



Eating Healthy on a College Student's Budget



There are two challenges I see for college students to eat a healthy diet once they've decided that eating healthy will help them feel, look and perform better in school, athletics and other activities. First, the temptations of poor quality food everywhere they go and secondly, college students often live on a tight food budget.

As far as temptations go – just don't try to be perfect. I have found for myself and most of my clients that eating healthy 80-90% of the time is good enough to offset the negative health effects of pleasure foods. If you're basically healthy and want to stay healthy you can have a dessert or two a week and a few drinks on the weekend (if you are of age). Balance is the key. The following tips are ways in which you can eat healthy on a limited budget.

1. Eating several servings a day of fruits and vegetables are a top priority for a healthy diet. Fruits and vegetables are primary sources for vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber. If there are local food co-ops often you can get high quality produce for better prices than in the stores. *If you can't afford organic produce make sure you rinse the pesticides and insecticides from produce with one of these two homemade formulas:*

- ❖ 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 2 Tbsp. baking soda, 1 cup of water mix up and put in a spray bottle. Spray the fruits and vegetables and rinse with pure water
- ❖ Soak produce for 10 minutes in a basin filled with ½ vinegar and ½ pure water. Rinse vinegar off with pure water.

2. Eat raw nuts and seeds: Almonds, walnuts, pecans, brazil nuts, pine nuts, hazelnuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, and sesame seeds are some of the most nutrient dense, affordable, convenient health foods you can find.

Avoid roasted nuts – (they're toxic and increase "Bad" LDL cholesterol levels). Raw nuts and seeds are loaded with high quality protein, good monounsaturated fats, Vitamin E and minerals. A great snack is a piece of fresh fruit and a small handful of raw nuts or seeds.

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3. Don't waste your money on junk foods and toxic foods like: candy bars, fried foods, chips, processed foods and soda. You're just throwing your precious dollars at large food conglomerates, which don't give a hoot about you or the environment. You'd be amazed how much money you blow on foods and drinks that deplete your body of nutrients and energy. Save your pleasure food allocation for the weekend and eat something of higher quality – a nice dessert or a glass of wine (if you are of age).

4. Integrate the following affordable, nutrient dense foods into your diet:

- ❖ *Eggs* – are a perfect food. Chop up a hard-boiled egg in a salad, blend a raw egg or two with fruit and nut milk in a smoothie, or have a breakfast omelet with spinach, mushrooms and tomato. Eggs have high quality protein and fat. Eat omega 3 enriched eggs to get the brain boost you need from this essential fatty acid. To get the truth about cholesterol go to www.createvibranthealth.com/newsletters.html and check out issue #5.
- ❖ *Live-cultured yogurt* – beneficial bacteria acidophilus and bifidus are found in good quality yogurt and help regulate your digestion and elimination.
- ❖ *Bee pollen* – can be found in most health food stores and is packed with B vitamins (which help you cope with stress) minerals, enzymes, fatty acids and even complete protein. For a month on lived on nothing but Bee Pollen, brown rice and water (although I don't recommend it) and felt great.
- ❖ *Spirulina* – A nutrient dense blue-green algae that in loaded with B-vitamins, anti-oxidants, iron, protein and gamma linolenic acid which helps regulate your body's hormones. It comes in powder form or tablets and is found in the supplement section of the health food store.
- ❖ *Sprouts* – Even more affordable if you grow your own. All you need are sprouting jars and seeds. All legumes/beans, seeds and nuts can be sprouted. Sprouting increases the nutrient content of the seed and makes them much easier to digest. Mung beans, sunflower seeds, lentils, Alaskan peas, and adzuki beans are some of my favorite sprouts; www.sprouting.com is one of many online suppliers of sprouting information, seeds and jars.

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Eating healthy on a limited budget can be fun if you use your imagination and put in a little effort. What you eat affects every aspect of your life. Eating a high-quality nutrient dense diet is one of the most important steps you can take to better physical, mental and emotional health. Your performance in school, your energy level, your ability to think clearly, and your physical appearance are all affected by what you eat and digest. Following these tips is a great first step to having a healthy diet and lifestyle.



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