

HEALTHY HEART DIET

GENERAL INFORMATION:

What is a healthy heart diet?

The goal of a healthy heart diet is to decrease your risk of heart disease. Some of the major risk factors for heart disease are high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and being overweight. Cholesterol (koh-LES-ter-ol) is a type of fat that is found in your blood. Making changes to your diet, lowering your blood pressure, and losing weight are ways to decrease your risk for heart disease. Other ways to decrease your risk include getting more exercise and stopping smoking.

A healthy heart diet limits fat and cholesterol to help lower your blood cholesterol. Adding soluble fiber to your diet may also help to decrease your blood cholesterol levels. Decreasing the amount of sodium (SO-de-um) that you eat and drink may help to control your blood pressure. You may also lose weight on this diet because decreasing your fat intake will decrease your calorie intake. Decreasing calories in your diet can help you to lose weight.

What can I do to make a healthy heart diet part of my lifestyle?

Changing what you eat and drink may be hard at first. Think of these changes as "lifestyle" changes, not just "diet" changes. You will need to make these changes part of your daily routine in order to feel better.

Choose a variety of items on this diet to avoid getting tired of having the same items every day. Keep a list of items allowed on this diet in your kitchen to remind you about the diet.

Carry a list of items allowed on this diet to remind you about the diet when you are away from home. Tell your family or friends about this diet so that they can remind you about it.

Ask your caregiver, a dietitian (di-uh-TISH-in), or a nutritionist (noo-TRI-shun-ist) any questions you may have about your diet plan. A dietitian or nutritionist works with you to find the right diet plan for you. Dietitians and nutritionists can also help to make your new diet a regular part of your life.

What should I avoid eating and drinking while on a healthy heart diet? Avoid eating foods that are high in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. Learn to read labels on packaged foods before buying them. Ask your caregiver for more information about how to read food labels. The following foods are very high in fat, saturated fat or cholesterol.

Bread and other carbohydrates:

Biscuits, croissants, and store-bought muffins.

Cakes, cookies, donuts, pies, pastries.

French fries, hash browns and fry bread.

Granola.

Snack chips.

Dairy:

Whole milk, evaporated whole milk, and sweetened condensed milk.

Half and half creamer.

Hard or semi-soft cheese.

Ice cream.

Cheddar cheese soup, or French onion soup topped with cheese.

Soups made with cream, half and half, or whole milk.

Fruits and vegetables:

Fruits baked into high fat desserts, such as pastries, pies, or cakes.

Fruit fritters.

Fruit ice cream.

Avocado (more than one-quarter of an avocado) or guacamole dip.

Fried or batter-dipped vegetables, or vegetables prepared with butter, cream, or cheese sauce.

Meats and meat substitutes:

Bacon, fatback, ham hocks, or sausages.

Fish canned in oil, or ham, cold cuts, or lunchmeats.

Hot dogs, spare ribs, chimichangas, and other fried foods.

Lamb or mutton, liver, sweetbreads, or organ meats.

Cheese dips.

Eggs (more than four per week).

Fats:

Butter, margarine or shortening with hydrogenated oils or lard.

Coconut or coconut milk, or foods containing palm kernel, or coconut oil.

Heavy, table, or whipping cream, or regular sour cream or cream cheese.

What are the types of fat I need to know about? There are several different kinds of fat that are found in foods. It is important to know how much of each of these fats you should have in your diet. Eating too much of some types of fats may increase your blood cholesterol. Eating the right amount of other types of fat can help to keep your cholesterol at the right level. The following are types of fats, and the amounts of each that you should have in your diet:

Monounsaturated (mo-noh-un-SACH-er-ayt-ed) fats are found in olives, peanuts, seeds, and other nuts. These fats do not raise your cholesterol if you eat them in moderation (not too much). Include some foods each day that contain monounsaturated fats. Monounsaturated fats should make up 10 to 20 percent of the total number of calories eaten in one day.

Polyunsaturated (po-lee-un-SACH-er-ayt-ed) fats are found in oils such as canola, sunflower, sesame, safflower and other plant oils. Polyunsaturated fats should make up about 10 percent of your calorie intake.

Omega-3 (oh-ME-ga 3) fats are found in certain types of high fat fish, such as salmon, mackerel, and albacore tuna. These fats help protect against heart disease. Eat at least two servings a week of these foods. If you cannot eat fish, talk to your caregiver about using a fish oil supplement (pill).

