



Guide for Safe and Healthy Grocery Shopping for Cancer Patients during COVID-19

Grocery shopping and eating well can cause stress for many cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may worry that your nutrition status will fall short because:

- it can be hard to access fresh food because of social distancing and limiting trips outside your home.
- stores may be out of many essential items and popular or familiar foods.
- delivery times from grocery stores can be limited.

This guide contains helpful information for safe and healthy grocery shopping. Included are tips for safe shopping, grocery delivery/pick up options in and around the Boston area, and healthy pantry and grocery items to consider buying along with easy-to-prepare meal ideas using these items.

Tips for Safe Grocery Shopping:

The risk (chance) of COVID-19 is higher in patients who receive treatment that compromises their immune system. If you are a patient, ask a caregiver or friend to go grocery shopping for you if possible. If that is not an option, here are a few other resources in the Boston area available for food delivery and pick up:

Third Party Services for Grocery Delivery/Pick Up:

- Instacart (Star Market, Market Basket, H Mart, Wegman's, Shaw's)
- Amazon Prime (Whole Foods)
- Shipt (Roche Bros, Target, CVS, Shaw's, Star Market)
- Peapod (Stop and Shop)
- Mercato (Foodie's, Boston Public Market, many other local specialty grocers)

Restaurant Grocery Delivery

- Earl's Grocery Delivery - <https://earls.ca/news/earls-grocery>
- Juice Press Grocery Delivery - <https://juicepress.com/jpgrocery>

Pick Up/Delivery Options at Local Farms and Food Vendors:

- Russo's Produce Boxes - <https://russos.com/>
- Wilson Farm - <http://www.wilsonfarm.com/v2.0/home.php>
- Brookford Farm - <http://www.brookfordfarm.com/>
- Boston Organics - <https://bostonorganics.com/>
- JW Lopes - <http://jwlopes.com/>

Be aware that you may need to place orders well in advance due to high volume.



If none of these options are available and you MUST go out, follow the CDC guidelines to protect yourself as best as possible:

- Wash your hands (for at least 20 seconds) before entering the store, after leaving the store, and again when you get home. If you cannot wash your hands immediately, use hand sanitizer.
- Wear a mask.
- Do not touch your face.
- Stay 6 feet, or 2 arm's length, away from others.
- Wipe down carts or baskets with disinfecting wipes.
- If you are 60 or older, go to the store during special shopping hours when there are smaller crowds and a freshly sanitized and stocked store.

See CDC Guidelines for additional information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/essential-goods-services.html>

Food Assistance Programs

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>
- Community Servings - <https://www.servings.org/>
- Meals on Wheels - <https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>
- Project Bread: <http://www.projectbread.org/>
 - Foodsource Hotline: <http://www.projectbread.org/get-help/foodsourcehotline.html>
- Food Pantries:
 - Greater Boston Food Bank: www.gbfb.org
 - Brown Bag Program: <https://www.gbfb.org/search/brown+bag+program>
 - Western County Food Bank: www.foodbank.org
 - The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts: www.foodbankwma.org



COVID-19 Grocery Store List

Here is a complete list of recommended grocery store items to purchase to help extend your supply of healthy food. You do not need to buy everything on this list. Pick the items that appeal most to you and then add them to your personal grocery store list or virtual cart.

Pantry items:	Fresh produce (that lasts for 1-2 weeks):	Frozen items:
<p>Proteins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fish (tuna, salmon, sardines) • Canned or dried beans (cannellini beans, kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans) • Canned or dried chickpeas • Dried lentils • Chickpea/lentil/bean pasta • Quinoa • Protein powder (plant based or whey) <p>Starches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole wheat pasta • Farro • Brown or wild rice • Oats • Whole grain crackers • Granola <p>Healthy Fats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts: walnuts, pistachios, almonds, cashews • Nut butters: Peanut butter, almond butter • Seeds: pumpkin, sunflower, chia, ground flax • Seed butters: Sunbutter, 88 Acres Sunflower and Pumpkin Seed Butters • Olive oil • Canned or jarred olives <p>Fruits/Vegetables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried fruit: dried mango, apricots, raisins, prunes (ensure no added sugar) • Sundried tomatoes • Canned artichokes • Fruit cups (peaches, pears, mandarin oranges) • Applesauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beets • String beans • Potatoes • Sweet potatoes • Celery • Carrots • Broccoli • Brussels sprouts • Grape tomatoes • Cauliflower • Melon • Onion • Shallots • Garlic • Parsnips • Rutabaga • Peppers • Arugula • Butternut squash • Spaghetti squash 	<p>Proteins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish (salmon, tuna, mahi mahi, cod, tilapia, and more) • Shellfish (shrimp, scallops, crab) • Poultry • Edamame • Meat <p>Fruits/Vegetables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinach • Broccoli • Tri colored peppers • Peas • Cauliflower rice • Onion • Green beans • Asparagus • Berries • Pineapple • Dark cherries • Peaches • Mango



