


Leyla Weighs In: Out of sight, out of mind: The benefits of cleaning out your pantry

A big obstacle to maintaining your diet is all the goodies available—often right in your own kitchen. When that box of cookies or candy bar is calling you from the cupboard, it can be difficult to resist. But for many, not having those treats around, or at least not within view, is enough to turn the dial down on temptation, leaving far less need for distraction. I'm always advising new dieters to first clean out the cupboards and pantry before starting their new eating program. This little chore can ensure the best chance for diet compliance and weight loss success.

If you live alone, this is easy enough to do. However, if there are other family members living with you, such as your grown children and spouse, who may be opposed to the *Great Pantry Clean-Out*, you have to negotiate. A good strategy is to place all sweets and treats in a particular cupboard that you designate as off-limits to you. In other words, any time you're in the kitchen you must deliberately ignore *that* cupboard. Put your blinders on. If temptation is too great, **employ your inner Yogi**. Needless to say, family members should be supportive of your dieting efforts and make sure that *their* treats aren't left lying around in full view. 

And by NO MEANS should you be grocery shopping for unhealthy foods on behalf of your family. Remember, your teenage and adult members can do their own treat shopping. Better yet, they can keep it outside altogether by buying just a single serving when cravings strike.

But don't wait until you change your diet to clean out your pantry. Purging your cupboards regularly will keep you from using old, expired goods which should never be used, safeguarding your family from possible mold, bacteria and other food-borne pathogens.

To your health!