

Easy and Healthy Nutrition

In times of crisis or emergency – as we are experiencing now – it is important to maintain our lifestyle and make sure we are well nourished.

While there are many efforts to understand how COVID-19 affects our health, we do know one thing for sure: Malnutrition makes us vulnerable and might increase our risk of getting sick. Therefore, we must take care of ourselves and keep our healthy habits. Yes, the grocery stores are still open and hopefully will remain open even if the situation worsens. But, A) don't we want to have our favorite foods when we're stuck at home? B) Shouldn't we make sure that we have everything we need just in case? C) there are ingredients that will disappear quickly. D) Why should we be stressed about something we can easily take care of in advance?

Therefore, it's critical to plan ahead and be ready. Worse case – we have a pantry filled with good, healthy, long-lasting foods. We can always count on consuming them in the future.

Here are a few general tips deal with the current situation:

- Make sure you have someone to help you with grocery shopping or use one of the online options (i.e. Instacart, Amazon Fresh, Peapod, Costco, Target, Walmart etc). It will help you stay away from busy places and keep you safer. Food deliveries are very convenient – groceries will literally land at your doorstep. Another great option is grocery pickup – your shopping bag will be brought to your (or your caregiver's) car.

- Even in times of crisis you should follow your dietary restrictions. Be prepared and buy any ingredients you require in advance (Gluten / nuts / lactose free items etc.).
- If you cannot find a specific ingredient that is needed and don't know what a good substitute could be – please consult your PCP or dietitian.
- IF you consume any supplementary foods, such as Ensure, vitamins or minerals – make sure you have enough to last two weeks.
- Always prefer fresh food: vegetables, fruits, beans, soups etc. over frozen or canned food. When you buy canned food – prefer the low sodium options.
- Always rinse your fruits and vegetables.
- Keep drinking enough water during the day (at least 6-8 cups a day), unless you have any kind of health concern that restricts it.
- Consult with your PCP about vitamin D. It might be a good idea to consider in times of low exposure to sunlight.

The list below will help you better plan how to stock-up your pantry while keeping a healthy diet during a time of crisis (if you have any special restrictions / needs / allergies – please keep following them).

- Root vegetables tend to have a longer shelf life: Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Beets, Carrots, Cabbage, Onion.
- Frozen / canned vegetables and fruits (including tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, apple sauce etc..)
- Frozen / canned / dry legumes (beans, peas, lentils, chickpeas etc..)
- Canned fish (Tuna, Salmon, Sardines) and chicken
- Whole Grains / Grains (Buckwheat, Barley, Rice, Quinoa, Pasta etc..)
- Bread (you can refrigerate or freeze to keep longer)
- Rice-cakes/ Crackers
- Oatmeal (Old Fashion or Instant)

- Nuts
- Granola bars
- Peanut Butter
- Tahini sauce
- Oil, Olive oil
- Flour
- Baking powder, Yeast
- Sugar / sweeteners
- Shelf stable milk
- Unsweetened jam
- Coffee/ Tea

Why?

These foods:

- A. Last longer
- B. Provide carbs, proteins and healthy fats
- C. Are easy to use
- D. Will be handy in case of emergency (i.e. if you cannot find bread anywhere – you could make your own)