Pantry items continued:

Miscellaneous:

- Dried herbs and spices (Italian seasoning blend, ground ginger, ground garlic)
- Nutritional yeast
- Real maple syrup
- Vinegar (balsamic, rice, apple cider)
- Soy sauce (low sodium) or coconut aminos
- Honey
- Flaked, unsweetened coconut
- Dark chocolate chips/dark chocolate bar
- Unsweetened cocoa powder
- Snack bars: KIND, Larabar, RX Bar, 88 Acres, Go Macro

Beverages:

- Shelf stable dairy-free milk (oat, coconut, almond, rice, cashew, flax, and more!)
- Electrolyte beverages: coconut water, Nuun tablets, Gatorade, Powerade
- Nutrition supplement drinks: Orgain Organic Nutrition, Boost, or Ensure
- Herbal tea (ginger, chamomile)

Nutrition Tips For Meal Prepping:

Build your meal:

1. Start out by picking a protein, like canned fish, beans, lentils, tofu, nuts/seeds, nut butter, frozen meat/poultry/fish, or a scoop of protein powder.
2. Add some colorful plants, like frozen fruits or vegetables, or fresh produce if available.
3. Lastly, complete the meal by adding a starch, like potatoes/sweet potatoes, whole grains like oats, farro, or brown rice.

How?

- Keep it simple, be flexible and work with the ingredients you have available to you!
 - If you can't find your normal staple items, try something new (i.e. swap farro for rice, or tofu for chicken).
- Keep a few extra bags of frozen produce and protein options on hand (just in case you can't get to the store).
- Buy larger bags of frequently used dry goods, such as rice, pasta, beans, nuts and seeds.
- If you feel fatigued, have readily available, easy to prepare snacks on hand, such as nuts/seeds or trail mix, peanut butter with crackers, snack bars, and nutrition supplement drinks like Orgain Organic Nutrition, Boost or Ensure.



About Immunity:

There are many nutrients that can help your immune system function. Not getting enough of these nutrients may change how well your immune system works.

Do: Eat a healthy, balanced diet (like those in the grocery store list) will ensure that you are getting all the vitamins, minerals, and protein you need.

Don't: Eat double or triple nutrients in attempt to “boost” your immune system. This does not work.

Do: Eat more plant-based foods.

Don't: Spend money on supplements claiming to boost your immune system.

If you are currently being treated for cancer and you have concerns about your nutrition, ask your treatment team for a referral to the Cancer Center dietitians.

For additional healthy eating and shopping tips during COVID-19, visit:

<https://giving.massgeneral.org/covid-19-smarter-supermarket-shopping>

<https://giving.massgeneral.org/covid-19-healthy-eating-from-pantry-staples/>

Mass General Cancer Center Nutrition Website: massgeneral.org/cancer/nutrition



Quick Recipes Using Pantry/Frozen Items:

Whole Grain Pesto Pasta with Vegetables

This recipe is incredibly versatile. Start with any whole grain such as whole wheat pasta, farro, quinoa, or even wild rice. Add frozen tri-colored peppers, spinach and roasted tomatoes, broccoli, onion and garlic. And for a protein boost, toss in chick peas (garbanzo beans) or cannellini beans. To give this recipe more zing, try adding homemade pesto!

Ingredients:

- Whole wheat pasta, farro, quinoa or wild rice
- 1 bag frozen broccoli (or fresh)
- 1 bag frozen tri colored peppers (or fresh)
- 1 onion
- 4 large garlic cloves
- 2 cups cherry tomato (Or can use Rao's jarred tomato sauce)
- Dried oregano, basil or favorite "Italian blend" dried herb mix
- 1 can cannellini beans or chick peas (garbanzo beans)
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste
- Pesto (see recipe below)

Instructions:

1. Make pesto (recipe below) and set aside.
2. Make whole grain
 - according to direction on the box. Make 1 box of pasta, or 2 cups of other grain.
3. For vegetables
 - If using frozen, place in bowl and microwave. If using fresh, chop and place on parchment paper lined baking sheet (parchment paper allows you to use less oil). Sprinkle with sea salt, black pepper and 1T olive oil. Roast at 400 degrees for about 20 minutes (until browned). Add squeeze of lemon juice to cooked vegetables.
4. For the tomatoes, onion and garlic
 - slice small hole into cherry/grape tomatoes to allow them to "burst" while roasting. If using larger tomatoes, slice into wedges. Place tomatoes on baking sheet with parchment paper. Slice onion, and leave garlic cloves whole (chop garlic if feeling ambitious). Sprinkle with sea salt, sprinkle of black pepper and 1T olive oil. Roast at 400 degrees for about 20 minutes (until skin softens and looks loose). To make into a sauce, blend in food processor or blender, or transfer vegetables to a pot to use an immersion blender.
5. Serve grain topped with tomato sauce, vegetables and pesto. Top with cannellini beans or chick peas for extra protein punch!





