



good nutrition.

EATING FOR HEART HEALTH.

What we eat impacts many factors that can increase the risk of heart disease. These include:

- Cholesterol
- Blood pressure
- Diabetes risk
- Inflammation
- Mental health

To minimise these risk factors and reduce or prevent the possibility of heart-related disease, consider the following dietary measures:

1. Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains
2. Selecting a variety of lean protein sources
3. Consuming unflavoured, low-fat milk, low fat, unsweetened yoghurt, and low-fat cheese
4. Limiting the amount of salt that you add to foods or food products that contain a lot of salt
5. Restricting your intake of highly processed foods
6. Consuming healthy fat choices

1. Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

Fruits, vegetables and whole grains contain a variety of vitamins and minerals that support both heart health and general wellbeing. They are also important sources of fibre and antioxidants. Eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains can help to improve blood pressure, cholesterol levels and inflammation related to the cardiovascular system.

Fruit and vegetables - Aim for 2 servings of fruit and 5 servings of vegetables every day. Some tips for increasing your fruit and vegetable intake are:

1. Have fresh or tinned fruit (in juice) as a snack
2. Add fresh or frozen fruit to cereal or porridge
3. Keep frozen fruit in your freezer and add to smoothies
4. Add some salad to sandwiches, wraps or rolls
5. Aim to make half of your plate non-starchy vegetables or salad
6. Add vegetables into your cooking such as diced vegetables in curries or grated carrot and zucchini into Bolognese sauce

Whole grain bread and cereals - Foods that are wholegrain contain more fibre and are less refined. Eating these types of foods can help lower your risk for heart disease. The fibre binds with cholesterol in your gut meaning cholesterol cannot be absorbed into your bloodstream.

Swap refined grains such as white bread, pasta or rice for whole grain options such as brown rice, wholemeal flour, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta, oats, popcorn or buckwheat.



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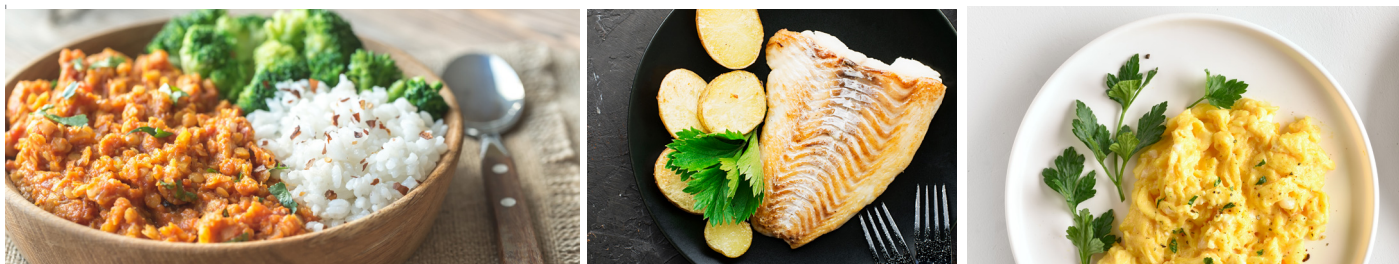
2. Eat a variety of lean protein sources.

The best lean protein sources are plant-based proteins, fish and seafood. Eggs and poultry are also other good options. If you do eat red meat, it is best to limit to 1-3 times per week.

How can you include more lean protein sources?

- Use tinned legumes such as chickpeas, lentils and beans
- Add to salads, soups or curries
- Enjoy hummus as a snack with vegetable sticks
- Substitute beef mince with lentils or beans (or even half of the mince)
- Add tinned fish to sandwiches or salads
- Remove the skin from poultry and choose lean cuts of red meat

Eggs - Eggs can be enjoyed as part of a heart-healthy diet. However, people who have diabetes or high cholesterol should limit egg consumption to 7 per week.



3. Choose unflavoured, low-fat milk, low fat, unsweetened yoghurt and low-fat cheese.

Choose reduced-fat dairy wherever possible and avoid sweetened dairy products such as flavoured milk. Butter, cream and ice cream should be limited for a healthy heart.

How can you choose healthier dairy options?

- Choose Greek or natural yoghurt and flavour with passionfruit, berries or tinned fruit
- Choose low-fat milk and cheese

4. Limit the amount of salt that you add to foods or food products that contain a lot of salt.

You can use other flavourings to make your food taste good. Your tastebuds renew every three weeks so if you are finding your food bland without salt, know that your tastebuds will adjust over three weeks.

