Navigating the Supermarket: Beans & Poultry

Use this guide to find the most nutritious choices in the supermarket.

Beans and peas. Beans and peas are great inexpensive sources of protein, fiber, folate, iron, and zinc. They also contain little or no saturated fat and cholesterol. Choose them often as a substitute for meat or in addition to small portions of lean poultry or fish.

Canned vs. dried beans. If you choose canned beans, rinse and drain them well to reduce the sodium content. Canned beans with no salt added are also becoming more widely available. Dried beans can be cooked ahead of time and refrigerated or frozen.

Enjoy a wide variety of beans and peas because they all contain different nutrients. Scan through the list below and check off your favorite beans or the varieties that you have never tried. Make an effort to incorporate them into your diet regularly.

- Black beans
- Great Northern
- Lima beans
- Soy beans
- Black-eyed peas
- Kidney beans
- Navy beans
- Split peas
- Chickpeas
- Lentils
- Pinto beans
- Tofu

Chicken & turkey. Lean chicken and turkey are good sources of protein, vitamins, and minerals. Be sure to trim any visible fat and remove the skin of poultry before eating. Choose leaner light meat over the fattier dark meat. Choose lean ground chicken or turkey breast that is ground without the skin.

Goose & duck. Goose and duck are very high in saturated fat. Choose them less often.

By: Kelly Frazier, M.A., ACSM, Furman University. Sources: American Heart Association, Mayo Clinic, Harvard School of Public Health, and Food and Drug Administration.
How Can I Eat More Beans and Peas?

Get creative! Try at least one to two meatless meals per week such as soft tacos stuffed with pinto beans, chili with kidney beans, or black beans & rice with a salad.

Simmer a pot! Try bean soup such as minestrone, split-pea, black bean, or lentil. Pair with a salad and whole grain crackers.

Pile them on! Add beans at the salad bar such as kidney beans, garbanzo beans, or three-bean salad.

Extend with beans! Replace half of the ground meat in chili, tacos, or spaghetti sauce with beans.

Spread it on! Spread white bean dip on sandwiches instead of mayonnaise.

How Can I Choose Healthier Cuts of Poultry?

Think lean! Choose white meat chicken or turkey breast rather than the fattier dark meat.

Read labels! Ground chicken and turkey can contain as much fat and saturated fat as ground beef if the dark meat and skin are included. Read labels carefully and look for extra lean ground chicken or turkey breast.

Get trimming! Trim off all visible fat with a sharp knife or kitchen shears. Remove the skin before eating because it contains much of the saturated fat and cholesterol.

Divide your plate! Fill three-fourths of your plate with whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and beans. The remaining one-fourth can be used for lean poultry, fish, or meat.