

SHOP LIKE AN EXPERT

A Guide to Healthy
Grocery Choices



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I created this **Guide** to gather, in one place, the information needed to make informed decisions at the grocery store. Page 9 is a Cheat Sheet designed to print and take with you to the store. Or take a picture of it with your phone so you always have it with you.

Eat More

Berries

- At least 1 cup/day

Other fruit

- At least 2 more cups/day
 - Such as fresh, frozen, cooked, or canned fruit
 - Does **not** count: dried fruit and fruit juices

Leafy greens

- At least 2 cups/day
 - Such as spinach, kale, romaine, mustard/turnip/collard greens, bok choy, chard, cilantro, parsley, watercress, arugula, and other lettuces

Other vegetables

- At least 2 cups/day
 - Such as fresh, frozen, cooked, or canned vegetables
 - Does **not** count: dried vegetables, fried vegetables, ketchup, potatoes, corn, salted or pickled vegetables, and vegetable juice

Beans, peas, and lentils

- At least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup/day
 - Such as fresh, frozen, cooked, or canned
 - Does **not** count: dried, fried, or crispy beans, peas, and lentils

Intact whole grains

- At least 2 cups/day if cooked (or 1 cup/day if measured dry)
 - Such as oats, barley, wheat, quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, rye, rice, bulgur, corn, sorghum, einkorn, farro, freekeh, kamut, spelt, teff, millets, fonio, and triticale
 - Does **not** count: foods made with whole grain flour (bread, pasta, bagels, crackers, etc)

Seeds and nuts

- 1 to 2 ounces/day
 - Walnuts are the heart-healthiest nut.
 - Ground flax seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, and pumpkin seeds (pepitas) are all good choices.
 - Does **not** count: nut butters and nuts/seeds that are roasted, salted, or have added sugar

Protein

- At least .635 grams of protein per pound of body weight and at least 30 grams of protein per meal

Tip: Each week, buy at least one fruit or vegetable from each of these colors: green, red, orange, yellow, white, blue, and purple.

Low-mercury fish high in EPA/DHA (omega-3 fats)

- 8 to 17 ounces/week
 - Such as salmon, sardines, trout, arctic char, mackerel, herring, anchovies, and Pacific oysters
 - Does **not** count: dried fish, smoked fish, fish jerky, broiled fish, barbecued fish, battered fish, fried fish, popcorn shrimp, fish sticks, fish cakes, fish balls, and imitation crab meat
- Alternatively, take at least 500 mg of EPA/DHA each day from fish oil or algal oil.

Eat Less

Red meat

- Limit to 18 ounces/week (about 3 portions)
 - Such as beef, lamb, mutton, pork, veal, venison, bison, and goat

Eggs

- Limit to 7 eggs/week (there is no limit on egg whites)

Refined grains

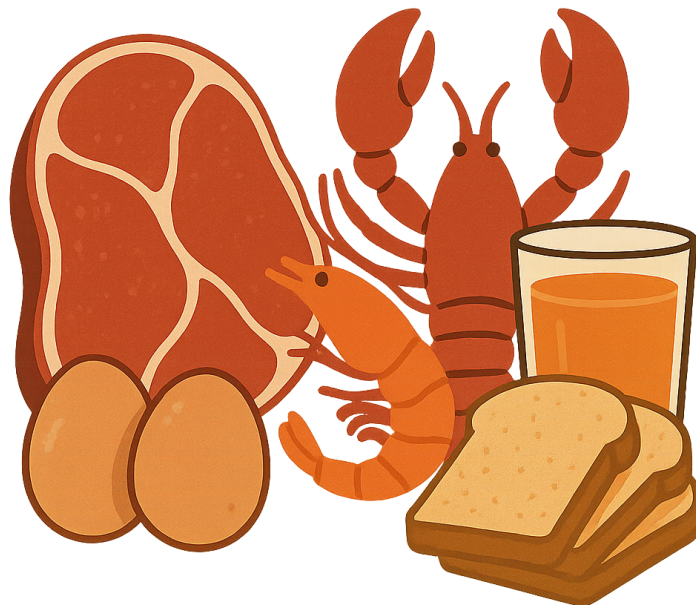
- Limit to 3.6 ounces/day (about 3 pieces of bread, a large bagel, or a bowl of breakfast cereal)

Shrimp and lobster:

- Limit to 21 ounces/week (about 40 shrimp)

Fruit juice

- Limit to 4 ounces/day



Avoid

Sugary drinks

- Such as soda, fruit drinks, juice, sweetened milk (dairy or plant), sweetened tea, sweetened coffee, energy drinks, sport drinks, and many cocktails

