

John: Welcome to this edition of Patient Listening a Podcast service from Marshfield Clinic where we present health topics to you without all the technical jargon so you can get information that is easy to understand and useful to you in your everyday life. I'm your host John Tracy.

This podcast represents part two of a podcast series titled Staying Healthy in tough economic times.

A few weeks back we posted the first part by Dr. Tom Gabert that touched on the many ways you can become a smarter health care consumer specifically while in your doctor's office.

This second part by Trina Ford, a Marshfield Clinic registered dietician and nurse practitioner, focuses on diet and specifically what type of things you can do while at the grocery store to stretch your food dollar and get the proper nutritional balance you need to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Without further ado here is Trina Ford.

Trina:

Thank you, I'm Trina Ford and I'm a registered dietician and a nurse practitioner. I've been working with the Marshfield Clinic for about thirteen years. What I would like to do today is share helpful hints and tips for surviving the difficult times we have and eating healthy at the same time.

In order to eat healthy, and also limit the costs associated with that, it is good to plan ahead when you're going to the grocery store. Go with a list. Stick to the list; that is probably the more difficult part. If you have small children, maybe they should stay home so that you can go and stick to the list, or in my case maybe my husband should stay home because he seems to grab things that are off the list!

If you are in the grocery store, look up and look down. Things that are at eye level are going to be the more expensive and the advertised items. So if you look up and down, those are going to be the items that are store brands or bulk items that will be less expensive. And don't go when you are hungry! If you are hungry, you are going to buy more!

The second item that is really helpful is; try to skip the junk food. Instead of buying chips and soda, which have lots of calories, are expensive, and have very little nutritional value (what I mean by that is they don't have the vitamins, the proteins, or minerals that we need on a day to day basis). Instead, go for things such as popcorn that you make at home, where you can get a bulk bag of popcorn. Homemade cookies or things like this. Or fresh fruit is always a good choice. If you can, especially now this time of year with summer coming along, hit the farmers markets and look for locally grown fruits and vegetables. Soon we will have strawberries and asparagus coming into season and can't wait! So as the

summer goes along, those seasonal vegetables are number one going to have much more nutrition to them, and they will be less expensive. You can even freeze some of the items or in some way save them for later in the year. Green peppers are one of my favorites, just to take, slice them up, and through them in the freezer. You don't need to blanch them or anything. And they are great snacks to take out of the freezer and just crunch on like those rings frozen if you're into something crunchy and frozen. But I think we have a little ways to go before it is green pepper season.

Another way to save is to prepare your meals at home. Anytime someone does a meal for you, such as packaged dinners, frozen TV dinners, that is there time and it will cost you more for that serving. So anytime you make your meals at home they are going to be less expensive. And if you can make meals at home using less meat, substituting a good protein source such as like a dried bean, like a black bean or a kidney bean, instead of a meat, making like a tortilla with vegetables and beans with a little cheese on top, the beans will be your protein source. You don't need the meat with that, and you will have additional vitamins and minerals from those beans and a source of fiber and very low fat.

Another way to cut down on meat which tends to be a very expensive item is to go with meatless chilies, meatless spaghetti sauce, adding in those protein sources from beans or some cases using the grains such as bulgar or rice. You can use soy protein too. Soy protein has a little bit less fiber. Sometimes it's called TVP or texturized vegetable protein. But the beans are less expensive and provide you with a lot of nutrition.

Making your snacks at home, things like homemade oatmeal cookies, popcorn, buying things in bulk if you do want to buy snacks. Larger bags of apples and oranges which tend to be in season and less expensive. A bag of potatoes, a big bag of potatoes, five pounds or ten pounds costs maybe two dollars, and that will provide many meals. You will get fiber, b-vitamins from the potatoes; vitamin c in one potato provides about half of your vitamin c for the whole day for you. And if you have the potatoes instead of buying the frozen, cut up, crispy kind that you throw in the oven; you are going to pay twice as much for those prepared, frozen potatoes because someone else did the work for you. So anytime you can buy things in bulk, looking for unprepared like oatmeal in bulk that you can jazz up with some raisins and then maybe you can go for the store brand cereals that are unsweetened would be the next choice. And larger containers of frozen juice and stuff in your cart instead of prepared

So hopefully all these tips will help you when you're going shopping. Again go prepared, go with a list, and be ready to stick to the list.

John:

That's all the time we have for this edition of Patient Listening. Thanks for tuning in. Don't forget that this was part two of a podcast series designed to help you stay healthy in tough economic times. You can hear the latest edition of Patient Listening by subscribing to our RSS feed on our website at www.marshfieldclinic.org/podcasts or you can subscribe to the podcast series on I-tunes by going to your I Tunes account and searching for Marshfield Clinic.

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