

Module 4  
Section 3

# EATING WELL

Keep your body healthy by eating nutritious foods, even on a tight budget.

# IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL:

Discover what it means to eat well and healthy.

Explore the three main nutrient categories.

Learn tips on how to eat well on a tight budget.

Understand the importance of how you eat.

# EATING WELL

Hello and welcome to your Eating Well on the Go! Dietitian Jamie is here to help you eat healthy without spending too much money. She'll also give you some tips on meal planning so you can stay energized throughout the day. Eating well is not only good for preventing diseases, but it also helps with thinking clearly and managing stress.



Many people think healthy food is expensive. When you're on a tight budget, grocery shopping and planning meals can be stressful. While it's true that food prices are going up, Jamie is confident that she can teach you some things that will help you make the most of your money when it comes to food.

So what does it mean to eat well and eat healthy? It means eating mostly whole foods that have a good balance of carbs, protein, and fat, as well as vitamins and minerals. You also need to eat enough calories to have energy throughout the day. If you eat too little, you'll feel tired, get headaches, feel hungry all the time, and have weak muscles. If you eat too much, you'll feel bloated, have energy crashes, and gain too much weight. Luckily, your body has built-in regulators to help you eat the right amount. Sometimes, we ignore these signals, but with a little practice, you can learn to trust your body again.

Eating well doesn't mean eating perfectly all the time. It means making healthy choices most of the time that align with your goals. Many people think that eating well is expensive, but the truth is, with some planning, cooking, and reducing waste, you can eat well without breaking the bank.

## Proteins, Carbohydrates, & Fats

Let's start with the basics. You may have learned about healthy eating from a pyramid in school. But since we don't eat off of pyramids, let's simplify it for you. There are **three main categories of nutrients: protein, carbohydrates, and fat**. Let's begin with protein. Protein is the most filling nutrient and can be found in foods like meat, fish, eggs, dairy, yogurt, nuts, seeds, and legumes (like lentils and beans).



**Proteins** are an important part of our body. They help us build muscles and repair injuries. It's a good idea to have protein at every meal, especially in the morning. What we eat in the morning often affects what we crave throughout the day. So, if you start your day with a donut, you might crave sugar all day long. But if you start with a savory egg bake, those sugar cravings will stay away for a long time! Breakfast usually doesn't have much protein, but it would be better if it did.



Now let's talk about **carbohydrates**. This is where a lot of processing comes in. There are different kinds of carbohydrates, like white and whole grains. Some snacks have a lot of carbs, but fresh fruits are a better choice. Carbs give us energy and help our brains work. We shouldn't get rid of carbs completely, but we should choose less processed ones and eat more fresh or frozen ones.

The last category is **fats**. We used to think that all fats were bad, but that's not true. There are fats that are good for us and help our bodies in many ways. They help us think clearly, keep us warm, and even help our bodies use vitamins and minerals from food. For example, low-fat dressing is not as good as regular dressing.



### Here are some tips for eating well on a tight budget:

**1.** Whole foods are usually cheaper than processed foods. Buying in bulk is also cheaper than buying single servings. But we should also think about convenience so that we don't waste food.

Oats are cheaper than cereal. Buying a block of cheese is cheaper than buying shredded cheese. Buying a bag of rice is cheaper than buying ready rice.

Whole foods are more nutritious and filling than highly processed foods.

Chips cost about the same as a bag of apples, but apples will keep us full for longer and take longer to eat.

**2.** We don't need to worry too much about buying organic food. While organic food has less pesticides, the nutrition content is similar to non-organic food. Both organic and non-organic foods are good for us. Local food might even be better.

**3.** We don't need to spend a lot of money on superfoods. All whole foods are super. While foods like spirulina, fresh dates, chia seeds, and bee pollen are great, we can still have a variety of healthy foods without spending too much.

**4.** Frozen food is healthy. Freezing is a way to keep food fresh for longer. It helps preserve the nutrients in the food. Bacteria can make food go bad. When food is fresh, it can lose some of its nutrients over time. The longer it has been since the food was picked, the more nutrients it can lose. Frozen food loses less nutrients, but still some.

**5.** Buy in bulk. If you have enough space to store it, buying food in large amounts can save money.

**6.** Buying dry food, like beans and rice, is usually cheaper than buying canned food. The same is true for pasta and herbs.

**7.** Root vegetables like potatoes and beets are healthy and filling, and they can go with any meal. These are "good carbs" that provide satisfaction and

energy for several hours after a meal. They can also go in soups or main dishes.

