

Healthy Eating

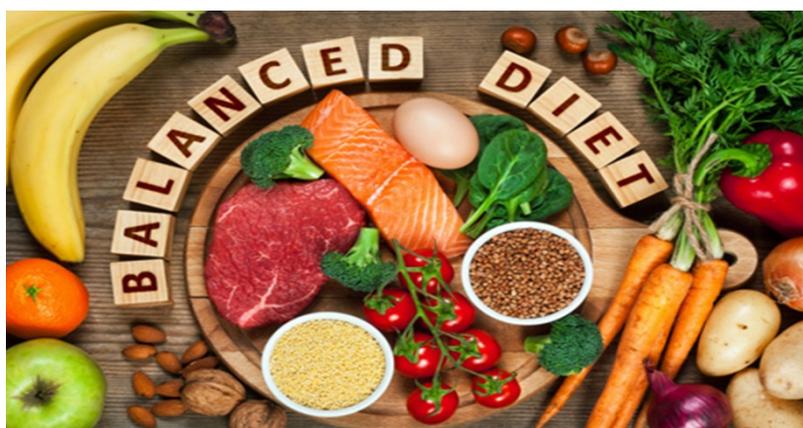


A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight heart disease. Remember, it's the overall pattern of your choices that counts. Make the simple steps below part of your life for long-term benefits to your health and your heart.

What is a Healthy Diet?

The key to healthy eating is to base your diet around foods that are as close to how they are found in nature as possible. This means eating plant-based foods more often and choosing highly-processed foods less often. You may also choose to include non-processed lean meats, poultry and/or dairy. This style of eating is naturally low in saturated and trans fats, salt and added sugar and rich in wholegrains, fibre, antioxidants and unsaturated fats.

Everyone should aim for a well balanced diet. The best way to understand it is to think of foods in the following food groups.



Vegetables and Fruit



This is one of the most important diet habits. Vegetables and fruits are delicious, convenient and packed with nutrients (antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and fibre) that help protect against heart disease, stroke, Type 2 Diabetes, and some cancers. They also help you maintain a healthy weight by keeping you full longer.

Tips to add colour to every meal and snack:

- Pack portable, easy-to-eat fruits and veggies in your work or school bag and avoid vending machine temptations.
- Have a meatless meal once a week. Think vegetable lasagne, portabella mushroom 'burgers' or grilled veggie kebabs. Try adding spinach, capsicums or mushrooms into scrambled eggs and omelettes.
- Fill out a sandwich with fruits and veggies. Try sliced or shredded vegetables like beets, carrots, celery, cucumbers, onions, peppers, radishes, tomatoes and zucchini and/or sliced fruits like apple, avocado and pear.
- Keep frozen and canned fruits and vegetables on hand for when you need to throw together a meal in a hurry or as a way to boost soups and stews with extra nourishment. Compare food labels and choose items without too much sodium or added sugars.
- When eating out, ask if you can substitute a side salad for chips and other less-healthy sides.
- Top yogurt, oatmeal and cereal with berries or sliced fruit.

- Enjoy fruit for dessert most days. For example, make fruit popsicles by freezing 100 percent juice or pureed fruit in an ice tray or popsicle mold. Limit traditional sugar-sweetened desserts to special occasions.
- For snack time, keep fresh fruit and pre-chopped or no-chop veggies (such as baby carrots, cherry tomatoes and sugar snap peas) on hand instead of less-healthy snacks if they're readily available.
- Make it fun for kids to try new fruits and veggies. Let them pick out a new fruit or vegetable in the grocery store each week, and figure out together how to cook or prepare it. You might end up expanding your palate as well!
- Eat the rainbow: A fun and tasty way to make sure your family is eating a good variety of fruits and vegetables is to eat as many different colours as you can each day - the different colours offer different healthy nutrients.

Choose Wholegrains



Wholegrain foods include wheat, corn (maize), rice, barley, oats, rye, millet and quinoa. These grains can be eaten whole or processed into products like couscous (wheat) and polenta (maize). They are prepared using the entire grain. Wholegrain foods have more of their nutrients, like protein, B vitamins, vitamin E, and healthy fats to help you stay healthy and full longer. They're also rich in dietary fibre which is important for bowel health and helps improve cholesterol and glucose levels. Choose wholegrain options instead of processed or refined grains (e.g. white bread, white flour, sugar, bakery items, low-fibre cereals). Refined

grains have been heavily processed and contain fewer nutrients, less naturally occurring fibre, and their energy is used up quickly. Most adults should aim for four to six serves of wholegrains a day.

What is one serving of wholegrains?

