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Simple strategies for supermarket success

Happy and HEAL THY New Year to all my readers! This year I thought I would start off with something we all need but probably never think of before going to the supermarket — that is, having a STRATEGY for healthy food shopping. Being the father of four small children, I certainly know the “battlefield” known as the supermarket. With my list in hand, I set out every Sunday with my shield, breastplate, and sword to fight off temptation down every aisle. Well here we go together...

You may feel like it is more expensive to eat healthy, but you will find that you can do it economically with careful planning and preparation. It is far cheaper in the long run to make the effort now and to take care of your health, rather than having to pay more medical bills and miss time from work and fun later.

Bring a list and stick to it! Make a menu plan for the week and consult the store ads and coupon offers to see what is on sale that week so you can incor-

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By. Dr. James Proodian

porate it into your plan.

Don't make the grocery store a restaurant — avoid the aisles that aren't on your list. My college professor once said to avoid the aisles and “shop the perimeter” ... good advice from a man of wisdom.

Never, ever eat in the store or in the car!

Beware of the “sample ladies” ... just say no! In many cases the foods they are promoting are not good for us.

Skip the specials. It's not a deal if it's not on the list. Conversely, stock up on healthy staples that can be frozen or stored and won't tempt you to overindulge.

Buy wholesome, “real” food — the less prepared it is the better, and it is often less expensive.

Processed and packaged foods are usually higher in cost and lower in nutritional value than those you prepare yourself. Buy bulk sizes of items that you use frequently and that have a longer shelf life. Here are some examples of ways you can save money:

- Buy whole broccoli stalks rather than precut broccoli florets to save money and preserve vitamin content.

- Marinate chicken breasts with your own healthy homemade marinades rather than buying prepackaged marinated chicken, which is more expensive and usually has added salt, sugar, and preservatives.

- Make your own healthy salad dressings with your favorite herbs, vinegar, and extra virgin olive oil rather than store bought dressings, which frequently have added salt, sugar and damaging fats.

- Buy fresh vegetables or plain frozen vegetables rather than the vegetable medleys with sauce, and then add your own healthy

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- Buy brown rice, whole grains, and legumes in bulk bins or large sizes and store in zip-lock bags.

- Buy the 36 count of eggs.

Throughout my career I have developed many rules for being healthy and living a healthy lifestyle, and the first and foremost is, *you need to shop for yourself*. If it's in the house, you're going to eat it. So if it's not healthy, don't buy it. Temptation is down every aisle and on every street corner; we all need to work hard to avoid

unhealthy habits. Remember that heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure — the five main killers of Americans today (over 90%) — have all been linked to unhealthy eating habits.

I wish you the best for 2006 and as always, if there is anything I can do to help, just ask.

Dr. James Proodian is an author, educator, and healthcare practitioner specializing in *Chiropractic Rehabilitation and other natural healing techniques*. He also provides free health lectures and health screenings for companies, clubs, schools, churches, and other organizations throughout Monmouth County. All of Dr. Proodian's health articles can be found on his website at www.NaturalHealthcareCenter.com. He can also be reached at his practice, Natural Healthcare Center, at 732-222-2219.