

Don't abandon healthy eating during coronavirus pandemic

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(HealthDay)—As Americans empty grocery shelves over fears of

possible shortages during the coronavirus pandemic, one nutritionist says healthy eating doesn't have to fall by the wayside.

There is no need to hoard because there is plenty of [food](#) in the United States and food distributors are working to keep shelves stocked, said Diane Rigassio Radler, director of the Institute for Nutrition Interventions at Rutgers University, in New Jersey.

However, it is a good idea to have plenty of food at home to reduce the number of times you have to go grocery shopping, she added.

When you go shopping, try to go at times when stores are less crowded so that you can maintain adequate social distancing. Another option is online grocery shopping.

Wash your hands as soon as you get home from grocery shopping. Then unpack your bags. Wipe off packaged foods with an alcohol-based paper towel or commercial antimicrobial wipe, and wash all produce. If you have reusable bags, wash them if possible or wipe them down with an alcohol-based towel.

Follow the same routine if you order groceries online, she noted in a university news release.

Stock up on canned, frozen and dried non-perishable foods, but understand the differences. Canned foods last for years, but generally have a higher sodium content than the others. Frozen foods will last for months, but could go bad if there are power outages.

Dried foods, including dried beans, pasta, shelf-stable milk, and [root vegetables](#) (carrots, potatoes) and squashes (such as acorn or butternut) are also good foods to have at home, Rigassio Radler said.

A [healthy diet](#) with lots of fruits and vegetables and adequate protein and grains can help you maintain your immunity. Limit your intake of added sugar and alcohol, she advised.

Drink plenty of water, try to get 150 minutes of physical activity per week, and stay well-rested. Moderate exercise can boost immunity, and lack of sleep can weaken your immune system, Rigassio Radler said.

If you decide to go to a restaurant, maintain social distancing. Choose cooked foods rather than salad or sushi. And, most importantly, she added, always wash your hands before you eat.

More information: The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has advice for [people who stay at home due to the coronavirus](#).

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