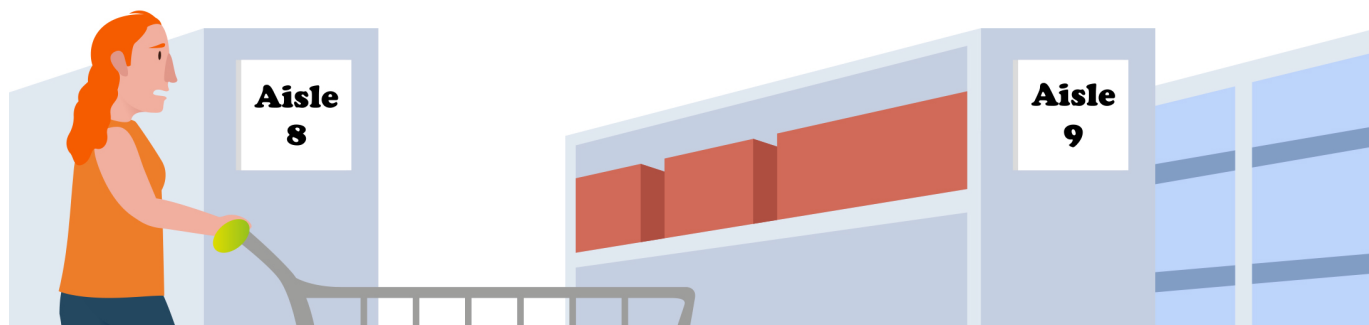


Do Processed Foods Belong on Your Table?



No doubt you've heard that processed foods are what's wrong with the American diet. They have too much sugar, too much sodium and too many calories. Processed foods get a bad rap, but not all processed foods are the same. There is quite a difference between a hot dog and canned tuna, but a lunch of either is based on processed foods.

If you used no processed foods, you'd have to grind your own wheat berries before baking bread. You'd have no chicken broth in your pantry, no dried herbs and spices in your cabinet, no cold breakfast cereal and no store-bought peanut butter. **Instead of shunning all processed foods, be discriminating.** Choose processed foods that offer lots of nutrition and not extra calories, sugars and sodium.

Here are some good choices to have on hand...

- Steel cut or rolled oats
 - A bowl of oatmeal doesn't compare to a packaged oatmeal bar
- No-salt-added canned and boxed tomatoes
 - Use them with pasta, soups, casseroles, chicken, fish, black beans, and more
- Whole grain bread

- Whole-grain spaghetti
- Quick-cooking barley and wheat berries
- Lower-sodium vegetable and chicken broth
 - A terrific shortcut to homemade soup and a great way to cut back on salt and fat
 - Simmer rice and barley in reduced-sodium broth instead of salted water with butter
- Canned salmon or tuna
 - An easy way to get your two or more servings of fish weekly
- Canned beans
 - Drain and rinse to wash away about 40% of the sodium
- Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables
 - Select varieties without added sodium and sugar
- Nut butters
 - The natural varieties will not have added sugar or partially-hydrogenated fats

Some processed foods can help you put together a delicious and nutritious meal in less time. Choose each one carefully, and read labels to see how they fit into your diet and the diets of your family members.

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