

# Your guide to pre-packaged foods

Figuring out which pre-packaged foods are healthy choices can be confusing. There are so many to choose from! Read on to get helpful tips on how to spot healthy pre-packaged food options while grocery shopping.

## What are pre-packaged foods?

Pre-packaged foods are foods that are sealed in a box, bag, can or other container. They are sold in the grocery store in their packages. Some examples of pre-packaged foods include:

- Ready-to-eat frozen entrees
- Frozen chicken nuggets and hamburgers patties
- Crackers and granola bars
- Ice cream, cakes and cookies
- Pop and juice
- Pre-washed salad
- Bagged frozen fruit
- Canned tuna

Milk, yogurt and cheese

## Are pre-packaged foods bad for me?

Maybe. Some pre-packaged foods like ready-to-eat frozen entrees, granola bars, frozen chicken nuggets and pop may be high in calories, fat, salt and/or sugar. If you fill up on these pre-packaged foods, you may be missing out on other more nutritious foods.

## Can pre-packaged foods fit into a healthy eating pattern?

Yes. Some pre-packaged foods are not only convenient, but nutritious too! Try these healthy, pre-packaged food choices:

### Canned Foods (rinse canned goods or buy plain, low sodium versions)

Tuna and salmon

Beans

Lentils

Corn

Carrots

Tomatoes

### Frozen Foods

Plain frozen vegetables like broccoli, carrots and peas

Plain frozen fruit like strawberries, mangoes, blueberries and cranberries

Unseasoned fish like plain salmon, cod, trout and halibut

### Bagged or Boxed Foods

Pre-washed lettuce  
Shredded carrots  
Cut up vegetables  
Fruit trays  
Whole grain, high fibre breads and cereals  
Plain oatmeal  
Plain whole grain pasta and brown rice

### Other healthy pre-packaged foods

Low fat milk, yogurt and cheese  
Unsalted nuts like almonds and walnuts  
Natural, plain peanut and nut butters

## How do I spot a healthy pre-packaged food?

### Read the nutrition label!

All pre-packaged foods have a [nutrition label](#) and an ingredient list. Click [here](#) to see a few short videos to learn how to use a nutrition label. You will learn about:

Serving size, calories and % Daily Value and  
Nutrients you need to get more of and which nutrients to avoid

## Bottom line

It is possible to find pre-packaged foods that fit into a healthy diet by reading nutrition labels. Compare nutrition labels and look for items that are lower in calories, sodium, sugar, fat and higher in fibre.

You may also be interested in:

[How to choose the best canned soup](#)

[How to choose the best breakfast cereal](#)

[How to choose the best yogurt](#)