Processed meat

- Such as sausage, bacon, ham, pepperoni, bratwursts, hot dogs, bologna, pastrami, chorizo, salami, corned beef, beef jerky, turkey jerky, fish jerky, dried or smoked fish, canned meat, other deli meats/cold cuts, and minced meats such as hamburger and sausage if smoked, salted, cured, dried, or canned

Fish high in mercury

- Such as shark, swordfish, marlin, orange roughy, tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico, bigeye tuna, and king mackerel

Full Fat milk, cheese, yogurt, and other dairy products

- Acceptable if it is fat-free (0% fat) and unsweetened (no added sugar)



Nutrition Facts Label

Below is a sample Nutrition Facts label.

Nutrition Facts

4 servings per container

Serving size 1 fresh stack (55g)

Amount per serving

Calories 270

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 13g 17%

Saturated Fat 5g 25%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 180mg 8%

Total Carbohydrate 36g 13%

Dietary Fiber 2g 7%

Total Sugars 17g

Includes 16g Added Sugars 32%

Protein 3g

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%

Calcium 10mg 0%

Iron 2.3mg 15%

Potassium 90mg 0%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Serving Size

It is important to be mindful of how many calories you consume, but the calories (and other items on the Nutrition Facts label) must be viewed in terms of the serving size. The “serving size” on the Nutrition Facts label is not a recommendation as to how much you should consume. It is a neutral reference point for measuring the other items on the label. Before comparing two similar products, adjust for any difference in serving size (you may need to use your phone calculator).

Calories

We were taught to believe less calories is always better. However, this is not always true. For example, there are two granola products I enjoy. One has added sugar and the other does not. The granola with added sugar has less calories, because the manufacturer of the no-added sugar granola compensated for a less sweet taste by adding more fat in the form of nuts and seeds. In the long run, eating the granola with the healthier ingredients is likely a better choice.

When comparing products, choose those with:

Less saturated fat

- Limit to 7% of calories (less than 15 grams per day on a 2,000-calorie diet)
 - Ignore “Total Fat” as this does not distinguish between healthy and unhealthy forms of fat. Limiting total fat probably won’t help you lose weight unless you swap the high fat foods for low-calorie fruits and vegetables.
 - Trans fat: this is now banned as a food ingredient in the U.S. and many other countries.

Less sodium

- Limit to 2,000 mg/day (1,500 if you have high blood pressure)
 - **Tip:** Choose products where the sodium (per serving) is less than the calories.
 - On the label shown, the sodium content (180 mg) is lower than the calorie count (270 calories), so the product isn’t considered high in sodium.

More fiber

- Aim for at least 30 grams/day.

Less added sugar

- Limit to 5% of calories (25 grams per day on a 2,000-calorie diet)
 - **Tip:** Look for “Added Sugars” under Total Carbohydrates (ignore “Total Sugars,” as sugar that is naturally part of a food, such as fruit, is perfectly fine).
 - Before the FDA required added sugars to be on the label, consumers had to look through all the ingredients for any type of sugar. Thankfully, looking for added sugar is now much easier.
 - High fructose corn syrup is not any worse than other forms of sugar. But it is cheap and is therefore found in many ultra-processed junk foods.
 - Watch out for foods with more than 10 grams of added sugar per serving and try to limit each meal to no more than 10 grams of added sugar.

You can **ignore** most other items on the Nutrition Facts label if you focus on eating the foods under **“Eat More” on page 1.**

NEVER BELIEVE ANYTHING ON FOOD PACKAGING, UNLESS IT IS ON THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL OR IN THE INGREDIENTS LIST. Food manufacturers can legally lie everywhere else on the package.

Ingredients List

The ingredients are listed by weight. The first few ingredients often make up the bulk of the product.

Avoid food with ingredients that sound like they belong in a chemistry lab

- Such as potassium bromate, propylparaben, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, sodium benzoate, silicon dioxide, food dyes (i.e., Red 3, Blue 2), and artificial flavor

Avoid foods made with solid fats

- Such as lard (pork fat), bacon grease, chicken fat, tallow (beef fat), butter, ghee (clarified butter), shortening, palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil, coconut cream, canned coconut milk, hard margarine that comes in a stick (not a tub), hydrogenated oils, and other fats that are solid at room temperature

Swap solid fats for liquid plant oils

- Such as safflower, hempseed, flaxseed, walnut, grapeseed, sunflower, corn, canola, soybean, wheat germ, sesame, almond, cottonseed, peanut, rice bran, avocado, or olive oil

THOSE ARE NOT TYPOS. SEED OILS ARE VERY HEART HEALTHY AND COCONUT OIL IS ONE OF THE WORST OILS DUE TO THE SATURATED FAT THAT INCREASES THE RISK OF HEART DISEASE.