Pesto (Adapted from the Minimalist Baker):

- 2-3 cups arugula or basil
 - 4T nutritional yeast or parmesan cheese
 - 3T olive oil
 - 2T lemon juice
 - 2T water
 - 1/4c walnuts or pine nuts
 - sea salt and black pepper to taste
1. Blend ingredients in food processor or blender until smooth
 2. Use as a topping to grains, bread/toast, eggs, sweet potatoes, and so much more!



Healthy, No-Bake Honey-Almond-Coconut Granola Bars!

These are an energy and nutrient rich treat! Add ground flax seeds or chia seeds for an omega-3 boost, and fiber.



Ingredients:

- 1 cup chopped almonds (or walnuts, cashews, Brazil nuts, or pumpkin seeds if nut free)
- 1 ¾ cups oats (old fashioned or quick cooking)
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 cup cream almond or peanut butter (or sunflower seed butter if nut free)
- ½ cup honey or maple syrup
- 1 ½ tsp vanilla extract

Optional ingredients: dark chocolate chips, chopped dried fruit (dates, apricots, cranberries)

Instructions:

1. Line a 9x9 inch baking pan with crisscrossed pieces of parchment paper. This will make pressing the bars into shape, then releasing them from the pan easy. I've used plastic wrap too.
2. Toast the chopped almonds/nuts to bring out ALL the flavor. Place in a skillet over medium heat and toss/stir for about 5 minutes until fragrant.
3. In a mixing bowl, add oats, coconut, cinnamon and salt. Add your chocolate chips and/or dried fruit here if adding.
4. In a 2 cup glass measuring cup, whisk almond butter, honey and vanilla extract. (You may need to heat in the microwave for a few seconds).
5. Use a large wooden spoon or spatula to mix the wet ingredients into the dry. If the mixture seems too wet, add extra oats.
6. Transfer the mixture to the baking pan.
7. Cover, and transfer to the refrigerator for at least 1 hour, or overnight. This allows the liquid to be absorbed into the oats, and the bars to set.



Cherry Chocolate Smoothie

Serves 2

Ingredients:

- 1 cup oat milk (or other milk of choice – almond, coconut, rice, cow's)
- 1-2 scoops vanilla protein powder (plant based or whey)
- 1 c frozen black cherries
- 4 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup frozen spinach leaves
- 2 Tbsp almond butter or peanut butter
- ½ cup ice

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients into a blender and pulse until smooth. Adjust the amount of milk and ice to desired consistency.

Simple Niçoise Salad

Serves 2

Ingredients:

For the dressing:

- 2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp honey
- 1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pinch sea salt

For the salad:

- 2 large eggs (optional)
- 1 cup green beans (fresh or frozen) or 8 frozen asparagus spears
- 8 baby potatoes, halved (or 1 small potato, cut into quarters)
- 1 can oil-packed tuna or salmon
- 8 olives

Optional ingredients (if available): grape tomatoes, cucumber slices, artichoke hearts, or fresh greens

Instructions:

1. Whisk together oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, honey, pepper and sea salt in a small bowl. Set aside.
2. Bring water to boil in a medium pot (enough to cover eggs). Once boiling, add in eggs and cook for about 10 minutes. Transfer eggs to a bowl of cold water, and chill for about 5 minutes. Peel and set aside.
3. Then, add green beans (or asparagus spears) and potatoes to the same pot of boiling water. Cook until slightly tender (2 minutes for green beans/asparagus, and 5-10 minutes for potatoes). Transfer to a bowl of cold water and let chill. Remove and pat dry with a paper towel.
4. Arrange all ingredients on a plate or on top of greens (if available). Drizzle dressing on top and serve.





Staple Item Stir-Fry

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

- 1 cup brown rice or quinoa
- 2 cup water
- 1 lb frozen shrimp/chicken/salmon/
edamame or tofu
- 2 cups frozen peppers
- 2 cups frozen broccoli
- 1 cup frozen onions
- 1 Tbsp olive oil

For the sauce:

- 3 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
or coconut aminos
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup or honey
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tsp oil
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground garlic
- ½ lime, juiced



Instructions:

1. First cook the rice/quinoa. In a medium-sized pot, combine 2 cups water and rice or quinoa. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-low, cover with a lid, and simmer until it has absorbed all of the water. Remove from heat, and let it rest for about 5 minutes. Uncover the pot and fluff with a fork. Set it aside to cool.
2. While the quinoa/rice is simmering, prepare the dressing: mix all ingredients together in a small bowl, and set aside.
3. Finally, in a large sauté pan, heat 1 Tbsp olive oil over medium heat. Add protein of choice (season with salt and pepper if desired) and cook until slightly done (turn over halfway while cooking), about 3-5 minutes. Add in frozen vegetables and stir. Cook together until vegetables are warm and tender, stirring occasionally. Pour sauce over the mixture and stir. Serve warm.