

Diet for Stroke Prevention: *Getting Started*

The types of foods that you eat may influence your risk of having a stroke. You can use this guide to help you get started making dietary changes to reduce your stroke risk.



Reviewing your current diet

Foods for stroke prevention

The foods listed below are foods that may help reduce the risk of having a stroke.

Which of these healthy foods are you eating *too little* of, and which are you *eating enough* of for stroke prevention? Put a mark in the boxes for the ‘I eat’ statements below that are most accurate for you.

| Healthy Foods for Stroke Prevention | Likely eating <i>too little</i> for stroke prevention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eating <i>enough</i> for stroke prevention |
|--|---|--|
| Vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or less times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or more times a day |
| Fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or less times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or more times a day |
| Unsalted nuts and seeds or nut/seed butters (e.g. walnuts, almonds, pumpkin seeds, flaxseed, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 3 or less times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 4 or more times a week |
| Fish and shellfish | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or less times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or more times a week |
| Whole grain foods (e.g. oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, whole grain breads and cereals, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or less times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or more times a day |
| Beans, legumes, tofu (e.g. soybeans, kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or less times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or more times a week |
| Vegetable oils (e.g. olive oil, flaxseed oil, canola oil, flavor-infused vegetable oils, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat less than once a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or more times a day |

Less healthy foods

While some foods may help reduce the risk of a stroke, some other foods may increase risk for having a stroke when we eat too much of them. Take a moment to look at the list of these less healthy foods below.

Which less healthy foods are you eating *too much* of for stroke prevention?

Less Healthy Foods for Stroke Prevention

Eating *too much* for stroke prevention

Better for stroke prevention

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Processed meat products and high-fat red meat (e.g. processed deli meats, sausages, fast food meat products, high fat cuts of red meat, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 3 or more times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 2 or less times a week |
| High fat dairy products (e.g. high fat cheese, cream, high fat yogurt, ice cream, milkshake, 2% or homogenized milk) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or more times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat less than once a day |
| High saturated fat condiments (e.g. butter, cream cheese, sour cream, gravy, whipping cream) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 1 or more times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat less than once a day |
| Commercial desserts and pastries (e.g. donuts, muffins, cakes, cookies, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 4 or more times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 3 or less times a week |
| Sugary beverages (e.g. soft drinks, slush beverages, sweetened fruit punches, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I drink 4 or more times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I drink 3 or less times a week |
| Sugary condiments (e.g. table sugar, honey, syrup, jam) | <input type="checkbox"/> I use 3 or more times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I use 2 or less times a day |
| High salt or sugary snack foods (e.g. potato chips, French fries, Cheezies, pretzels, chocolate, candy, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 4 or more times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> I eat 3 or less times a week |
| Added salt or high sodium condiments (e.g. salt shaker, onion/garlic salt, soy sauce, salt-based seasoning blends, and others) | <input type="checkbox"/> I use 2 or more times a day | <input type="checkbox"/> I use 1 or less times a day |

Recommendations for stroke prevention

Vegetables

Eat 2 - 3 or more times a day

- ✓ Fresh or frozen, cooked or raw are great choices
- ✓ Include as snacks, salads, and with meals more often



Fruit

Eat 2 - 3 or more times a day (talk to your dietitian about limits if you have diabetes)

- ✓ Fresh or frozen are great choices
- ✓ Include as snacks, on cereals, in smoothies, and for dessert more often



Unsalted nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters

Eat 4 or more times a week

- ✓ Unsalted and raw nuts (e.g. walnuts, almonds, and others) and seeds (e.g. pumpkin, flaxseed, and others) are great choices
- ✓ Include a small handful as a snack, on cereals, in salads or in smoothies



Fish and shellfish

Eat 2 or more times a week

- ✓ Fresh, frozen and lower-salt canned are great choices
- ✓ Include for supper, in salads, sandwiches, or on whole-grain crackers



Whole grain foods

Eat 2 or more times a day

- ✓ Oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, whole grain breads and cereals are great choices
- ✓ look for products made with whole grains instead of white flour when choosing breads, cereals and pasta



Beans and legumes

Eat 2 or more times a week

- ✓ Dried or canned beans (e.g. soybeans, kidney beans, and others) and legumes (e.g. lentils, chickpeas, and others) are great choices – drain and rinse canned versions to reduce salt
- ✓ Include in salads, stir-fry, pasta, soups and sandwich wraps
- ✓ Try adding tofu to recipes