Avoid foods made with refined grains

- Look for any of the terms on page 7.

Choose whole grains instead

- Look for any of the terms on page 8.

Refined Grains

Barley	Contains whole grains
Barley grits	Cracked wheat bread
Malted barley flour	Durum flour
Pearled barley	Enriched bromated flour
Pot barley	Enriched flour
Scotch barley	Enriched self-rising flour
Corn	Enriched wheat flour
Corn flour	Instantized flour
Corn grits	Made with whole grains
Corn starch	Made with whole wheat
Degerminated corn meal	Multi-grain
Durum grits	Phosphated flour
Grits	Self-rising flour
Hominy	Self-rising wheat flour
Hominy grits	Semolina wheat
Rice	Stone ground
Basmati rice	Unbleached flour
Enriched rice	Unbleached wheat flour
Jasmine rice	White flour
Long grain rice	Wheat flour
Rice flour	Wheat starch
Rice starch	Other
Sushi rice	Contains whole grains
White rice	Farina
Wheat	Made with whole grains
100% wheat	Multi-grain
All-purpose flour	Oat flour
Bread flour	Quinoa flour
Bromated flour	Rye flour
Bulgur wheat	Seven grain
Couscous	Soy grits
Cake flour	Stone ground

Healthy Whole Grains

Barley	Rolled oats	Whole durum flour
Barley groats	Steel cut oats	Whole durum wheat flour
Dehulled barley	Whole grain oats	Whole grain bulgur
Dehulled barley flour	Whole oat flour	Whole grain wheat
Hulled barley	Whole oats	Whole wheat
Sprouted barley	Whole oat flour	Whole wheat flakes
Whole barley	Rice	Whole wheat flour
Whole barley flakes	Black rice	Whole wheat pasta
Whole barley flour	Brown rice	Whole wheat pastry flour
Whole grain barley	Brown/wild/red/black rice flour	Other
Whole grain barley flour	Red rice	Amaranth
Corn	Wild rice	Buckwheat
Masa	Rye	Buckwheat groats
Whole corn	Cracked rye	Einkorn
Whole corn flour	Rye berries	Emmer
Whole cornmeal	Rye chops	Kamut
Whole grain corn flour	Whole rye	Quinoa
Whole grain grits	Whole rye flakes	Sorghum (milo)
Whole ground corn	Whole rye flour	Sorghum flour
Millet	Wheat	Spelt
Hulled millet	Bromated whole wheat flour	Spelt berries
Millet	Bulgur (cracked wheat)	Sprouted buckwheat
Millet flour	Cracked wheat	Sprouted einkorn
Millet groats	Crushed wheat	Sprouted spelt
Sprouted millet	Entire wheat flour	Teff
Oats	Graham flour	Teff flour
Instant oats	Sprouted wheat	Triticale
Oat flour	Sprouted wheat berries	Triticale flour
Oat groats	Stone ground whole wheat flour	Whole grain quinoa
Oatmeal	Toasted crushed whole wheat	Whole grain spelt flour
Old fashioned oats	Wheat berries	Whole spelt flour
Quick cooking oats	Whole bulgur	
Quick oats		

Shop Like an Expert Grocery Shopping Cheat Sheet

(Based on the IDEAL-21 Grocery Shopping System)

Step 1: Plan your weekly meals around the foods listed below, then build a detailed shopping list from that plan.

*The Weekly Plan section of the Health & Well-Being Journal includes a template that walks you through planning your weekly meals.



Daily

- **Vegetables:** 4 cups or more (including at least 2 cups leafy greens)
- **Fruit:** 3 cups or more (including at least 1 cup berries)
- **Beans, peas, and lentils:** ¾ cup or more
- **Whole grains:** 2 cups or more (like oatmeal, brown rice, barley, and quinoa)
- **Seeds and nuts:** 1 to 2 ounces (heart healthiest choices are hemp seeds, chia seeds, ground flax seeds, and walnuts)
- **Protein:** aim for at least .635 grams of protein per pound of body weight, and at least 30 grams of protein per meal

Weekly

- **Seafood:** 8 ounces or more of salmon, sardines, trout, arctic char, mackerel, herring, anchovies, and Pacific oysters (these are all high in EPA/DHA and low in mercury)
- **Or take a fish oil** or algal oil supplement that provides at least 500 mg of EPA/DHA per day

Limit or Avoid

- High saturated fat foods, processed meat, refined grains, sugary drinks, alcohol, added salt, regular (full) fat dairy, and egg yolks (see Step 4 below for more details)

Step 2: Eat a filling meal right before going to the grocery store, so you are not hungry.

