

# Eating Well During Quarantine

For most of us, our routines have been upended, including our eating habits. Here are some tips for adapting to this new normal while maintaining your energy and focus.

## Access to Food

Shopping for food may be different right now, but there is no need to feel panicked or hoard food. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) created this helpful [video](#) with guidelines to follow when grocery shopping. If your transportation is limited, contact your local grocery store for information on curbside pickup and delivery options. You may also consider trying a meal kit service, there are a wide variety depending on your budget and nutritional needs. Blue Table, UB's food pantry service, is still fulfilling orders at this time. Visit their [website](#) for more information and to place an order.

## Preventing Food Waste

Check what you have on hand before making a shopping list. The acronym "FIFO" is helpful—the first food that you've brought into your home should be the first food you take out when you're making your meals. Dates on food packages refer to "best quality" of the food by the manufacturer, and not the safety of the product (with the exception of baby food). Food is safe to eat well past the dates on the packaging.

## Different is Fine

Accept that your meals and snacks may look different, and your meal timing may shift. Give yourself room to find a way of eating that works for you. It's o.k. if your meals are not perfectly balanced, or Instagram-worthy. Nix that unnecessary pressure!

## Create an Eating Pattern

Try to establish some sort of eating schedule. Do not skip meals because you are less active. Your body needs energy just to exist—even if you're just sitting at a computer. Don't try to cut carbs, cut fat or anything like that. Do not start a diet. Listen to your body and try to match your hunger.

## All Food is Valuable

Canned food is not worthless and is quite useful, especially at a time like now. Canned, frozen, dried, as well as fresh, can all play a role in giving us the variety we need to maintain health. Consider using more plant-based protein as meat may be more scarce, or expensive. Lentils, beans, peas, tofu, nut butters, and more offer delicious and convenient protein!

## Have Fresh Food Daily—If Possible

We can't store vitamin C, so a nice daily dose is helpful. Citrus fruits, 100% juice, bell peppers, and other foods are much more beneficial than a vitamin C supplement.

## If Food is Limited

A standard potency multivitamin may help fill in micronutrient gaps. However, that vitamin will not give you energy, like food will.

## No Miracle Foods

No food or nutrient is known to help protect against COVID-19. Best to aim for good overall nutrition and include as wide a variety of foods as possible.

## Boredom Eating

Do you find yourself looking for something to eat when you're procrastinating on that paper? This is not unusual! Eating does give us something to do. But if you only turn to food when you're bored, you may enjoy it less and be less in tune with your body's needs. Take a moment and see if you're genuinely hungry, or if you actually need something else. Maybe instead of snacking, your body could benefit from a glass of water, a nap, or some social connection.

## Plate and Enjoy

If you eat while multi-tasking, you may not taste, sense, or even enjoy the food as much. Take a meal or snack break. Put your food in a bowl or on a plate. Look at it while you eat it. Give that food your full attention just for a short time. Taking the time to do this can help you feel more satisfied.

## Get Creative!

This time at home can be great for trying new things in the kitchen! Make that recipe you've always wanted to try. And substitutions are o.k.! You might be surprised at what ingredients you can swap in your favorite recipes. There are no shortage of fun, easy, and pantry-friendly recipes on the web.

## We're Still Here

Health Promotion is still available to help you meet your nutritional needs. If you have questions or need help navigating these resources, you can set up an appointment to meet with our registered dietitian by calling (716) 645-2837 ext. 8.

