

## Atkins Shopping Tips

When you start the Atkins diet, you are entering a new world of eating. And nowhere is that more apparent than at the supermarket. Suddenly, all of your stand-by foods like macaroni and cheese, pasta and bread are no longer on your shopping list. When you go shopping for the first few times you may feel like a fish out of water. However, with a bit of practice you'll feel just as comfortable as you were with your previous shopping lists.

Successful Atkins shopping starts before you reach the store. There are many resources for shopping lists online and in Atkins books. Before you head for the store, make a list of the week's recipes and then decide what you'll need to make each meal. Make sure to purchase low-carb snacks for in between meals.

Also, plan for modifications to the meals for other people in your home. You won't be able to make totally different meals for yourself and your family for the long term. The best approach is to use the main meat dish for your meal for the entire family and then a carbohydrate side dish for your family. For example, if you are eating meatloaf you can add half a potato for the other members of your family.

Once you've made your meal plan for the week, its time to hit the store. When you arrive, buy your protein items and produce first. This may sound very simple and like it won't make much difference, but it will. Once you've filled your cart with all of the acceptable foods, there won't be room for much more.

Consider buying your meat in bulk. This will save you lots of money if you know where to get family sized packages of meat. When you buy meat in large quantities, you can also cook it in bulk as well. Taking time a few days per week to cook meat makes it simple to follow the Atkins plan. You can cook your meat before hand and have it ready to go when you need it. You can purchase ground beef, chicken pieces, small steaks and even seafood in bulk.

Cheese, if you can tolerate it, can also be purchased in bulk. Many stores offer store-brand cheese in large bricks. You'll need to make sure to read the labels before you purchase any cheese. Make sure that when you eat cheese to eat some fiber (salad or raw veggies) as well. Having large blocks of your favorite cheeses on hand can make it easy to grab a quick snack between meals.

As you walk around the store, stick to the outer edges. The outer aisles have the freshest food. Think about your neighborhood grocery store. Most often the deli, the meat counter and the produce section are all along the sides of the store with the packaged items in the aisles. This is especially important if you

are in the initial phases of the Atkins diet. You'll want to stay away from all packaged foods during induction, even if they are low carb packaged foods. Once you add more carbohydrate grams to your daily limit, you can start to experiment with low-carb packaged foods.

That leads to the next important tip - read the labels! Just because an item says it is low carb, it may have hidden sugars. Do your investigative work at the grocery store so you won't get home with products that cause you to gain weight.

Shopping for the Atkins diet will take some time to get used to. You'll be navigating parts of the grocery store that you may not be familiar with. You'll also be purchasing items you've never cooked before. However, with planning and dedication low carb shopping will become easier. Just remember to make a list before you visit the store and stay toward the outer aisles of the grocery store. In no time, you'll be an experienced low carb shopper.

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