

Heart Healthy Eating Basics

Do the foods we eat really make a difference?

Yes, they do!

A heart healthy diet helps to reduce cholesterol, blood pressure, and body weight!

Fruits & Vegetables

- Eat a variety of colors and types – 5 colors per plate!
- Choose *whole* fruits and vegetables instead of juices
- Add fruit and/or vegetables to every meal and snack



Breads, Rice, Pasta

- Increase fiber intake with 100% whole grain bread, pasta, or brown rice
 - Check list of ingredients, the first word should be “whole”
- Make at least half of your grain choices whole grains

Meats & Other Proteins

- Choose lean cuts of meat, trim all visible fat, and minimize fats in cooking
 - Watch portion sizes! Make them the size of the palm of your hand
- Eat fatty fish twice a week – salmon, trout, mackerel have healthy fats
- Go meatless at least once a week - choose beans, nuts, and seeds
 - Get at least 4 servings of beans, nuts, seeds a week

Dairy & Milk Products

- Choose 2-3 servings of low-fat dairy products every day
- If lactose intolerant, choose products with lactase added or find non-dairy sources of calcium and vitamin D

Fats, Oils, & Dressings

- Choose the reduced fat products
- Swap out saturated/*trans* fats for unsaturated fats – read food labels
 - Saturated and *trans* fats are not heart healthy
 - Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are heart healthy
- No *trans* fats! Check list of ingredients for “partially hydrogenated” oils

Do Not Forget!

- Limit sodium to less than 1,500 mg a day
- Limit added sugars in food and beverages
- Drink alcohol in moderation, if at all
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Meet with a registered dietitian



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Adapted from the American Heart Association's Healthy Diet Goals
http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Healthy-Diet-Goals_UCM_310436_SubHomePage.jsp