

10 budget friendly ways to eat healthy during #SALockdown

By [Bernice Venter](#)

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Dietician and Geneway practitioner Bernice Venter shares 10 ways you can maintain healthy eating on a budget during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Replace a meal by having a protein shake for lunch

Not only are some protein shakes balanced and nutritious, they keep you full for longer rather than refined carb-driven meals, and help you with calorie control. If you struggle to 'drink' your meal, you can have a few starch-free vegetables such as peppers, cucumber, lettuce or tomato with it (a small salad). Your protein shake meal should be the meal you tend to over eat on or struggle to control your calorie intake.



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Find some plant-based meals that you enjoy

Have these instead of meat one or two days a week. Plant-based proteins –chickpeas, lentils or beans – keep for long in the cupboard, often coming in tins or packets. There is a great health benefit (these have anti-inflammatory properties, reduced calories, are a good protein source) and they are more delicious than you think. A compromise is to have half the meat portion you usually do and add a portion of plant-based proteins to make up your protein quota for that meal – instead of a full chicken breast with your salad add half a chicken breast and add some chickpeas to make up the other half of the protein. The same concept can be applied in pasta, stews or curries.

Include more vegetables in your meals

This one is really simple. Instead of having two vegetable servings, have three, and a smaller portion of meat. Find some recipes for vegetables that you enjoy. Vegetables are very affordable (you can even opt for the frozen ones) and offer wonderful health benefits as they are packed with antioxidants, vitamins and fibre. Vegetarian cooking is all the rage at the moment so there are plenty of vegetarian recipes online.



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Pre-cut mixed vegetable packs are usually cheaper than buying each vegetable individually

The stir-fry and soup packs that are available give great variety with plenty of nutrients, plus they are a huge time saver with everything already cut. Check the prices and you will be surprised. This will especially be beneficial for small families, couples or if you live alone.

Avoid buying cold drinks and sugary drinks

These are unnecessary sugar and offers empty calories in your diet. Make your own ice teas. Create your own water flavours with ice, lemon, apple slices or even herbs. Water is key!

Don't buy things that you would never have bought before

Try and stick to your normal habits as much as possible. Don't buy any unnecessary food or snacks. Remember, if you don't have it, you can't eat it.

Make full, nutritious meals so that you don't constantly feel hungry and want to snack all the time

Rather spend time making a proper, nutrient-dense meal that is high in protein, vegetables and even fibre. High protein and high fibre meals will improve your satiety and help you feel fuller for longer. Don't spend too much time on making interesting snacks as these can easily become a full meal and lead to over-eating.



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Make your own breakfast cereals

An easy option is by soaking oats and grated apple in milk overnight. Overnight oats is a great alternative and requires no cooking. (You save a huge amount of electricity by not having to cook it.) You can also make your own muesli by mixing together some bran flakes, raw oats, cranberries, nuts and seeds and a hint of granola. Cranberries offer fibre and that hint of sugar to your cereal so you don't need to add honey or sugar.

Make use of left overs

Depending on the size of your family, making use of leftovers can minimise wastage.

Use left-over proteins for lunch, blend fruits into a smoothie for breakfast or as a snack drink. Freeze over-ripened fruit and bake with it (banana bread). You can treat this one as a MasterChef mystery box challenge.



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Food choices are always important

Remember to ask yourself am I making the most of this meal? Does this give me all the nutrients I need? How can I prevent myself from over-eating? Is there a variety of foods on my plate? Think before you eat, always.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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