



## **Questions? Where to Find Answers.**

When I was a dietetic intern, I was given a great piece of advice. There is far more nutrition information than your brain can recall, and it is constantly changing. You will not know the answer to every question. What matters is knowing where to look for an accurate answer.

I've heard a lot of questions during the nearly 38 years I've been a Registered Dietitian. Resources have changed over the years. We used to use books, magazines, and people for answers. About 10 years ago, a group told me "The Food Channel" was their source of nutrition information. Now I suspect the computer is the major information source. Here are some reliable online resources for some common questions I hear:

### **Food storage. How long will this keep? How long can I freeze this?**

<https://www.nutrition.gov/subject/shopping-cooking-meal-planning/food-storage-and-preservation>

### **How do I store my fresh fruits and vegetables? How do I know if they are ripe?**

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide>

This page lists fruits and vegetables in season in winter, spring, summer and fall. If you click on the name of a fruit or vegetable in the list, it will open up a page of information about that item including nutrition data, recipes and preservation and storage advice.

Most larger grocery stores have a binder in the produce department with information about the fruits and vegetables. It is usually quite large with laminated pages. If you don't see it, ask for help to find it.

## **Where can I find recipes for \_\_\_\_\_?**

This is a hard question. Everyone is looking for something different.

If you need recipes for a special diet, go to the website for the national foundation for that illness. For example, here is the link for recipes from the American Heart Association. <https://recipes.heart.org/en>

If you like to look through cookbooks, I suggest browsing at the library or bookstore. Or search on Amazon for your topic of interest paired with the search term "cookbook" for book suggestions.

I find magazine and newspaper food sections helpful. They reflect new ideas and trends. Browse magazines and newspapers in the library or at a large bookstore.

My daughter's generation goes directly to the computer. They enter the details about the recipe they want, and usually lots of recipes pop up. With this method, the more details you put in your search, the better. It is an fast and easy way to find recipes for special diets or specific ingredients.

## **I don't understand food labels.**

<https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/nutrition-facts-and-food-labels/the-basics-of-the-nutrition-facts-label>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/labelingnutrition/ucm274593.htm>

## **I need recipes on cooking for one person.**

If you know how to cook already, add these phrases to your thought patterns—"Great! I don't have to cater to anyone else's food preferences" and "Feeding my body high-quality fuel will help it keep running better". Love leftovers because that means you don't have to cook as often. Find a friend to share meals or leftovers with. And remember that a well-balanced, healthy meal can be soup and sandwich or an entree salad, it does not have to be a full cooked "dinner".

You are not alone. When I "googled" cooking-for-one, 1,420,000,000 results appeared in 0.54 seconds. Here are two websites to start with:

<http://www.pbs.org/food/theme/cooking-for-one/>

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipes/15050/everyday-cooking/cooking-for-one/>

### **I need ideas for cooking on a limited budget.**

<https://cookbooks.leannebrown.com/good-and-cheap.pdf>

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/meal-planning-shopping-and-budgeting>

<http://cookingmatters.org/recipes>

### **What should I eat?**

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/older-adults>

### **What do you think about this herbal therapy/nutrition supplement/natural treatment?**

<https://nccih.nih.gov>

### **Where can I find information about what to eat for my health condition?**

Start looking on the website for the national association for that disease such as:

[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

Information about fresh food does not change much. After all, we've been eating meats, fruits, vegetables, dairy food and grains for centuries.

Information about processed food more complex since the food industry is always inventing new ingredients and products. You have to understand how to use a nutrition label, and you have to evaluate the food marketing.

Information about nutrition is the most complicated. Nutrition is a young science; the first vitamins were discovered in 1912. As medical knowledge increases, our understanding of nutrition increases. New information sometimes leads to changes in advice. It is frustrating when the advice seems to change every few years. Rely on resources that are impartial (not selling a product) and based on current nutrition research for your best nutrition information.

Article prepared by St. Anthony Park Area Seniors volunteer, Lisa Hoelscher, MPH, RDN, LD. Content in this column is evidence-based, general information for healthy adults, and not intended as medical advice. If you have a medical condition, check with your doctor before making diet changes.

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