Some flavourings you can try to season your food with are:

- Garlic
- Onion
- Ginger
- Chilli
- Pepper
- Mustard powder
- Fresh lemon or lime
- Dried herbs

5. Limit highly processed foods.

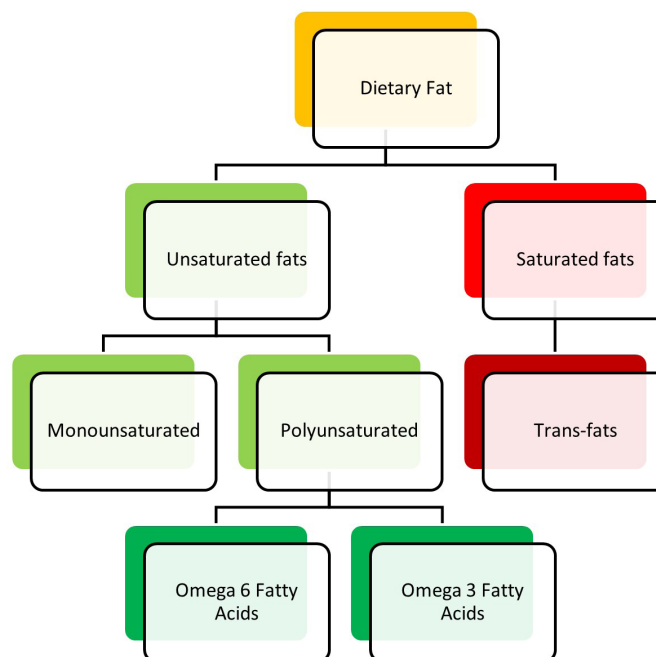
Choosing fresh foods and preparing your food at home gives you control over how much and what types of fats you are consuming, as well as the amount of salt in your food. By selecting fresh you can include more fruits and vegetables, which also benefits heart health.

In addition to eating a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and lean protein sources, there are 3 things you can consume that benefit heart health. These are:

1. Healthy fats
2. Plant sterols
3. Soluble fibre

Dietary fats - We need fats in our diet as they are used in certain parts of the body like the brain and cell walls. There are also some important vitamins that are fat-soluble, so we need to consume certain fats to absorb these vitamins. Vitamins A, D and E are all examples of fat-soluble vitamins. There are many kinds of fats, some that are better for our heart and health than others. The diagram on the right shows the different types of fats. Green indicates fats that are good for us and red indicates fats that are not.

All fats have the same amount of energy (kilojoules) per gram, regardless of the type of fat. Even though fats have a higher energy density than carbohydrates and proteins, they are still necessary as part of a heart-healthy diet. Oils that are solid at room temperature are saturated. For example, coconut oil which is 80-95% saturated fat.



Unsaturated fats - These fats are an important part of a healthy diet. Unsaturated fats include monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats and omega 3 and omega 6 fats. Eat a variety of foods with healthy fats daily to get enough for your body. Unsaturated fats are important for absorption of fat-soluble vitamins and help to make up parts of brain tissue and cell walls.

Monounsaturated fats - Monounsaturated fats can be found in:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Avocado
- Almond, peanut and cashew nuts

How much should I eat per day?

- 1 tablespoon (20mls) of extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ avocado
- 30g of unsalted nuts
- 1 tablespoon of nut butter

Hints for eating more monounsaturated fats:

- Add extra virgin olive oil when you are cooking or use in salad dressings
- Spread avocado on whole grain crackers
- Enjoy peanut butter on whole grain bread



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Polyunsaturated fats - Polyunsaturated fats can be found in:

- Oily fish and seafood such as salmon, sardines, tuna and mussels
- Sunflower or canola oil
- Walnuts, brazil or pine nuts
- Chia, flaxseed or sunflower seeds
- Tahini
- Soybeans

How much should I eat?

Per week: three serves of oily fish or seafood (1 serving size is 150-200 grams)

Each day:

- 30g of unsalted nuts
- 2 teaspoons of seeds
- 1 tablespoon of tahini
- 2 teaspoons of oil spread

Hints for eating more polyunsaturated fats:

- Eat a mix of nuts and seeds as a snack
- Mix tahini and lemon juice together and then add to vegetables or salad
- Replace ham with tinned salmon in a sandwich or salad
- Add a spoonful of seeds to cereal, porridge, smoothies, salads, sandwiches or wraps

Omega 3 and 6 fats - Omega 3 and 6 fats are a certain type of polyunsaturated fat that can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Omega 3 and 6 fats are found in:

- Oily fish and seafood
- Walnuts
- Chia seeds
- Hemp seeds
- Flaxseed
- Some eggs (check label/information on the egg carton)

If you have high triglyceride levels, you may benefit from taking a fish or algae supplement if you cannot get enough in your diet. Speak with your doctor or dietitian for advice.





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Plant sterols - These are a component of plants that interact with cholesterol in the gut to block absorption into the body. You can increase your plant sterol intake by eating more plant foods, taking a supplement or by choosing food products that have been fortified with plant sterols.

Some examples of plant sterol fortified products are:

- Milk
- Cereal
- Margarine

How much plant sterol should I be eating per day?

A serving of plant sterols is 2-3 grams. You need to be eating at least this much to see any results. Check the label of fortified food products for confirmation of a serving size for one.

Soluble fibre - Soluble fibre acts in a similar way to plant sterols. It binds with cholesterol in the gut, meaning that cholesterol cannot be absorbed into the bloodstream. Increasing the amount of soluble fibre that you eat can help decrease your overall cholesterol levels.

Soluble fibre is found in plant foods including barley, oats, legumes, psyllium, lentils, seeds, fruits and vegetables.

Hints for adding more soluble fibre to your diet:

- Choose oat porridge or unsweetened muesli for breakfast (add seeds for additional health benefits).
- Add canned beans to any salad
- Have a piece of fruit for breakfast
- Put a spoonful of psyllium husks or chia seeds into a smoothie, yoghurt or salad
- Choose a fibre supplement such as Metamucil or Benefibre



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