Vegetable oils

Eat 1 or more times a day

- ✓ Olive oil, flaxseed oil, canola oil, or flavour-infused vegetable oils are great choices
- ✓ Add to various salads, dips for bread or vegetables, add to cooked dishes, in smoothies, brush on fish



Recommendations for stroke prevention

Processed meat products and high fat red meat

Limit to 2 or less times a week

For example: processed deli meats, sausages, fast food meat products, high fat cuts of red meat, and others)

- ✓ Some healthier options include unprocessed lean meats and poultry, fish, shellfish, nuts and seeds, natural nut/seed butters, beans, legumes, hummus



High fat dairy products

Limit to less than once a day

For example: high fat cheese, table cream, high fat yogurt, ice cream, milkshake, 2% or homogenized milk

- ✓ Some healthier options include low fat dairy products (e.g. low fat milk, low fat yogurt, low fat cottage or ricotta cheese), unsweetened soy or almond milk beverages



High saturated fat condiments

Limit to less than once a day

For example: butter, cream cheese, sour cream, gravy, whipping cream

- ✓ Some healthier options include vegetables oils, flavour-infused vegetables oils, salad dressings, natural nut or seed butters, hummus, guacamole, salsa



Commercial desserts and pastries

Limit to 2 - 3 or less times a week

For example: donuts, muffins, cakes, cookies, and others

- ✓ Some healthier options include fruit, low fat yogurt, small portion of dark chocolate, homemade heart healthy desserts – *see websites on last page for recipes*



Sugary beverages

Limit to 2 - 3 or less times a week

For example: soft drinks, slushes, sweetened fruit punches, and others

- ✓ Some healthier options include water, regular or naturally flavoured sparkling water or club soda, unsweetened teas or coffee



Sugary condiments

Limit to 2 or less times a day

For example: table sugar, honey, syrup, jam



High salt or sugary snack foods

Limit to 2 - 3 or less times a week

For example: potato chips, French fries, Cheezies, caramel popcorn, pretzels, chocolate, candy, and others

- ✓ Some healthier options include air popped popcorn, unsalted nuts and seeds, unsalted tortilla chips, whole-grain low salt crackers



Added salt or high sodium condiments

Limit to 1 or less times a day

For example: salt shaker, garlic/onion salt, soy sauce, salt-based seasonings, and others

- ✓ Some healthier options include spices, herbs, non-salt seasoning blends, hot sauces



Sample meal plan for stroke prevention

Breakfast

Oatmeal with apple slices, chopped walnuts (or ground flaxseed) and cinnamon
Low fat milk or unsweetened soy milk beverage

Lunch

Sliced avocado, tomato and lettuce sandwich on wholegrain bread
Unsweetened low fat yogurt with slices of banana

Afternoon snack

Handful of unsalted nuts and unsweetened dried fruit

Supper

Baked salmon with brown rice and roasted vegetables tossed in olive oil and herbs
Low fat milk or unsweetened soy milk beverage

Evening snack

Garden vegetables with hummus (chickpea) dip

Sample meal plan for stroke prevention

Breakfast

Whole grain toast with natural peanut butter

Fresh fruit salad

Lunch

Mixed green salad with added lentils or chickpeas and olive oil and balsamic vinegar dressing

Whole grain roll

Low fat milk or unsweetened soy milk beverage

Afternoon snack

Fresh fruit with unsweetened low fat yogurt for dipping

Supper

Lean marinated chicken breast with baked potato dressed with salsa, and steamed vegetables

Low fat milk or unsweetened soy milk beverage

Evening snack

Whole grain low salt crackers with homemade guacamole (avocado) dip

Recipes

The following websites are a good place to find healthy food recipes for stroke prevention:

Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation

Website link: www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/recipes



American Heart Association

Website link: recipes.heart.org



British Heart Foundation

Website link:

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-matters/healthy-eating-toolkit/recipe-finder



Notes

Registered Dietitian: _____

905-378-4647 ext. _____

HOW ARE WE DOING?

*You can provide feedback
or suggestions for
Niagara Health Clinical
Nutrition services at:*

www.niagarahealth.on.ca/en/clinical-nutrition