**8.** Some cuts of meat that are not as popular can have more nutrients. With whole chicken, bone in means more nutrition.

**9.** Include plant-based meals. Adding lentils to taco meat or beans to chili can make the meal less expensive.

**10.** Before you buy new food, check what you already have so you don't buy the same thing twice. This also helps reduce food waste.

**11.** No need to worry about name brands when it comes to food. All manufacturers must follow the same food standards and regulations.

**12.** Planning your meals ahead of time can save money. You can make a lot of meals at home for the same price as one meal at a restaurant.

**13.** Eating similar meals with different toppings or using the same ingredient in different ways can be fun and save money.

**14.** Buy what's in season. It is less costly than out of season. More in season can also be more local and fresher. If you have the storage space, freeze for later.

**15.** Limit food waste by freezing for later. Pasta sauce can go in tomato soup. Leftover cooked veggies can go in an egg bake or roasted and tossed on a salad the next day.

**16.** It's important to pay attention to how much you eat. Eating more than you need can cost more money. Using a smaller plate and listening to your body's hunger and fullness signals can help you eat the right amount.



### **HOW you eat is important too.**

Eating well isn't just about what you eat, but also how you eat. These habits don't cost anything and can help you save money on expensive diet-specific foods.

Your body has two states: rest and digest, and fight or flight. This is important to remember when thinking about food.

The cross-over between food tolerance and mental health can be confusing. Some people try to solve their stomach problems by cutting out certain foods or entire food groups. But this approach

can have serious consequences.

Instead, try some simple mindfulness practices to calm your body and help with digestion. A calm body while eating results in increased enzyme production, better nutrient absorption and less inflammation. Take a few deep breaths before eating, chew your food slowly, and use all five senses while eating. Being grateful and enjoying your meals in a nice place can also help.

Limit multi-tasking at meals and be present whenever possible. This will also help you know when you've eaten enough, lightening the burden of digestion on your body.

Now if you have an allergy or persistent digestive disorder you may need to eliminate some foods. Even so, focus on what you "can" eat instead of what you need to avoid. Try not to buy expensive alternatives such as "gluten free" or 'dairy free" items. Appreciating what you can eat keeps your brain happier and helps you not to think you are missing out.

In conclusion, it IS possible to eat well without a large grocery budget. Some meal planning skills and cooking skills take time to learn but just remember, everything is complicated before it's easy! It just takes practice before it becomes a habit. The benefits include clear thinking, maintaining a healthy weight, and having more energy. I hope you learned something new today and that it helps you reach your health goals in a sustainable way.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What are some ways you can eat healthy on a tight budget?

2

How can you practice gratitude during meals and why is it important?

3

What are some strategies you can use to incorporate more whole foods into your diet?

4

How can meal planning help you eat healthier and save money?

5

What are some ways you can reduce food waste and save money?

6

How can mindful eating practices benefit your overall health and well-being?



*nourish and heal*  
**HEADSTART GUIDE**

---



*What is in  
this guide:*

- Learn how to simplify meals with proteins, fats + carbs
- Find out which fats to enjoy + which to avoid
- Begin to trust yourself with food again
- Build a foundation of balanced blood sugar throughout the day

- 32 -

# Carbs

## non-starchy vegetables (1-3 c serving)

asparagus	kale
brussels sprouts	leafy greens
broccoli	mushrooms
cabbage	peppers
cauliflower	spinach
celery	tomatoes
cucumber	turnips
Eggplant	zucchini

## starchy veggies (1/2 c serving)

beets	potatoes
carrots	pumpkin
corn	squash
peas	yams

## fruit (1/2 c serving)

apple	kiwi
banana	melon
berries	peach
cherries	pear
grapefruit	pineapple
grapes	

## whole grains + beans (1/2 c serving)

beans	oats
bread	pasta
brown rice	quinoa
couscous	tortilla
lentils	wild rice

# Protein

2-4 oz. serving

beef	lamb
bison	seafood
chicken	tofu
cottage cheese (1/2 c.)	tuna
eggs (2-3)	turkey
greek yogurt (1/2 c.)	venison
fish	whey (= 20g)

# Fats

at least 10g/serving

almonds (16)	mayonnaise (1-2 T)
avocado (1/2)	olive oil (1 T)
butter (1 T)	olives (10)
cheese (1 oz)	peanut butter (2 T)
coconut milk (1/4 c)	pecans (20)
coconut oil (1 T)	pistachios (2 T)
cream (2 T)	seeds (2T)
macadamia nuts (6)	walnuts (8)

