

Hez Project

Nutrition: Coming Up with a Grocery Store List for Chicago Neighborhood Stores

Dietary recommendations for CVD health encourage diets that are low in fat and sodium and high in fiber, fruits, and vegetables. However, the population's ability to meet this recommendation for a healthy diet continues to be a public health concern. Studies have shown that choices are influenced by many factors, mainly, taste, nutrition, weight control, convenience, and cost, where cost is usually the most significant predictor of dietary choices made (Carleton et al, 1995; Glanz et al, 1998). If cost is a serious issue for families, healthy eating is very difficult to achieve. The increased availability of energy-rich foods that are less expensive, might make these foods very attractive for people with limited incomes (Pi-Suyner FX, 2002).

In 1999, in recognition of the challenges of healthy eating for individuals and families with fixed incomes, the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) was prepared by the Center of Nutrition Policy and Promotion of the USDA to aid food stamp recipients in meal planning and in achieving the 1995 US Dietary Guidelines (TFP, 1999). The foods used in the meal plans are readily available in stores and include a variety of commonly consumed meats, milk products, vegetables, fruits, grains, and mixed dishes. The foods are all nutrient-dense foods and foods with little or no nutritional value were excluded altogether. More importantly, the plan allowed for healthy and affordable meals. Since its creation, the TFP serves as the national standard for a nutritious diet at a minimal cost.

The TFP has 12 different grocery shopping lists (called *market baskets*) developed for different age and gender groups. Each shopping list for each age-gender group met 100% of the RDA for 14 essential nutrients in 1999. These 12 different shopping lists were combined to create sample recipes and menus for a family of 4. In 2002, an update (*The New Thrifty Food Plan in Nutrition in Clinical Care, 2002*) to the TFP was made in which the following RDAs recommendations were made: folate (increased to 400 ug/day), calcium (1000mg/day for males/females ages 19-50, and 1200 mg for males/females over 50), Vit E (15 mg/day for males/females), and B12 (2.4 ug/day for males/females). In order to meet these new guidelines, the update suggested the consumption of the following food products to assist in achieving higher intakes of aforementioned nutrients: folate fortified cereal grains (folate source); extra servings of beans, spinach, broccoli, kale, or supplemental calcium (calcium sources); sunflower seeds, wheat germ (vitamin E sources); and B12 fortified food or supplement (B12 sources).

As a consequence of the 2005 Nutrition Guidelines, the TFP has been modified by a few researchers (Neault N et al, 2005; available at http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/csnappublic/HealthyDiet_Aug2005.pdf and Jetter and Cassidy, 2006) to create a healthier diet *market basket*. The table below shows the healthier food items selected by the researchers based on the 2005 Nutrition Guidelines to improve the Thrifty Food Plan food list. The modifications of healthier food items have made the TFP less affordable since it is very well known that healthier food alternatives are more expensive (Jetter and Cassidy, 2006).

USDA Thrifty Food Plan Food Item	Modification to Health Diet
White Bread	Whole Wheat Bread
White Rice	Brown Rice
White Flour	Whole wheat flour
Orange juice	Whole fruit
Stick margarine	Liquid margarine
Ground pork	Lean ground pork
Red Meat	Fish or beans
Spaghetti Sauce	Low-sodium spaghetti sauce
Canned Mushroom	Low-sodium canned mushrooms
Vegetable oil	Canola or olive oil
Whole Milk and cheese	Low fat milk and cheese
Tuna Fish	Water-packed albacore tuna fish
Snacks high in fat	Carrot sticks, yogurt, whole fruit

A Food Store Survey (see attached) was developed by the USDA's Economic Research Service as part of the USDA Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit to aid communities in assessing the availability and affordability of food in retail food stores. This survey has then been modified (see attached) by the IOWA state cooperative extension to meet the needs of the local community.

For the Hez Project, we propose to use the standard set forth by the TFP and combine it with the newly modified healthy diet list based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines to make a Hez Food Store Survey that we can then use to assess the availability and affordability of foods in the Hez Project neighborhoods. The food store survey can have both the original and healthier options and therefore allowing the availability and accessibility of all the foods can be determined.

References:

Carleton et al, 1995;
Glanz et al, 1998
IOWA state cooperative
Jetter and Cassidy, 2006
Neault N et al, 2005
Pi-Suyner FX, 2002
TFP 1999
USDA Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit,