

Tips to do a good shopping

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The Spanish population has changed their dietary habits in the last 40 years, and more importantly, in the last quarter of century. The consumption of meat has increased considerably and, constractingly, the consumption of vegetables and cereals (bread) has diminished. Moreover, there has been a constant increase in the consumption of fats, above all, saturated fats, those involved in the development of arteriosclerosis and those, as can be inferred from their name, which make arteries get blocked. In the case of children, it has been observed a high amount of total and saturated fat which is probably related to the high consumption of factory produced baked goods, which contain a lot of saturated fats and which are, unfortunately, so frequent for children.

Together with the changes observed in the kind of food purchased, a change in the way of doing the shopping has been observed. Instead of doing the shopping daily in markets and food shops next to our home, people do it with less frequency (weekly, once every two weeks or monthly) and, often, in big stores. In these stores, the supply of products is not only abundant but changing. This strategy helps increase the sales since it often makes us go through all the corridors. We should go with the shopping list previously made if we do not want to end up with a trolley full of unnecessary products, many of them already cooked and with a high amount of fats and sugar. These products can replace others which we should and even wanted to purchase.

It is important that we learn how to do the shopping if we do not want to purchase what we find by chance and having what we buy "by chance".

Tips:

1. Do not do the shopping when feeling hungry, have something before. It has been proved that if we feel hungry we purchase a higher amount of food than needed.

2. Doing the shopping is a good moment to **teach our children** how to do it according to nutritional and economic patterns. We need to bear in mind that doing the shopping with our children can be regarded as an extra-curricular activity which can very useful for them.

3. Do the shopping with a **previously made shopping list**.

4. **Check your list** before leaving. We need to make sure that the difference between what we purchase and what we have decided to buy is not higher than 10%.

5. **Buy fresh products:** vegetables and " **seasonal**" fruit. Thus, we make sure that we have a good quantity of antioxidants and vitamins and that the best **relationship quantity and quality-price** is achieved. It is very important to know that juices cannot replace fresh fruits and that vegetable-made dishes cannot replace a salad or boiled vegetables.

6. **Buy few pre-cooked food.** If you do so, always **check** their **ingredients**. Make sure that you choose "healthy fat" as olive oil, better than seed oils (sunflower, soya and corn). It is better if olive oil is "virgin" thanks to its richness of antioxidants. Check the ingredients of pre-cooked food and avoid that they are made with unidentified or not advisable fats as saturated and partially hydrogenated fats (trans). Those made with seed oils (sunflower, soya and corn) are not a bad choice.

7. Check when you leave that your trolley or shopping basket:

a) Is **completely full of seasonal vegetables and fruits** and there is a **great range of colours** (each range usually corresponds to a group of antioxidants).

b) Contains abundant **legumes and fish**, white as well as blue.

c) Contains low-fat dairy products.

d) Contains **few meat , white if possible** and with different origin: rabbit, turkey, chicken or ostrich.

e) With few pre-cooked food.

f) Only contains, if so, natural canned food or with olive oil.

g) And use, whenever is possible, baskets instead of shopping bags since they bring us closer to the desired sustainability.

The strategy of the three steps, described above, can help us follow the aforementioned recommendations:

Chart: Strategy of the three steps

- Before doing the shopping

- Make a shopping list when you run out of products at home.
- Do the shopping when you have had some food.
- Carry your glasses or a magnifying glass to be able to read the ingredients.

- While doing the shopping

- Check the expiring date.
- Check price and weight.
- Read critically the list of ingredients.

- After doing the shopping

- Check that the deviation between what you have in your trolley and your shopping list does not reach 10%.
- Check that the strategy of the three steps has been followed.
- Make a photograph of your trolley, even virtually, to check that it contains lots of fresh and natural products.