Saturated (SACH-er-ayt-ed) fat is solid at room temperature, and includes butter, lard, coconut or palm oil, shortening, and some types of margarine. Hydrogenated (hi-DRO-jen-ayt-id) and trans-fats are types of fats that are similar to saturated fats. Eating foods that have these type of fats can raise your risk for heart disease by increasing blood cholesterol levels. Saturated fat should make up less than 10 percent of daily calories.

Dietary cholesterol is a type of fat that is found animal foods including dairy products, meat, fish and poultry. Egg yolks and organ meats (such as liver) are also high in cholesterol. High amounts of dietary cholesterol may increase blood cholesterol in some people. Eat less than 300 mg of cholesterol per day.

What can I eat and drink while on a healthy heart diet? Ask your dietitian or caregiver how many servings to eat each day from each of the following groups of foods. The amount of servings you should eat from each food group will depend on your daily calorie needs. The following is one serving of each food item:

Breads and other carbohydrates: Most people need six to 11 servings of breads and other carbohydrates every day.

One slice of bread (four-inch square), or half of a three-inch bagel.

One small (two-inch square) dinner roll, or half of a hamburger or hot dog bun, or English muffin.

Three-fourths of a cup of flaked cereal, or one-third of a cup of cooked cereal, such as oatmeal or farina.

One-half cup of corn or peas, or one medium corn-on-the-cob.

One-third cup of cooked pasta or rice, or one-half cup of mashed potatoes, or one three-inch baked potato.

Six crackers, or three squares of graham crackers.

One ounce of fat-free or baked potato chips or corn chips.

Half of a six-inch piece of pita bread, or one 6-inch round tortilla.

Dairy: Most people need two to three servings of dairy products every day.

One cup of skim or one-percent fat milk.

One-third cup nonfat dry milk powder.

One-half cup of low fat or fat-free frozen yogurt or ice milk.

One cup of fat-free yogurt.

Fruits: Most people need two to four servings of fruit every day.

One-fourth of a cup of raisins, prunes, or other dried fruit.

One-half cup of canned fruit or applesauce.

One and one-fourth of a cup of any kind of berries.

One and one-half cups of cubed melon.

One small banana, or half of a large (nine-inch) banana.

One medium (three-inch) apple, peach, or orange.

Half of a fresh grapefruit or a large pear.

Two small plums or tangerines.

Seventeen small or 12 large grapes.

Vegetables: Most people need three to five servings of vegetables every day. One serving of vegetables is one cup of raw vegetables, or one-half cup of cooked vegetables.

Salads including greens such as lettuce, spinach, or Romaine, and carrots, broccoli, celery, cucumber, radishes and other raw vegetables.

Cooked fresh or frozen vegetables, such as Brussels sprouts, squash, asparagus, eggplant, beets, green beans, and turnips. Choose a variety of brightly-colored vegetables.

Meats and meat products: Most people need two to three servings of meat and meat products every day.

Three ounces of chicken or turkey without skin.

Three ounces of cooked fish or shellfish.

Three ounces of lean beef, pork, low fat ham, turkey, or other deli meats.

Three-fourths of a cup of fat-free or low fat cottage or ricotta cheese.

One-inch cube or one ounce of low fat cheese.

Two tablespoons of low fat Parmesan cheese.

Two egg whites, or one half-cup of fat-free egg substitutes.

One egg (eat less than four per week).

One-half of a cup of cooked dried peas, beans, and lentils.

Two tablespoons of peanut butter.

Fats: Most people need one to three servings of fats every day.

One-eighth of a medium avocado.

One teaspoon of certain oils, such as canola, olive, peanut, soybean, or safflower.

One teaspoon of low fat or regular soft margarine or mayonnaise. Buy only margarines that have liquid oils as the first and second ingredients listed on the food label.

One tablespoon of regular salad dressing, or two tablespoons of low fat salad dressing.

Two tablespoons of low fat or fat-free sour cream or cream cheese.

Two tablespoons of sesame seeds, six almonds, or 10 peanuts.

Two teaspoons of peanut butter.

What are some other ways to decrease the amount of fat in my diet?

Keep your total fat intake at thirty percent or less of your daily calories. You can do this by eating low fat foods, and avoiding high fat foods. If you buy packaged foods, choose those with less than 30 percent of calories as fat. Read the labels on packaged foods before buying them. Many products have lower-fat options.

Cut off fat from all meats before cooking them. Remove the skin from poultry (chicken). Do not fry meat, fish, or poultry