## EATING FOR NOURISHMENT

- Build a balanced plate - choose to include 1 serving of protein, 1-2 servings of fat, and 1-2 servings of carbs at every meal
- You can ALWAYS have more non-starchy vegetables. They are an excellent source of fiber and minimally impact blood sugar levels.
- Think of snacks like "mini meals". Avoid eating carbs alone.
- Remember, this isn't about counting calories, carbs, or fat. It's about providing *predictable nourishment* to keep your blood sugars stable throughout the day.
- Pack meals and snacks ahead of time to grab on your way out the door!
- You don't need to eliminate favorite foods! Limit indulgences to to create *balance*. Think 80% nourishing foods, 20% fun foods without guilt.

Track your progress

	protein	carbs	fat
breakfast			
lunch			
supper			
snack			

👉👉👉👉👉👉👉👉      😊 😐 😞

	protein	carbs	fat
breakfast			
lunch			
supper			
snack			

👉👉👉👉👉👉👉👉      😊 😐 😞

	protein	carbs	fat
breakfast			
lunch			
supper			
snack			

👉👉👉👉👉👉👉👉      😊 😐 😞

# Nourishing Fats

Healthy fats support metabolism, improve brain function, reduce hunger, and help keep blood sugar levels stable which helps prevent type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

## Enjoy healthy fats like these at every meal + snack:

almonds  
avocado  
butter  
cheese  
coconut milk  
coconut oil  
cream

cream cheese  
macadamia nuts  
mayonnaise  
olive oil  
olives  
peanut butter  
pecans

pistachios  
seeds  
walnuts



# Refined Fats

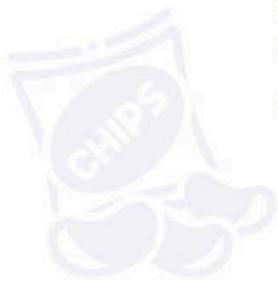
Refined fats create inflammation all over the body, they can lead to poor immune function, memory problems, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and more.

## Always read your labels! Limit fats found in these foods:

chips  
coffee creamer  
corn oil  
cookies  
cool whip  
cottonseed oil

hydrogenated oils  
margarine  
miracle whip  
nuts roasted in oil  
partially hydrogenated oils  
store-bought baked goods

shortening  
soybean oil  
trans fat  
vegetable oil  
safflower oil



## How to measure progress:

- Are you pooping more?
- Do you have more energy?
- Do you have less brain fog?
- Are you less constipated?
- Have you lost your “puffiness?”
- Are your clothes fitting
- Are you sleeping better?
- Do you feel stronger?
- Do you FEEL better?



## Bonus Mindset minute

Sustainability is KEY.

Stick to the basics and commit to learning balance.

Step out of the yo-yo cycle and feel better, for *GOOD*.

Swap out that all-or-nothing for a mindset of “always something”.

You get to choose.

You get to be curious.

You get to choose kindness towards your body today and every day.

## Curious about working together?



Reach out to me directly at [hello@dietitianjamie.com](mailto:hello@dietitianjamie.com) to book a complimentary 15 minute call to chat about how 1:1 coaching can bring clarity and acceleration to your nourishment goals.

