

# Fitrasta's Comprehensive Healthy Shopping Guide for the Indian Diet

This guide aims to empower Indian consumers to make informed and healthy choices while grocery shopping. It highlights nutritious options within the Indian culinary context, addressing prevalent health concerns like diabetes and heart disease. The guide emphasizes selecting whole grains, fresh vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats, while limiting processed foods, excessive sugars, and unhealthy fats.



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# Grains and Pulses: Choosing Wisely

## Select

- Whole grains: Rice, whole wheat atta, quinoa, millets (ragi, jowar, bajra) – high in fiber, complex carbs, and essential nutrients. Example: Ragi is a great source of calcium and iron.
- Unprocessed pulses: Moong dal, toor dal, masoor dal, chana dal, black beans, kidney beans – excellent sources of protein and fiber. Example: Moong dal is easily digestible and good for all ages. (remember to soak them before cooking)

## Avoid/Limit

- Refined grains: maida (all-purpose flour) – low in fiber and nutrients, can cause rapid blood sugar spikes.
- Processed pulses with added salt, sugar, or preservatives.

The major problem with buying groceries in our country is the adulteration, so always go for a trusted brand and do a thorough research before buying something.

# Vegetables: The Foundation of a Healthy Diet

## Select

- Leafy greens: Spinach (palak), fenugreek (methi), mustard greens (sarson), kale – rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- Colorful vegetables: Carrots, beets, bell peppers, eggplant, okra – diverse nutrient profiles and health benefits. Example: Beetroot is a good source of nitrates.
- Locally sourced and seasonal vegetables for freshness and affordability.

## Avoid

- Overly processed or canned vegetables with high sodium content.
- Vegetables that appear wilted or damaged and imported vegetables as they have lesser nutritional value.

Emphasizing a variety of vegetables is crucial. Leafy greens provide essential vitamins and minerals, while colorful vegetables offer a range of antioxidants. Opting for locally sourced and seasonal vegetables ensures freshness and affordability, supporting local farmers and reducing environmental impact. Careful selection avoids processed options with excessive sodium and ensures optimal nutritional value.

# Fruits: Natural Sweetness, Smart Choices

## Select

- Fresh, whole fruits: Guava, papaya, oranges, apples, bananas, berries (where available) – rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- Fruits with lower glycemic index: Apples, pears, berries.

## Avoid/Limit

- Fruit juices: High in sugar, lacking in fiber.
- Canned fruits in syrup: Added sugars and preservatives.

1 serving of fruit juice has nearly same sugar level as a can of cola (Source: Mayo Clinic). Choosing fresh, whole fruits over juices is a healthier way to satisfy sweet cravings. Whole fruits retain fiber, promoting satiety and regulating blood sugar levels. Selecting fruits with lower glycemic indexes, such as apples and berries, can further mitigate blood sugar spikes. Avoiding canned fruits in syrup minimizes the intake of added sugars and preservatives, supporting overall health.

# Dairy and Alternatives: Balancing Calcium and Fat

## Select

- A2 Milk, yogurt, dahi and paneer – good sources of calcium and protein (all of this depends on an individual and the sources they are buying these from)
- Plant-based alternatives: Almond milk, coconut milk (unsweetened) – for those with lactose intolerance or dietary preferences.

## Avoid/Limit

- Preservative filled Dairy products
- Sweetened yogurt or flavored milk: Added sugars.

70% of world's population has some form of lactose intolerance (Source: NIH).

A2 Cow milk has been seen to be better for Gut but lack of study is there to support that scientifically

Plant-based alternatives offer viable options for individuals with lactose intolerance or those following vegetarian or vegan diets. Choosing unsweetened varieties minimizes added sugar consumption. Moderation in full-fat dairy intake is advisable to maintain a balanced diet and promote cardiovascular health.

# Oils, Spices, and Condiments: Flavor Without the Guilt

## Select

- Healthy cooking oils: Olive oil, Coconut oil, mustard oil (in moderation) – sources of healthy fats.
- Spices: Turmeric (haldi), cumin (jeera), coriander (dhania), ginger (adrak), garlic (lehsun) – rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds. Example: Turmeric contains curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory.
- Homemade chutneys and pickles with minimal salt and sugar.

## Avoid/Limit

- Processed condiments high in sodium, sugar, and unhealthy fats: Excessive amounts of store-bought sauces, dressings, and pickles.
- Saturated and trans fats: Vanaspati, ghee in excess, processed snacks.

Using healthy cooking oils in moderation provides essential fatty acids, supporting heart health. Spices enhance flavor while offering potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. Choosing homemade chutneys and pickles allows for control over salt and sugar content. Limiting processed condiments and unhealthy fats minimizes the intake of sodium, sugar, and saturated/trans fats, promoting overall well-being.

**Healthy Doesn't mean BLAND!!**



## Important Disclaimer

This shopping guide provides general recommendations for a healthy Indian diet. It is not a substitute for personalized advice from a qualified healthcare professional.

Individual dietary needs may vary based on age, sex, activity level, health conditions, and other factors.

The facts and statistics presented in this document are for informational purposes only.