Step 3: Commit, in writing, to only buying food on your list and then go to the store.

Step 4: Read the ingredients before buying.

Try to avoid foods with:

- **Industrial food ingredients:** such as corn syrup, modified food starch, cornstarch, natural and artificial flavors, mineral oil, carnauba wax, confectioner's glaze, caramel color, and other food dyes like red 3
- **High saturated fat food ingredients:** lard (pork fat), bacon grease, chicken fat, tallow (beef fat), butter, ghee (clarified butter), shortening, palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil, and coconut cream
- **Regular (full) fat dairy:** milk, cheese, yogurt, cream cheese, cream, and other dairy products
- **Processed meat:** sausage, bacon, ham, pepperoni, bratwursts, hot dogs, bologna, pastrami, chorizo, salami, corned beef, beef jerky, turkey jerky, fish jerky, dried and smoked fish, canned meat, and other deli meats/cold cuts
- **Refined grains** (if it has flour without the word "whole," it is probably a refined grain)
- **Red meat:** no more than 18 ounces per week
- **Eggs:** no more than 7 yolks per week

Step 5: Read the Nutrition Facts label before purchasing.

- **Sodium:** aim for less than 2,000 mg per day (1,500 mg per day if you have high blood pressure). Choose products that have less sodium (in mg) than calories per serving.
- **Added Sugar:** aim for less than 10 grams of added sugar per meal and less than 25 grams per day. Avoid products with any added sugar, unless you are purposely buying it as a treat.
- **Saturated Fat:** aim for less than 15 grams per day.
- **Fiber:** aim for at least 30 grams per day.

Step 6: When you get home, immediately put your healthy foods in plain sight and your trigger foods out of sight.



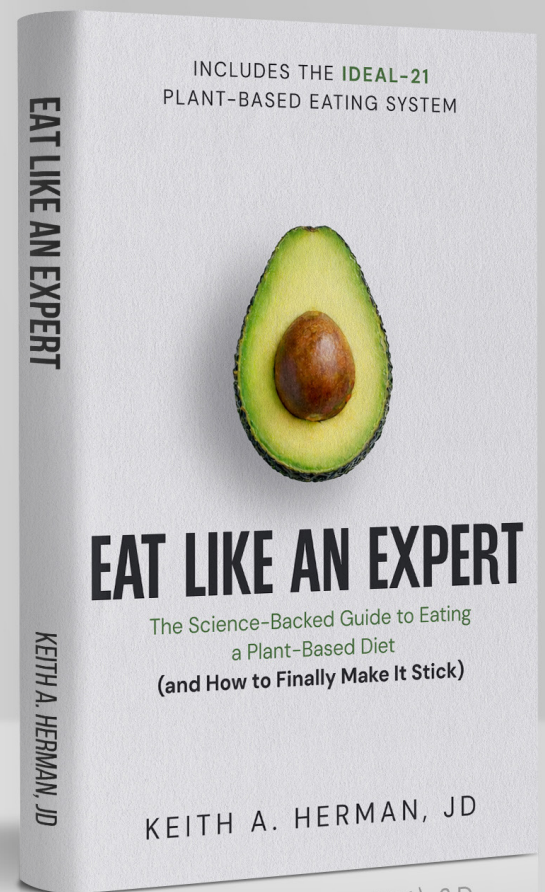
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Keith A. Herman

Keith A. Herman is a Trusts and Estates attorney with over 25 years of experience helping clients prepare for death and minimize taxes. Now, Keith is expanding his focus from **wealth planning to health planning**—empowering individuals to plan for a thriving life, not just the end of it.

As an attorney, Keith mastered the art of evaluating evidence and distilling complex information into clear, actionable advice. In Keith's soon-to-be-released book, ***Eat Like An Expert***, he applies those same skills to the science of **habit change and nutrition**, helping you make sense of what truly works for lasting health. Keith is also a co-creator of the Health & Well-Being Journal™, a daily accountability planner for optimizing your mind, body, and spirit, and tracking healthy behaviors.

Keith is the Founder of the Expert Diet Project, whose mission is to help reverse the alarming trend of health misinformation, by educating the world on who the real experts are in health and nutrition.



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For more information about **Eat Like An Expert** or the Health & Well-Being Journal, go to www.KeithAHerman.com or email me Keith@KeithAHerman.com

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