



Rawpixel/iStock/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images

25 Heart-Healthy Eating Tips

Contributors: Esther Ellis, MS, RDN, LDN

Published: February 21, 2022 **Reviewed:** February 18, 2022

Certain foods can lower your risk of heart disease or help to manage it, while other foods may increase your risk. Try these tips for preparing heart-healthy meals.

Choose Healthier Types of Fat and Cooking Methods

- Use small amounts of oils such as canola and olive in recipes and for sautéing.
- Make salad dressings with olive or flaxseed oil.
- Blend mashed avocado into dips or use small amounts to add flavor to dishes.
- Try different ways of cooking foods, such as baking, broiling, grilling, steaming and poaching to add variety.

Eat Foods Containing Omega-3 Fatty Acids

- Add walnuts to cereal, salads or muffins. Try walnut oil in salad dressings, too.
- Eat two 4-ounce portions of fatty fish each week, such as salmon, lake trout, canned light tuna (in water), mackerel and sardines.
- Some chickens are given feed that is high in omega-3s so their eggs will contain more as well. When buying eggs, check the package label.

Include Dietary Fiber

- Include plant-based foods as sources of protein, including tempeh, beans, lentils, seeds and nuts.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables at each meal.
- Opt for whole fruits and vegetables instead of 100% fruit juices more often and don't discard edible peels. Removing the peels on produce, like apples and potatoes, lowers their fiber content — just be sure to wash them before preparing or eating.
- Choose whole grains instead of refined grains whenever possible.

Limit Saturated Fat

- If you eat meat, select lean cuts of beef and pork, especially cuts with "loin" or "round" in their name and drain the fat off of cooked, ground meat.
- Cut back on processed meats high in saturated fat, such as hot dogs, salami and bacon.
- When you make a stew or soup, refrigerate leftovers and skim off the fat with a spoon before reheating and serving.
- Replace higher-fat cheeses with lower-fat options such as reduced-fat feta and part-skim mozzarella.
- Thicken sauces with evaporated fat-free milk instead of whole milk.
- Move toward using lower-fat milk and yogurt. Start with 2% products, then move to 1% and finally to fat-free to adjust to the new taste.
- Choose skinless poultry or remove the skin before eating chicken or turkey.
- Check the Nutrition Facts Label on food packaging for saturated fat content and to see if *trans* fat or partially hydrogenated oils are listed. Food manufacturers have removed *trans* fats from their products, but some foods with longer shelf-life dates such as cakes, cookies, crackers, pastries, pies, muffins, and doughnuts may still contain them. These foods are also sources of added sugars and should be limited for that reason, as well.

Reduce Salt (Sodium)

- Prepare foods at home more often so you can control the amount of salt in your meals.
- Use as little salt in cooking as possible. You can cut at least half the salt from most recipes.
- Skip the table salt and be mindful when adding other higher-sodium condiments to your food at the table, like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles and olives.
- When choosing canned foods, select "reduced-sodium" or "no-salt-added" soups and vegetables.
- Check the Nutrition Facts Label for sodium and choose products with lower sodium content.
- Season foods with herbs, spices, garlic, onions, peppers and lemon or lime juice to add flavor.

Source: eatright.org



Provided by the Lac du Flambeau Food Distribution Nutrition Education Program 715-588-4386