

## Healthy Pantry Makeover

The first step to cooking healthy is to stock your pantry with a variety of foods that you can use as a base for a healthy meal. If your pantry needs a healthy makeover, the first thing you'll want to do is toss the junk and start thinking about which healthy foods you like to eat. To start out, go through your pantry and group foods according to type. As you do this, read labels and pull any food that lists 'high fructose corn syrup' or 'hydrogenated' on the label. These foods contain subpar ingredients and are not part of a healthy diet. Look through the Healthy Pantry List below to see if this food needs to be replaced with its whole food counterpart and if so, add it to your shopping list.

For example, if you find spaghetti sauce that contains high fructose corn syrup in your pantry you will need to remove it and find a healthier replacement at your store. If you find mixed nuts that have 'hydrogenated' on the label you will add these to your list and replace them with a variety of raw or dry roasted nuts. You can either donate these foods to a charity or begin to replace them over time. The following checklists can be used in taking inventory of what you need in order to stock a healthy pantry.

### Healthy Pantry List

- Whole wheat pasta, quinoa pasta, soy pasta
- Whole grains such as quinoa, brown rice, cous cous, orzo, bulgar
- Popcorn (not packaged, to be used with an air popper)
- Dried Lentils
- Box rice mixes (no 'hydrogenated' on the label and if sodium is a concern, use half the seasoning packet in the recipe)
- Dry or canned beans: black beans, kidney beans, lentils. (only beans and sea salt on label – rinse thoroughly before using)
- Potatoes and onions
- Canned tomatoes (no salt added) and jar sun dried tomatoes
- Jar spaghetti sauce (no sugar added)
- Jar pesto sauce
- Jar garlic
- Canned, unprocessed meats (tuna, salmon, chicken in water)
- Natural peanut butter (no sugar added) or almond butter
- Raw nuts (almonds, cashews, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, walnuts)
- Vinegar (red wine, apple cider)



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- Aged balsamic vinegar (sweeter and blends beautifully with olive oil for dressing)
- Vinaigrette Dressing
- Extra virgin olive oil, canola oil (high smoke point), extra virgin coconut oil (higher smoke point, can sauté at higher heat and add exotic flavor)
- Soups (not cream base; Healthy Choice brand tasted great & is low in sodium)
- Coconut Milk
- Whole grain breakfast cereals (oatmeal, 5-9 grain hot cereal or cold cereal that has more than 3 grams of both protein and fiber per serving)
- Herbs and spices (include a few seasoning collections, such as Montreal Steak Seasoning, Lemon Pepper Seasoning and Rub with Love Seasonings – if sodium is a concern, choose those made with sea salt and use sparingly)
- Baking soda and baking powder
- Honey, real maple syrup and agave nectar
- Whole wheat flour, white flour (use 1:1 ratio whole wheat to white flour in baking recipes which call for 100% white flour)
- Canned/ Boxed stock (low sodium beef, chicken, and vegetable broth)
- Sparkling water and herbal tea
- Ketchup, barbeque sauce, marinades, soy sauce, teriyaki sauce (these foods notoriously contain high fructose corn syrup); olives and capers; salsa
- Thai Kitchen Sweet Chili Sauce and Chili Paste
- Jar applesauce and variety of dried fruit (no sugar added)
- Energy bars: Raw Organic (brand) energy bars or Lara bars
- Whole wheat pretzels (dip in hummus)
- Whole wheat crackers and sesame thin crackers
- Lemon Juice

**What you will not see on this list is:**

- Canned vegetables. Frozen vegetables are always a healthy choice than canned.
- Boxed pasta mix (like macaroni and cheese or pasta alfredo) or instant potatoes. These are full of sodium, and fat. It takes approximately 10 minutes to boil a package of pasta and add 2 T of jarred pesto. This is a quick meal that does not warrant a 'short cut' that takes the same amount of time and has less sodium, fat and calories.
- Chips. Only purchase chips when you have a meal in mind (you are having chips and salsa as an appetizer to a meal or for game night) but don't keep them on hand.

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