Budget



Smart Shopping & Budgeting Resources



Community Food Support



HEALTHY FOOD ON A BUDGET



Eating Well on a Tight Budget

Grocery shopping on a limited budget can feel overwhelming, but with smart planning, you can still enjoy meals that are healthy, simple, and affordable. Start by checking what you already have, aim for at least one balanced meal each day, and stock up on staples to stretch your food supply for two weeks or more.

Food shopping starts at home. Planning meals and making a list saves time and money. Here are some tips to help you eat well and spend less:

- **Plan ahead** to find the best deals, avoid impulse buys, and reduce extra trips (and gas costs).
- **Check online ads and coupons** for discounts.
- **Create a healthy plate and include the 5 food groups** as a guide for balanced meals.
- **Take advantage of seasonal specials** for fresh, affordable fruits and vegetables.
- **Reuse leftovers** in casseroles, soups, snacks, or lunch boxes.
- **Organize your shopping list** by store layout to save time and avoid temptations.
- **Eat before you shop** to prevent impulse purchases.



If finding healthy and affordable food options near you is difficult, consider these easy and healthy alternatives:

- **Canned, dried or frozen produce:** These options are just as healthy as fresh fruits and vegetables and can last longer.
- **Canned vegetables:** Choose low-sodium, reduced-sodium or no-salt added options.
- **Frozen vegetables** with no added seasonings or sauces.
- **Canned fruit** packed in water or its own juice with no added sugars.
- **Dried fruit** with no added sugars.
- **Powdered milk** (dry milk), which is made from liquid milk with the moisture removed.



FOOD AS MEDICINE

COMMUNITY FOOD SUPPORT



Community Food Connections helps residents easily find local places that offer free or low-cost food and nutrition support. This page provides information on local food pantries, meal programs, farm stands, and other food access options to help ensure everyone in our community can access healthy, nourishing food.

- [Yuba-Sutter Food Bank food distributions & food pantries](#)
 - Shows monthly community food distributions and neighborhood food pantry locations available to residents seeking free and low-cost food.
- [Low Cost and No Cost Resources for Sutter County | Sutter County, CA](#)
 - Low cost and no cost resources in Sutter County. View the food section for more resources
- [Dine at Home Program – FREED Center for Independent Living](#)
 - Meal voucher program providing up to 20 meals per month from local restaurants. Available to low-income seniors and people with disabilities
- [Dine Around Town Program - Agency on Aging Area 4](#)
 - Non-traditional congregate nutrition program that offers meals at local partner restaurants. Participants can enjoy breakfast, lunch or dinner during the week or weekend at no cost.
- [Meals on Wheels](#)
 - Home-delivered meals available to seniors age 60 and older in Yuba and Sutter Counties that are homebound due to illness, recovery, or other causes that prevent them from leaving their home.
- [Employment & Eligibility Services Branch | Sutter County, CA](#)
 - Provides support for individuals and families with food assistance, including CalFresh, health care coverage (Medi-Cal), financial assistance, and Employment Services.
- [CalFresh Program | Sutter County, CA](#)
 - Federal Program designed to increase food purchasing for low-income households in order to provide a more nutritious diet.
- [Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\) Program | Sutter County, CA](#)
 - Federally-funded health and nutrition program for pregnant mothers and families with children ages 0-5.
- [EBT locator](#)
 - Find locations in the Yuba-Sutter area that accept EBT.
- [WIC approved store locator](#)
 - Find local WIC locations and grocers.
- [Madd Love Community Fridge:](#)
 - Community refrigerator that is open to all, making fresh, healthy food more accessible. Located at Yuba-Sutter Habitat for Humanity.

