Hi, Fit Fam. Nutrition Coach Stacy coming again today to you to talk about grocery shopping on a budget. So many people may be trying to save a little bit of money right now and budgeting for groceries is one way they are trying to do that. So I want to just start out by saying that many takeout locations are available for meals, however, making meals at home will definitely save money. So we're going to talk about some tips when you're going grocery shopping, and even before and after you grocery shop, on how to save money.  
  
So before you even head out to the grocery store, I want to suggest to check your pantry, check your refrigerator, for any foods that you see, maybe they're even close to expiring, but some of those items that maybe you forgot about. Maybe you have some canned beans or something like that that you can utilize in your meal plan.  
  
So now that I mentioned meal plan, that is the second thing. We want to meal plan our meals for the week. So as many meals as you can get into that, breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, the more you plan, the more you can save. So start to sit down, look at what you have in your pantries, take a look and start thinking about those meals that you want to create, using those things from your pantry and refrigerator, and then create the list to go shopping from there. So utilize those items you have. That's a big point.  
  
Now, what you want to do when you're making your meal plan and deciding what to do with what you have, try to think of creating and making things in bulk. So batch cooking is when you're creating a lot at one time, so you have things for leftovers that you can freeze. That can even go for crock-pot meals, one pan meals, things like that. So if you can make extra, you can either have them for leftovers for the week, or freeze them and you can have them at a later time. A lot of things like casseroles, muffins, soups, these can be frozen for up to two to three months. So just by making things one time, making extra, you can have extra for later on as well.  
  
So some of the things that you could be looking for to add into your list and into those meals, are some of those common foods that are typically less expensive at the store, while also providing a lot of nutrient dense quality. So things like oatmeal, brown rice, potatoes, both white and sweet potatoes, we could also do tuna, beans again, canned or dried, along with lentils, canned tomatoes, those are great to have on hand, you can add those to so many different things.  
  
Frozen vegetables, these are awesome to have on hand. Remember, frozen is very similar in quality and ingredients to a fresh version, but these will last so much longer, so that is a great idea to try to get into, especially if they're on sale. Other items too would be things like tuna, bananas, or even chicken. I know if you can get it on sale, if you can find it in the stores, chicken typically has different cuts that you can get at a less expensive price, and it's very versatile to use in a lot of different things. So those are some of the food items to consider purchasing and adding into your meals as you are creating your meal plan.  
  
So now that we've gone through all that beginning stuff, and we created our list based on the things we still need that we don't have on hand, now we're going to go into the grocery store. So when you're going into the grocery store, the top couple of items would be don't go hungry. You're more likely to buy extra or want some other foods that maybe you really don't want to have in your kitchen or in your pantry. So don't go hungry.  
  
Another thing would be is stick to your list. Don't venture off of the list. Have a nice, solid list before you go in, so you only stick to that and that's all you get. Another thing to consider, is to buy generic brands of items that you may need. So a lot of times, they may put the more expensive stuff in the middle, right at eye level on the shelf, look up or down. See if you can find a generic brand and that can definitely save a little bit of money there.  
  
Another thing would be don't buy things on sale if you don't need them. It may seem like a great price, great idea, but if it's not on your list, don't get extra, even if it is on your list, if you don't need it. So just keep that in mind as you go through the sale items. Another thing would be just because something is in bulk doesn't mean that it's less expensive than getting a smaller version. So really check out and see what the price per unit is. That's what it's called, the price per unit, and it's typically on all the labels on the shelves. But if the smaller version or the smaller item is actually a lower price per unit, it may be more worth it to get a smaller size than in bulk. So that is something to keep in mind as well.  
  
Now, we've gotten through the grocery store, we've gotten all the items that we need for our meal plan, now we're going to go home, we're done shopping, and we're going to stick to that meal plan. So the more you make up your foods ahead of time, plan out, get everything prepped and ready for the week, whether that's having your snacks all ready, everything's planned, ready to go, then you won't be getting to the point of, "Oh my gosh, I don't know what to eat for dinner. Nothing's ready. I think I'm going to order takeout." So stick to your meal plan, make those meals and utilize it.  
  
And then keep in mind too, that those recipes that you have when you ... If you make chicken, let's say you got chicken on sale this week and you found that nice animal protein, you want to try ... If you can, make extra. If you had leftover chicken, think of all the things that you could do with that leftover chicken for the week. You could put it on salads, or brown rice if you had that ready to go for lunches for the week. You can also put it into a tortilla and have a nice sandwich wrap for a nice hearty lunch the next day or a dinner. You can also use that chicken to throw it into a soup that you make, and then you can have a soup that you can have for a meal another day and then freeze it. You can have it for another meal in the future. So there's so many things, but the biggest thing is to stick to your meal plan once you get home and have things ready for the week.  
  
Now just to recap, I know it was a lot, we just want to say that try to make meals at home. Before you go grocery shopping, make your list. Make your list, plan out what you need based on your meal plan and what you do not have already in your pantry and your refrigerator, but try to factor those into your meals. Then you can go to the store and then buy all your grocery items. So keep in mind that some of ... Don't go hungry, stick to your list, look for those foods that are going to be the best ones to incorporate into your meals that are less expensive.  
  
So like we had mentioned, we mentioned oatmeal, eggs. Eggs is another one, I don't know if I mentioned that. Beans, lentils, tuna, rice, brown rice, potatoes, white or sweet potatoes, frozen veggies, and then chicken, and things like that. So look for those items in the store when you're there. And then after shopping, stick to your meal plan, make your meals and then eat those meals. That will help keep you on track to seeing the progress and results that you want, as well as keeping you on your meal budget.  
  
So I am excited that I was able to come again today and share a little bit about grocery shopping on a budget, and I look forward to seeing you again in other videos in the future. Take care, everyone.