

Cutting Gluten-Free Product Costs

As you begin to avoid gluten it becomes clear that gluten-free foods can cost significantly more than foods from a regular diet. A diagnosis of celiac disease means following a gluten-free diet for life. Finding ways to save money while following the diet can be essential.

Tips to save money while following a gluten-free diet

- Use whole foods (gluten-free grains such as rice, cornmeal, quinoa, buckwheat, amaranth, millet, etc.) whenever possible. Grains should be labeled gluten-free. Plain rice does not need to be labeled gluten-free.
 - Whole foods are less expensive than package products. For example, a bag of brown rice at Stop & Shop costs \$3.49, which is \$0.17/serving. A loaf of gluten-free bread costs \$4.99, which is \$0.83/serving.
- The Freezer is your friend.
 - Freeze extra batches of gluten-free meals.
 - Gluten-free flours can be frozen to extend their shelf life.
 - Buy multiple loafs of gluten-free bread on sale and keep them in the freezer.
- Make breads, baked goods, soups, stews, and chili from scratch.
 - Cooking at home lets you control ingredients and avoid cross-contamination.
 - Freeze homemade soups in batches. Label and date them.
 - Incorporate leftovers into new dishes.
 - Use websites such as Pinterest.com and gluten-free recipe blogs for inspiration.
- Buy food in bulk.
 - Many websites offer free shipping on orders exceeding a certain amount. Buy a few extras and eliminate the shipping costs!
 - Ask the store manager for a discount if buying an entire case of product. Some stores have this as a policy.
- Purchase food orders with friends or support group members.
 - Divide the items and save on shipping costs.
- Watch for sales.
 - Scan the weekly store circulars found in your local newspaper or online.
 - Consider buying in bulk when a food is on sale.
 - Shop around online and in grocery stores.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables can be expensive.
 - Buy fruits and vegetables that are in season and at your farmers' markets.
 - Mix frozen fruits and vegetables in soups, stews, and smoothies.
 - Buy root vegetables like carrots, yams, and potatoes – they stay fresh longer.
- Do not shop at convenience stores.
 - Extra convenience can equal extra cost. There is also a lack of fresh fruits, vegetables and lean meats.
- Sign up for the store's savings card to receive coupons for money back or extra discounts.

- Check out manufacturers' websites or contact food companies directly for coupons.
 - Websites including coolsavings.com and smartsources.com offer coupons for general grocery items (some are gluten-free). Use these coupons to offset the costs of pricier gluten-free foods.
- Websites that offer deals on gluten-free foods:
 - Amazon.com
 - GlutenFreeMall.com
 - Vitacost.com
 - Buy generic brands.
 - Remember to read the labels as the ingredients may vary among different brands.
Look for Whole Foods'® brand name products called "365."
 - Shop the perimeter of the grocery store.
 - Most of the items for those with celiac disease are naturally gluten-free including milk, fruits, vegetables, oils and plain lean meats/fish/poultry.
 - Shop from a list.
 - Make a meal plan for the week and only include needed ingredients on your list.
 - Include the costs of foods you regularly buy; when they are on sale stock up.
 - Lists decrease impulsive buying as people tend to buy only the things they need.
 - Don't shop when you are hungry.
 - Shopping on an empty stomach can make it harder to resist cravings that can break your diet and your budget.
 - Plan ahead of time to ensure you always have healthy snacks available. Some options include celery with peanut butter or home-made trail mix with gluten-free nuts, seeds and dried fruit.
 - Gluten-free food is your medication.
 - Many diseases and conditions require expensive medications. The medication for people with celiac disease is gluten-free food. Consider it money well spent on your health.
 - Ask your insurance company for reduced co-pays on brand name drugs if the generic form contains gluten.
 - Your gluten-free foods may be tax deductible. Learn more at Celiac.org.

