

Heart-healthy Nutrition

A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight heart disease. It's not as hard as you may think! Remember, it's the overall pattern of your food choices that counts. Start including the recommendations below into your lifestyle for long-term benefits to your health and your heart.

Limit saturated fat and *trans* fat intake (unhealthy fats).

- Foods high in saturated fats include fatty red meat, bacon, sausage, whole milk, cream, and butter.
- *Trans* fats are found in stick margarine, shortening, some fried foods, and packaged foods made with hydrogenated oils.

Include healthy fats.

- Aim to eat fish twice a week. Good choices include salmon, tuna, mackerel, and herring.
- Other healthy fats include olive oil, canola oil, flaxseed oil, avocado, nuts and seeds.

Increase fiber in your diet.

- Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dried beans are good sources of fiber.
- Aim for 5 cups of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Eat 3 ounces (oz) of whole grain foods every day (i.e. brown rice, barley, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat bread, oats).



Limit sodium intake.

- Limit processed foods:
 - Canned foods: soups, stews, sauces, gravy mixes, and some vegetables
 - Snack foods: pretzels, chips, crackers
 - Deli lunch meats, cured and smoked meats
 - Packaged mixes: seasoned noodle/rice dishes, stuffing mix, macaroni & cheese
 - Cheeses: read labels and avoid those with more than 140 mg sodium per serving; examples are American cheese, Velveeta, and Cheez Whiz
- Limit high sodium condiments, sauces, and seasonings:
 - Mustard, ketchup, salad dressings, bouillon cubes
 - Sauces: barbecue sauce, soy sauce
 - Any seasoning that has “salt” in the name or on the label

Heart-healthy Cooking Tips

Healthier Carbohydrate Choices

- Cook with whole grains such as brown rice, barley, quinoa, and oats.
- Switch half the white flour to whole wheat flour in your regular recipes.
- Reduce the amount of sugar in recipes by one-third to one-half.
- When making soups, add dried beans or lentils.



Cutting Back on Sodium

- Use as little salt in cooking as possible. You can use half of the salt called for in most recipes.
- Add flavor without salt – see ideas below!
- Cook without mixes and “instant” products that already contain salt.
- Select no-sodium or low-sodium canned foods, such as vegetables or tuna.



Replacing Unhealthy Fats with Healthy Ones

- Instead of butter use liquid oils, like canola or olive oil in recipes and for sautéing.
- Select lean cuts of beef and pork, such as those labeled “loin” or “round.”
- Get protein from plant foods (such as soy foods or dried beans and legumes) instead of meat.
- Aim to eat fish twice per week, especially fatty fish which are high in healthy omega-3 fats: salmon, albacore tuna, mackerel, and herring.
- Replace whole milk with 1%, 2%, or soy milk in recipes.



Sodium-Free Flavoring Tips

Fish: basil, bay leaf, chervil, curry, dill, dry mustard, green pepper, lemon juice, marjoram, mushrooms, paprika, pepper, tarragon, tomato, turmeric

Chicken: basil, cloves, cranberries, mushrooms, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, pineapple, saffron, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme, tomato, turmeric, lemon juice

Vegetables: basil, dill, garlic or garlic powder, ginger, lemon juice, marjoram, nutmeg, onion or onion powder, tarragon, tomato, salt-free salad dressing, vinegar