LEARN ABOUT PROCESSED FOODS

Most foods that we eat have gone through some form of processing. Learn about what processed foods are and how to make them a healthy part of your diet.

What are Processed Foods?

Many foods are changed, prepared or packaged before we eat them by...

- **Adding ingredients** like sweeteners, colors or preservatives
- **Fortifying** to add nutrients like fiber, vitamin D or calcium
- **Chopping** and **packaging** for improved convenience
- **Food safety tactics** like pasteurizing milk and canning fruits

Spectrum of Processed Foods

Minimally Processed

Such as salad mix, bagged dry beans, roasted unsalted nuts or frozen fruits

Highly Processed

Such as sugary beverages like soda and energy drinks, chips and processed meats

Choosing Healthier Processed Foods

- **Read food labels**, limit items that have **more than 20% of your Daily Value** of saturated fats, added sugars and sodium.
- **Enjoy frozen and canned produce**, which are just as nutritious as fresh produce. Make sure to look for options without added salts and sugary syrups.
- **Snack smarter** with unsalted nuts and seeds, homemade popcorn, and fresh fruits that are convenient and healthy!

GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY®

The information displayed in this resource is sourced from the American Heart Association. Please contact your primary care provider for more information.