- Wholegrain bread - **1 slice (40 g)**
- Wholegrain bread roll or flatbread - **1 medium (40 g)**
- Wholegrain rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa - **½ cup (75–120 g)**
- Cooked porridge - **½ cup (120 g)**
- Wheat cereal flakes - **2/3 cup (30 g)**
- Muesli - **¼ cup (30 g)**
- Crispbreads - **3 (35 g)**

Tips to eat more wholegrains

- Try a wholegrain or high fibre breakfast cereal like rolled oats, porridge or untoasted muesli.
- Swap white bread for wholemeal or wholegrain. Look for the words 'wholegrain' or 'wholemeal' on the label.
- Variety is the key to healthy eating. When planning your meals for the week, make sure you include a variety of foods. If you have pasta one night, go for brown rice or couscous another night.
- Watch your portion size. Rice and pasta can be easy to over-serve. For your main meal, keep to ½ - 1 cup (cooked) rice or pasta and load up on vegetables instead.
- Try brown rice and wholemeal pasta.

Choose Healthy Protein Foods



When choosing protein foods, variety is the key. Foods rich in protein include fish and seafood, legumes (such as beans and lentils), nuts, seeds, eggs, tofu, lean meat and poultry. These foods are a good source of protein, which the body uses for growth and repair. They also supply iron, zinc and B vitamins to help support a healthy heart. Most people should aim for 1-3 portions per day. Opt for low-fat options, such as lean meats and other plant based sources with high levels of protein. Legumes, for example, can pack about 16 grams of protein per cup and are a low-fat and inexpensive alternative to meat.

Tips for including protein foods

- Choose lean meat and skinless poultry trimmed of any visible fat, and include fish or seafood 2–3 times a week.
- Avoid processed meats like sausages and deli meats like salami.
- Eggs make great lunchbox fillers for adults and children and are very portable when hard boiled.
- Add legumes to soups, casseroles, salads and meat sauces to extend the meal and add extra texture and flavour. This means you can use less meat, which makes the dish lower in fat and cheaper.
- Include a handful (30 g) of nuts every day. Include as a snack or add to your favourite stir fry or breakfast cereal.

Milk, Yoghurt and Cheese



These foods are a good source of calcium, protein and some carbohydrate. Calcium is important for bone health. Opting for the reduced fat varieties is recommended if you have high blood cholesterol or are trying to lower your kilojoule intake. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend 2-4 serves of reduced-fat milk, cheese and yoghurt each day for most people over 2 years old.

Tips for including milk, yoghurt and cheese in your diet:

- Enjoy a bowl of wholegrain breakfast cereal or oats with unflavoured yoghurt or milk, fruit, nuts and seeds to start your day.
- Include unflavoured yoghurt or evaporated milk instead of cream or butter when cooking soups and curries to add a creamy texture. Add the yoghurt or milk at the end of the cooking process so it doesn't split.
- Butter, cream and ice cream are not part of a heart healthy eating pattern and should only be eaten occasionally.

ONE SERVE OF DAIRY IS EQUIVALENT TO:

	OR		OR		OR	
milk 1 cup (250 ml)		cheese 2 slices (40 g)		yoghurt 3/4 cup (200 g)		ricotta 1/2 cup (120 g)

It's recommended that more than 50% of intake from dairy foods is reduced-fat varieties.

* 1 cup (250 ml) soy beverage or beverages made from rice or other cereals which contain at least 100 mg calcium per 100 ml.

Healthy Fats



Unsaturated Fats

Nuts, seeds, avocado, olives and healthy oils (other than palm and coconut oil) contain heart healthy poly- and mono-unsaturated fats (omega-3 and omega-6) that help to reduce 'bad' cholesterol (LDL) and increase 'good' cholesterol (HDL). Unrefined oils, or those which are called 'cold-pressed' or 'extra virgin', have undergone very little processing. Therefore these oils have higher levels of many beneficial compounds, such as antioxidants.

Monounsaturated Fat Examples:

- avocados
- almonds, cashews and peanuts
- cooking oils made from plants or seeds like canola, olive, peanut, soybean, rice bran, sesame and sunflower oils.

Polyunsaturated Fat Examples (both omega-3 and omega-6):

- fish, particularly oily fish (tuna, salmon, sardines and blue mackerel)
- tahini (sesame seed spread)
- linseed (flaxseed) and chia seeds

- soybean, sunflower, safflower, and canola oil, and margarine spreads made from these oils
- pine nuts, walnuts and Brazil nuts.

Saturated Fat

Eating a lot of saturated fat increases your blood cholesterol, in particular, the bad (LDL) cholesterol which raises the risk of heart disease. Saturated fat can be found in the visible fat you can see on meat and chicken, processed foods like biscuits, pastries and takeaway foods that have used ingredients like butter, palm oil (often simply called vegetable oil), cheese and meat. While butter may be seen as a more 'natural' option than margarine spread it actually contains around 50% saturated fat and 4% trans fat. Coconut oil has also been linked to health claims such as being a 'superfood' but scientific evidence has found that it raises your total cholesterol (both good 'HDL' and bad 'LDL') and it contains 92% saturated fat. The research suggests coconut oil may be better than butter in how it affects blood cholesterol, but it's not as good as other plant oils like olive and canola oil.

