

## A Trip to the Market

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Shopping at the grocery store these days can be overwhelming with so many products on the market and so much information we are bombarded with on a daily basis. If your ultimate goal is to keep you and your family healthy, then here are some simple tips and strategies to help you obtain this goal.

Remember that the perimeter of the store is usually where you can avoid much of the processed and refined products laden with sugar and trans fats. It is here where you will find fresh produce, deli meats and cheeses, dairy products, juices, whole grain breads and fresh fish.

When shopping for fruits and vegetables, look for dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale which are loaded with antioxidants and rich in vitamins and minerals. Choose berries and tangerines which are high in phytochemicals, which are known substances which aid to reduce risk of certain cancers. Sweet potatoes and carrots are a wonderful choice loaded with beta-carotene.



Many stores now carry organic fruits and vegetables which are void of pesticides. Although these tend to be more expensive, some are worth your while such as apples and peaches, greens or baby eggplants. Of course as summer is right around the corner, taking advantage of your local farmers markets is a wonderful way to enjoy locally grown produce.

When looking for healthy fats, load up your grocery cart with the monounsaturated types such as olive oil, canola oil and peanut oil. Remember that all peanut butters are not created equal. Make sure the type you choose does not have hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated written on the label. This is a trans-type fat and not healthy for your heart.

Protein is essential in our diets and is the building blocks for muscle and contains amino acids that we need to live. Look for leaner cuts of beef, skinless chicken breasts, skim cheeses, low-fat dairy, and why not try other alternative types of protein such as tofu and tempeh. If you don't know what to do with these products go on web-sites such as Whole Foods where they have many recipes using these ingredients. Also keep in mind when choosing low fat dairy that the product may be laden with sugar such as a non-fat yogurt. You need to become the nutrition label expert and make the wise choices for you and your family. Hummus is another food made from ground garbanzo beans which is high in protein and delicious on crackers, in pita bread or used as a dip for vegetables. Give veggie burgers a try on a wheat sesame bun with sweet potato fries for your family.

The combinations are endless on how you can make a trip to the grocery store a fun and healthy experience for you and your family. Every week try a new fruit or new vegetable or introduce a new vegetarian food. With a little patience, willingness and creativity, you and your family can be on their way to eating in a way that nourishes the body and restores optimal health.

