

# Pantry Essentials

Everyone's pantry essentials will be a little different depending on what you and your family like. For the most part, you want to stock your pantry with real, whole foods as much as possible. Below are some suggestions on how to stock your pantry.

- Always **read labels carefully** and pay attention to the **ingredients** in these foods.
- Choose products with **minimal ingredients** and preferably **no artificial ingredients**.



## Beans and Lentils

- Dried or canned, these protein powerhouses are great to have on hand for a quick meal.
- Choose canned beans with no added sodium or preservatives and rinse first.
- Keep a variety of single ingredient bean flour-based pastas on hand such as red lentil, mung bean, black bean or chickpea to mix up pasta night.
- Dried beans can easily be cooked in the slow cooker for a hands-off way to have a nutritious dinner ready when you get home.



## Whole Grains

- Keep a variety of whole intact grains on hand such as brown rice, quinoa, millet, wheat berries, steel cut oats, amaranth, etc. as well as flours including almond, coconut and whole wheat.
- It's also helpful to stock up on quicker cooking whole grains for days you need a really fast meal such as:
  - ◇ Bulgur: steamed and cracked wheat berries
  - ◇ Rolled oats
  - ◇ Whole grain pasta: double check ingredients to verify that it is actually 100% whole grain, packaging can be VERY deceiving
  - ◇ Whole grain breads: good quality 100% whole grain breads only stay fresh for 3-5 days but to extend it's shelf-life, store in the freezer



## Canned Seafood

- Quick and easy protein options!
- Choose varieties packed in water or olive oil.
  - ◇ Wild-caught salmon and sardines
  - ◇ Tuna: high risk populations (pregnant women or children) and those who eat more than 1 can of tuna per week should seek out low mercury brands (e.g., Wild Planet)



## Fruits and Vegetables

- Those that don't need to be refrigerated can be kept in the pantry such as potatoes, onions, garlic and winter squash.
- Dried fruit with no added sugar is another pantry staple and a little goes a long way.
- Keep sturdy fruit like apples, bananas, pears and oranges on the counter. You'll be much more likely to grab it for a snack if you see it right away!



## Nuts and Seeds

- Nuts are loaded with healthy fats, fiber, and nutrients. They make for filling snacks, but can also be a great addition to meals.
- Keep a variety on hand so you can mix it up!
  - ◊ Almonds, cashews, pecans, pistachios, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, chia seeds, etc.
  - ◊ Buy in small quantities (like from the bulk aisle) or keep in the freezer if you don't go through them within a few months
- Natural nut and seed butters with no added sugar are another essential pantry item. Once opened, store in the fridge.



## Canned Tomatoes

- Use in many, many recipes- everything from pasta sauce to soups and stews.
- Keep a few cans on hand at all times. Try fire-roasted for extra flavor!
- Tomato paste is also good to keep around and is used in many recipes.



## Oils

- You will want a little variety when it comes to your cooking oils.
- Keep a high-quality extra virgin olive oil on hand for salad dressings or low to medium heat cooking.
- Keep grapeseed, coconut or avocado oil on hand for higher heat cooking.



## Vinegars

- Vinegars can be a great flavor booster for more than just salad dressings.
- A few versatile vinegars to always have on hand include: balsamic, red wine, rice and apple cider.



## Soy Sauce, Tamari, Coconut Aminos

- Great staples to have on hand for added flavor to many dishes.



## Miscellaneous Canned/Boxed Items

- Broth or stock (beef, chicken or vegetable): double check the ingredients for unwanted added sugar, artificial flavors and preservatives
- Thai curry paste: great addition to quick curry dishes
- Canned coconut milk
- Tahini
- Jarred salsa