

Is your plate heart-healthy?

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a heart-healthy lifestyle—one that includes heart-healthy eating—can lower your risk of heart disease and may prevent it from getting worse.¹

Heart disease occurs when the arteries become hardened or narrow due to plaque buildup. Having high blood pressure and high cholesterol increases your risk of developing heart disease.¹



A heart-healthy diet is one that:

Includes the right types of fats

There are three main types of fats:

- Unsaturated fats
- Saturated fats
- Trans fats

Unsaturated fats may have heart-health benefits, but eating too much saturated and trans fats may increase your risk of certain conditions.²

Try to replace unhealthy fats with healthy ones by:³

- Using olive oil instead of butter or creamy salad dressings
- Putting avocado on your sandwich instead of mayonnaise
- Trading potato chips for nuts, olives or veggies with hummus
- Eating fish 2–3 times per week instead of red meat

Limits salt

Many Americans consume too much sodium,⁴ and heart health is often affected.⁵

These tips may help you reduce sodium:⁶

- Avoid processed and restaurant foods
- Look for low-sodium versions
- Read labels to compare sodium
- Use herbs and seasonings instead of salt
- Be patient—your taste buds need time to adjust

Limits added sugars	<p>Limiting added sugars can help you focus on nutrient-rich foods and stay within your calorie limits.</p> <p>The American Heart Association recommends the following:⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women—Consume no more than 6 teaspoons of added sugars per day • Men—Consume no more than 9 teaspoons of added sugars per day <p>To reduce added sugars, avoid sweetened drinks, sugary snacks and sweets.⁸</p>
Focuses on fiber	<p>The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends getting at least 5–10 grams of soluble fiber per day.⁹</p> <p>Consuming soluble fiber helps lower LDL cholesterol. During digestion, it dissolves into a gel-like substance that helps block cholesterol and fats from being absorbed.⁹</p> <p>Examples include oat bran and oatmeal, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, peas and some fruits and vegetables.</p>
Emphasizes fruits and vegetables	<p>A diet rich in fruits and vegetables can have tremendous health benefits—especially for your heart.¹⁰</p> <p>To get more fruits and vegetables in your diet, try the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep fruit out where you can see it • Try to buy fresh when possible • Add them to your favorite meals and snacks • Try new varieties
Balances portion sizes	<p>How much you eat may be just as important as what you eat!¹¹ Follow these tips for practicing portion control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure your foods • Use the size of your hand as a guide • Use a small plate or bowl • Make your own single-serving packs • Listen to your hunger cues

Notes _____

References

- ¹National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
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http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/The-Effects-of-Excess-Sodium-Infographic_UCM_454384_SubHomePage.jsp#
- ⁵Harvard School of Public Health
<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/salt-and-sodium/sodium-health-risks-and-disease/>
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- ⁷American Heart Association
<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sugar/added-sugars>
- ⁸National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
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- ⁹National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
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- ¹⁰Harvard School of Public Health
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/vegetables-and-fruits/#ref11>
- ¹¹Mayo Clinic
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-healthy-diet/>

This is for informational purposes only and does not replace treatment or advice from a healthcare professional. If you have questions, please talk with your doctor. Talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise program or making any changes to your diet.