

Heart-Healthy Diet Checklist

A heart-friendly eating checklist focused on less sodium and saturated fat, more fiber, omega-3 and fruit and vegetables.

Eat More Fruit & Vegetables

- Fill at least half your plate with vegetables and fruit
- Aim for a variety of colors across the week
- Choose fresh, frozen or no-salt-added canned produce
- Add an extra serving of veg to soups, pasta and stir-fries
- Snack on fruit or raw veg instead of chips

Produce adds fiber, potassium and antioxidants with little sodium.

Limit Sodium

- Cook more meals at home so you control the salt
- Compare labels and choose lower-sodium products
- Rinse canned beans and vegetables to cut sodium
- Season with herbs, spices, citrus and vinegar instead of salt
- Go easy on cured and processed meats, broths and sauces

Most dietary sodium comes from packaged and restaurant foods.

Choose Healthy Fats

- Cook with olive or canola oil instead of butter
- Eat oily fish like salmon, mackerel or sardines once or twice a week
- Snack on unsalted nuts and add seeds to meals
- Limit fatty and processed meats and full-fat dairy
- Avoid fried and packaged foods with artificial trans fats

Unsaturated fats and omega-3s support heart health.

Pick High-Fiber Whole Grains & Legumes

- Choose whole-grain bread, pasta and cereals
- Start the day with oats or another whole grain
- Swap white rice for brown rice, quinoa or barley
- Include beans, lentils or chickpeas several times a week
- Make whole grain the first ingredient on labels

Soluble fiber from oats and beans can help lower cholesterol.

Cut Added Sugar & Limit Alcohol

- Swap sugary drinks for water or unsweetened options
- Keep desserts and pastries as occasional treats
- Watch for added sugar in sauces, snacks and cereals
- Limit alcohol, or avoid it, in line with your provider's advice
- Choose plain yogurt and add your own fruit

Excess added sugar and alcohol can affect heart health and weight.

Lasting Heart-Healthy Habits

- Watch portion sizes and eat to comfortable fullness
- Cook in batches so healthy meals are ready on busy days

Pair eating habits with regular physical activity

Use this printable checklist to stay consistent

Important: this is general information, not medical or dietary advice

Consult your doctor or a registered dietitian for a heart-health plan suited to you.