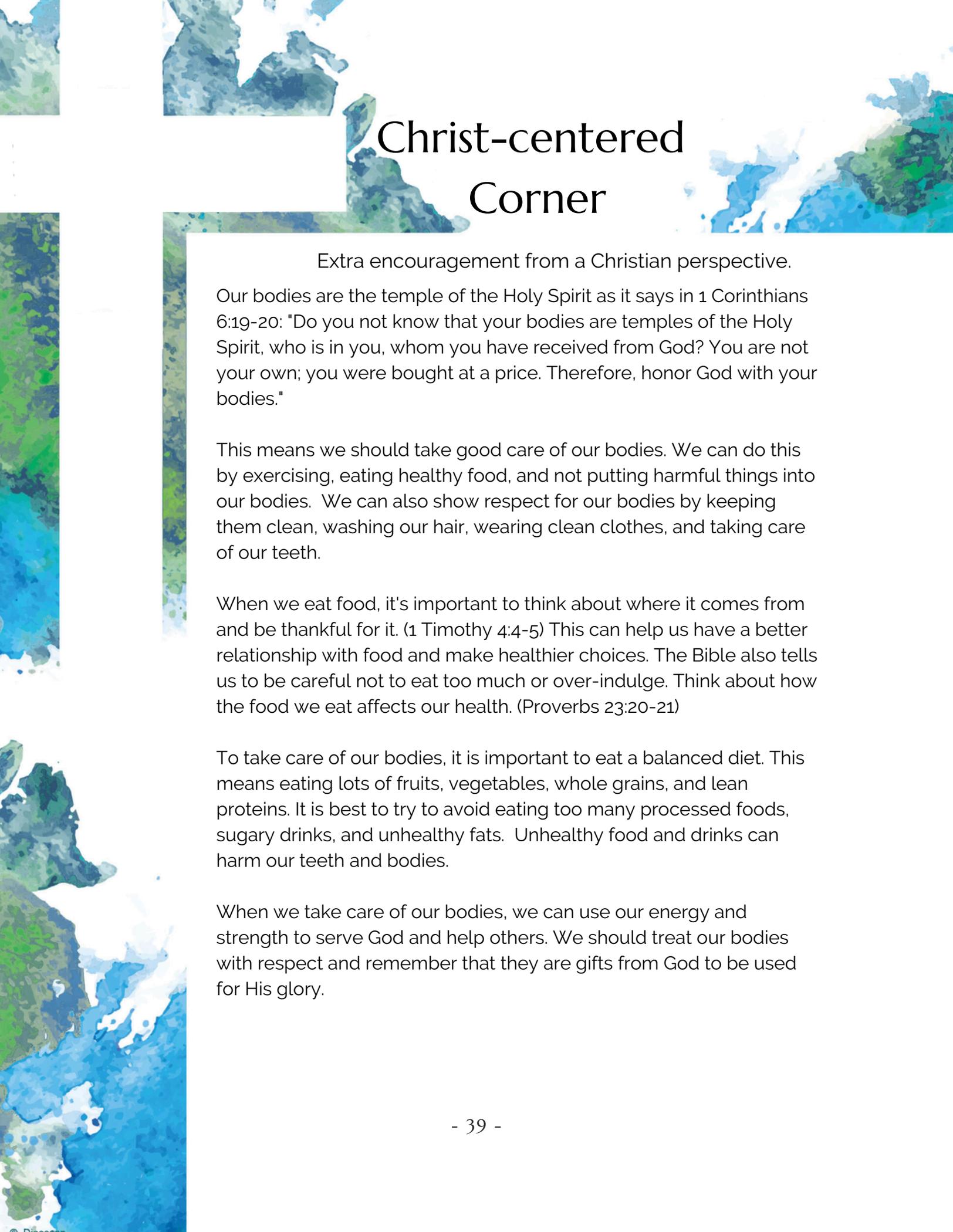
dietitian *jamie*

# PRACTICE, ROLE PLAY, OR JUST MORE TO CONSIDER

- Put together a few sample meals including proteins, carbohydrates, and fats.
- Create a sample meal plan of a breakfast to batch, a soup/salad for lunches, and three dinner ideas for the week ahead.
- Practice mindfulness techniques with a small treat or packet of trail mix.
- Discuss 5 senses during the snack.

# RESOURCES

- Jamie's Instagram: @dietitianjamie
- Healthy Eating, God's Way: Weight Loss Devotional and Challenge  
By: Cathy Morenzie  
Guiding Light Publishing / 2021
- Nutrition: Food & Healthy Eating, Grades 4-6  
By: Brenda Croft  
Rainbow Horizons Publishing / 2003
- The Satisfied Guide to Eating Well: A Healthy Plan for Your Spiritual Journey Toward Food Freedom  
By: Dr. Rhona Epstein  
Dexterity / 2024



# Christ-centered Corner

Extra encouragement from a Christian perspective.

Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit as it says in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies."

This means we should take good care of our bodies. We can do this by exercising, eating healthy food, and not putting harmful things into our bodies. We can also show respect for our bodies by keeping them clean, washing our hair, wearing clean clothes, and taking care of our teeth.

When we eat food, it's important to think about where it comes from and be thankful for it. (1 Timothy 4:4-5) This can help us have a better relationship with food and make healthier choices. The Bible also tells us to be careful not to eat too much or over-indulge. Think about how the food we eat affects our health. (Proverbs 23:20-21)

To take care of our bodies, it is important to eat a balanced diet. This means eating lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. It is best to try to avoid eating too many processed foods, sugary drinks, and unhealthy fats. Unhealthy food and drinks can harm our teeth and bodies.

When we take care of our bodies, we can use our energy and strength to serve God and help others. We should treat our bodies with respect and remember that they are gifts from God to be used for His glory.