Diet for Heart Disease Prevention: *Getting Started*

The types of foods that you eat can influence your risk of developing heart disease. You can use this guide to help you get started making dietary changes to reduce your risk for heart disease.

**Reviewing your current diet**

Heart-protective foods ❤️

Some foods are *heart-protective*, and eating enough of these foods in your diet can help lower your risk for heart disease. Take a moment to look at the list of heart-protective foods below.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart-protective foods</th>
<th>Eating likely <em>too little</em> for heart disease prevention</th>
<th>✓ Eating <em>enough</em> for heart disease prevention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or less times a day</td>
<td>□ I eat 2 or more times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit</strong></td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or less times a day</td>
<td>□ I eat 2 or more times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsalted nuts and seeds or nut/seed butters</strong> (e.g. walnuts, almonds, pumpkin seeds, flaxseed, and others)</td>
<td>□ I eat 3 or less times a week</td>
<td>□ I eat 4 or more times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fish and shellfish</strong></td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or less times a week</td>
<td>□ I eat 2 or more times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole grain foods</strong></td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or less times a day</td>
<td>□ I eat 2 or more times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, whole grain breads and cereals, and others)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beans, legumes, tofu</strong> (e.g. soybeans, kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas, and others)</td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or less times a week</td>
<td>□ I eat 2 or more times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetable oils</strong></td>
<td>□ I eat less than once a day</td>
<td>□ I eat 1 or more times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. olive oil, flaxseed oil, canola oil, flavor-infused vegetable oils, and others)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Less heart healthy foods

While some foods are heart-protective, some foods can increase risk for heart disease when we eat too much of them. These are called ‘less heart healthy’ foods. Take a moment to look at the list of less heart healthy foods below.

Which less heart healthy foods are you eating too much of for heart disease prevention?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less heart healthy foods</th>
<th>Eating too much for heart disease prevention</th>
<th>☑ Better for heart disease prevention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Processed meat products and high-fat red meat</strong> (e.g. processed deli meats, sausages, fast food meat products, high fat cuts of red meat, and others)</td>
<td>☐ I eat 3 or more times a week</td>
<td>☐ I eat 2 or less times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High fat dairy products</strong> (e.g. high fat cheese, cream, high fat yogurt, ice cream, milkshake, 2% or homogenized milk)</td>
<td>☐ I eat 1 or more times a day</td>
<td>☐ I eat less than once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High saturated fat condiments</strong> (e.g. butter, cream cheese, sour cream, gravy, whipping cream)</td>
<td>☐ I eat 1 or more times a day</td>
<td>☐ I eat less than once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial desserts and pastries</strong> (e.g. donuts, muffins, cakes, cookies, and others)</td>
<td>☐ I eat 4 or more times a week</td>
<td>☐ I eat 3 or less times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sugary beverages</strong> (e.g. soft drinks, slush beverages, sweetened fruit punches, and others)</td>
<td>☐ I drink 4 or more times a week</td>
<td>☐ I drink 3 or less times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sugary condiments</strong> (e.g. table sugar, honey, syrup, jam)</td>
<td>☐ I use 3 or more times a day</td>
<td>☐ I use 2 or less times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High salt or sugary snack foods</strong> (e.g. potato chips, French fries, Cheezies, pretzels, chocolate, candy, and others)</td>
<td>☐ I eat 4 or more times a week</td>
<td>☐ I eat 3 or less times a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Added salt or high sodium condiments</strong> (e.g. salt shaker, onion/garlic salt, soy sauce, salt-based seasoning blends, and others)</td>
<td>☐ I use 2 or more times a day</td>
<td>☐ I use 1 or less times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting Dietary Goals

Complete a review of your diet on the previous pages.

Are there some areas where you can increase the heart protective foods in your diet? Are there some areas where you can reduce the less heart healthy foods in your diet?

Many people find they have the most success with dietary changes when they start with goals they are confident they can achieve first. Start with dietary changes that you think will be easiest for you. Then, continue to build your heart healthy diet by working on those dietary changes that you think will be more challenging.

Review the dietary recommendations for heart disease prevention on the following pages to help you set some of those personal goals. You may find it helpful to makes some notes below to help you plan your dietary changes.

Notes

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
# Recommendations for heart-protective foods

## 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 less heart healthy foods

### 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 milk, low fat yogurt, unsweetened soy or almond milk beverages, low fat cottage or ricotta cheese

### 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, flavor-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
Heart healthy meal plan (sample day)

**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
Heart healthy meal plan (sample day)

**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 heart healthy food recipes:

**Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation**
Website link: [www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/recipes](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/recipes)

**American Heart Association**
Website link: [recipes.heart.org](http://recipes.heart.org)

**British Heart Foundation**
Website link:

Notes

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Registered Dietitian:________________________

905-378-4647 ext. ________________