Trans Fats

Eating less manufactured trans fats means eating less processed foods. Trans fats are found most commonly in foods containing partially hydrogenated oils and in some bakery and pastry products, popcorn, potato crisps, takeaway foods, and breakfast bars. These types of fat raise the 'bad' cholesterol and your risk of heart disease.

Make the Healthy Fat Choice, the Easy Choice with these Tips:

- Include a handful of nuts (30g) every day or two tablespoons of peanut butter. Add them to salads, yoghurt, or your morning cereal. Choose unsalted, dry roasted or raw varieties.
- Eat less bought cakes, biscuits and pastries. Also limit takeaway food like hamburgers, pizza and hot chips. These foods, as a whole group, are the leading contributors to saturated and trans fat intake.

- On packaged food products in the supermarket, check the ingredients list for ‘hydrogenated oils’ or ‘partially hydrogenated vegetable oils’ and avoid foods with these as they contain added trans fat.
- Trim all the fat you can see off meat, and remove skin from chicken.
- Avoid processed or deli meats (e.g. sausages and salami).
- Swap butter for a margarine spread made from canola, sunflower, olive or dairy blends. If you don’t like margarine, use nut butters, avocado or tahini as a spread.
- Eat fish, particularly oily fish, instead of meat 2-3 times a week, and choose legume or bean-based meals twice a week.
- Aim to include foods that provide at least 1 gram of plant-sourced omega-3 every day. For people who don’t eat fish, omega-3 capsules or liquids can also help supplement your intake.
- Choose a healthier oil for cooking. For salad dressings and low temperature cooking, choose olive oils, peanut, canola, safflower, sunflower, avocado or sesame oil. For high temperature cooking especially frying, choose olive oil or high oleic canola oil. These types of oils are more stable at high temperatures. Store oils away from direct light and heat and don’t re-use oils that have been heated.

Drinks



Take a minute and think about what you drink in a typical day. Unless you are a true water lover, you may be getting some extra, unneeded calories through sweetened soft drinks, energy and sports drinks and alcohol. Some research suggests that when you drink calories,

you aren't as satisfied as when you eat the same amount of calories in food which potentially can lead to weight gain.

Water

Your body is composed of about 60% water which makes drinking it essential to good health. Keeping hydrated helps flush out toxins, improve skin complexion, promotes weight loss, increases energy levels and more. As a general rule, it is recommended to drink about 2 litres a day. Plain tap water is the best choice as it's cheap and has no kilojoules but it's also fine to have these drinks in moderation: plain soda water, unflavoured milk, herbal tea and tea or coffee. While eating your fruits and vegetables whole is ideal, it's also ok to have a small glass (125 ml or about ½ cup) of 98% fruit or vegetable juice sometimes. Try adding sparkling or still water to make the drink last longer.

Sugary Drinks

Cut back or avoid, if possible, sugary drinks like: soft drinks, cordial, fruit drinks (less than 98% fruit) and sports and energy drinks. These drinks are very high in sugar and kilojoules and provide little, if any, nutritional value.

Tips to Quench your Thirst the Healthy Way:

- Carry a refillable water bottle or keep a cup at your desk to make water the easy choice.
- Keep water in the fridge so you can have cold water to drink whenever you're thirsty.
- Try adding chopped fresh fruit or vegetables to cold still or sparkling water for a refreshing drink, such as mint, lemon or cucumber.

Alcohol

If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. The Australian Guidelines recommend healthy adults should drink no more than 2 standard drinks on any day and a max of 4 standard drinks on a single occasion. Drinking alcohol above these recommendations increase the risk

of heart disease and stroke as it can cause high blood pressure and raises triglyceride levels (a type of bad fat in the blood). As alcohol is high in calories and sugars, it can also lead to weight gain and an increased risk of diabetes. Alcohol is not recommended in the following conditions:

- Pregnancy, or planning pregnancy
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Previous haemorrhagic stroke
- Medications that interact with alcohol
- Depression
- Chronic active liver disease.

If you think you may be drinking too much, or know someone who has a drinking problem talk to your doctor or practice nurse. Helpful information can also be found on these websites:

<https://drinkwise.org.au/>

<https://alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Campaigns>

Each of these is 1 standard drink



Sparkling wine	Wine	Light beer	Regular beer	Fortified wine	Spirits
100 mL	100 mL	425 mL	285 mL	60 mL	30 mL
13% alc/vol	13% alc/vol	2.7% alc/vol	4.9% alc/vol	20% alc/vol	40% alc/vol

Pre-mixed spirits have between 1.5 – 2.4 standard drinks each

Content Sources:

1. The Heart Foundation. *Healthy Eating*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating>.
2. National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.