



We know how busy life can be. So, having a well organised kitchen, fridge, freezer, and pantry is the first step to making healthier food choices. It can also help you save time and money!

You can create a healthy food environment by keeping the following foods readily available at home:

FILLING FOODS

These food are great staples, and will form the basis of daily meals.

They are nutritious and provide good sources of energy and minerals. They also leave you feeling fuller for longer.

Whole Grains, Starchy Crops & Starchy Fruits

Include these foods on a daily basis. Change for variety as supply allows.

- taro (dalo)
- sweet potato (kumala)
- cassava (including cassava flour)
- breadfruit
- green plantains (vudi)
- yam
- brown/red/black rice
- whole wheat (including whole wheat pasta and flour)
- oats (including rolled oats, granola and muesli) low-sugar, low-fat
- pearled barley
- quinoa
- corn
- rye

PROTEIN & FIBRE

These foods are a good source of protein which helps with growth and healing and repair of the body.

They contain good sources of fibre which helps maintain bowel regularity and good digestion.

Legumes

Include daily. Be sure to soak before cooking to remove gas forming features.

- dhal mix
- lentils (red, green, yellow, brown, including urad dhal and moong beans)
- beans (including red, black or white beans; pinto, kidney, cannellini, lima, butter, navy beans and moong beans)
- chickpeas (chana)
- split peas
- black eyed peas
- legumes flours such as chickpea flour (chana besan), pea flour (pea besan) and lentil flour (urdi besan)

Canned beans, chickpeas or lentils cost more than the dried ingredients but may be useful during cyclone season or if you are very busy (as they're much quicker to prepare). If you buy them, make sure they contain only water and salt and are free from sugar and other additives. If possible, you should carefully rinse them with clean water before eating them, to remove excess salt.



VITAMINS AND ANTIOXIDANTS

These foods are good sources of vitamins and antioxidants and other nutrients which are vital for all body functions.

Choose a variety of coloured foods to maximise your nutrient intake.

Fresh Produce

Include fresh fruit and or vegetables at every meal.

- Seasonal fruit – such as pawpaw, mango, banana, pineapple, passionfruit, watermelon and citrus fruit (like lime, lemons and kumquat)
- Seasonal vegetables – including leafy greens (like taro or amaranth leaves, spinach, choy sum or bok choy, watercress and all types of cabbage) and staples like tomatoes, carrots, pumpkin, eggplants, onion, garlic and long beans
- Herbs and spices – you should try growing your own in your garden or on your balcony (including mint, curry leaves, basil, oregano or rosemary)

ENERGY AND MINERALS

Nuts and seeds are an excellent source of a range of nutrients. However they also contain high levels of natural fats.

So while it is important to eat them as part of a regular diet, just eat small amounts.

Nuts and Seeds

Eat nuts and seeds sparingly (no more than a closed handful per day), preferably in their natural condition, *unsalted and not fried*. If you don't use them quickly, store in the fridge or freezer to preserve their nutrients and flavour.

- Local nuts or seeds e.g. Ngali nuts / Java nuts, Vutu, Beach almonds, Tahitian chestnuts, Breadfruit or Jackfruit seeds, Candlenuts, Cut nuts or Pandanus nuts.
- Peanuts
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Pumpkin seeds
- Sesame seeds
- Flax seeds / linseeds
- Chia seeds
- Sunflower seeds
- Watermelon and melon seeds
- Cashews
- Pecans
- Hazelnuts
- Coconut flesh
- Brazil nuts
- Pine nuts



PROTEIN AND MINERALS

These foods are good sources of protein and minerals. They add different textures and tastes to vegetables, grains and starchy crops.

Meat Alternatives

These foods can be used in place of meat and adapt well into different recipes. Include daily into meals.

- Legumes (beans, lentils, dhal, chickpeas and peas) and legume flours (chana besan/flour, pea besan/flour, urdi besan/flour)
- Soy chunks
- Nuts and seeds
- Tofu (like firm, soft, hard, or dried tofu or tofu skin)
- Tempeh

ENERGY AND MINERALS

Derived from nuts and seeds, nut butters are a wonderful source of nutrition and flavour.

Nut Butters

These energy rich foods add taste and texture but need to be used sparingly.

- Pure peanut butter (without added sugar and fats)
- Tahini (sesame paste)
- Almond butter

ENERGY

Sweeteners are very rare use only. They have few nutrients but can have much energy or create a craving for sweet foods.

Sweeteners

Use sweeteners very sparingly and as an occasional treat. Most foods do not need them, and they can add to unnecessary kilojoules which increases waist gain and contribute to blood sugar disorders.

- Sugar (Fiji sugar)
- Pitted dates, figs, prunes, or sultana
- Molasses
- Honey
- Stevia leaf powder
- Maple syrup
- Agave syrup
- Coconut nectar



BE ORGANISED

Healthy pantry staples are an important part of any kitchen.

Keep items dry, well labelled and in vermin proof containers.

Use regularly to avoid going stale.

PANTRY BASICS

Keeping a section of these foods will make it easier to create meals.

- Canned tomatoes (such as chopped or whole-peeled tomatoes)
- Soy sauce (preferably low sodium)
- Spices (such as turmeric, cumin, ginger, mustard seeds, coriander, cardamom or chili powder)
- Dried herbs (such as curry leaves, bay leaves, oregano, or rosemary)
- Non-dairy milk such as soy, almond, oats, or rice
- Coconut milk (but if you are lucky enough to have access to fresh coconuts, then you should make your coconut milk fresh – it's free, tastier and much healthier!)
- Vegetable stock (low-sodium and MSG-free)
- Whole grain breakfast cereals (like granola or muesli, Weet-bix)
- Nutritional yeast flakes

BE ORGANISED

These foods allow kitchen creativity!

Baking Essentials

Be organised

- Baking soda and powder
- Iodised salt
- Corn starch
- Vegetable oil (like olive, peanut, canola or soy)
- Agar-agar powder or other vegetarian jelly
- Cassava flour
- Raw sugar, honey, or coconut nectar

BE ORGANISED

Fresh is always best, but frozen allows flexibility.

Do not freeze for more than 3 months.

Frozen Foods

Eating fresh fruits and vegetables is ideal, but if sometimes you don't have time to go to the market, it might be convenient to have some frozen produce in the freezer.

Options include:

- Berries (like raspberries, blackcurrants, strawberries or blueberries)
- Vegetables – like spinach or mixed vegetables (make sure they are minimally processed and without added salt or fat)

Finally...

When stocking up on pantry basics, remind yourself to try out new foods on a regular basis.
Variety is the spice of life!