

Dietary advice to keep your heart healthy



Food group	Best choice	Occasionally	Best avoided
BREAD, OTHER CEREALS & POTATOES Aim to base all meals on a good sized serving from this group. Have bread or bread products as healthy snacks.	Wholegrain varieties of bread, chapatti without fat, pasta, rice, noodles. Wholegrain breakfast cereals. Oats. Couscous. Potatoes, sweet potatoes, yam & plantain.	Naan bread. Mashed potatoes.	Garlic bread, croissants, waffles. Deep fried chips. Sugar coated breakfast cereals. Roast potatoes.
FRUIT & VEGETABLES Eat plenty: at least 5 or more portions every day.	Fresh, frozen, fruit & vegetables. Dried fruit. Canned fruit in natural juice.	Canned fruit in syrup (drain the syrup). Orange juice, grapefruit juice.	Vegetables fried in batter (e.g. onion rings). Vegetables in creamy sauce. Apple juice, pineapple juice.
MEAT, FISH & ALTERNATIVES Eat a moderate amount (1-2 portions a day). Vary by choosing lean meat, 2-3 times a week. On the other days choose fish or non-meat alternatives. Try to eat fish at least twice a week, incl. one portion of oily fish. A portion of fish (or meat) is an amount the size of a pack of playing cards. A portion of eggs is 2 eggs. A portion of nuts & seeds is 2 tablespoons. A portion of cooked beans, peas & lentils is 4 cooked tablespoons.	Lean pork, ham, lamb, beef. Extra lean minced beef. Liver & kidney. Chicken & turkey without skin. Veal, venison, rabbit, game. All fish – cod, plaice, sole, whiting, canned tuna & shellfish. Oily fish – (fresh & canned) mackerel, sardines, pilchards, salmon, trout, herrings & fresh tuna. Eggs – on average 3 eggs a week fit in a varied diet. All nuts especially almonds, walnuts, linseed (flaxseed), pumpkin, sesame, sunflower seeds. Baked beans, sweetcorn, kidney beans, chick peas, lentils, peas. Rinse if canned in salt/sugar. Soya mince, soya beans, tofu, Mycoprotein sausages/burgers.	Lean bacon, reduced fat sausages, burgers, meatballs. Read the labels, choose lowest fat version. Reduced fat coconut milk.	Fatty cuts of meat – belly of pork, breast of lamb, duck, goose. Streaky bacon, sausages & sausage rolls, pies, pasties, pork pies. Chicken nuggets. Fish in rich creamy or cheesy sauces. Hollandaise, lobster sauce, seafood cocktail sauce. Fried fish in batter. Coconut cream. Roasted nuts in oil & salt.
MILK/DAIRY FOODS & ALTERNATIVES Aim to have 2-3 portions a day in drinks or in meals/snacks. A portion is a medium glass of milk (200ml). A portion is a small pot of yogurt or 'light' fromage frais (150g). A portion is a matchbox of medium fat cheese (40g) or 1/2 small matchbox of high fat cheese (20g) or 2 matchboxes of 'light' cheese spread (80g) or a large pot of cottage cheese (200g).	Skimmed, skimmed milk with plant sterols/stanols. Soya milk (with added calcium & vitamins). Low fat, fat-free or 'light' fruit yogurts. Yogurts & mini health drink (with plant sterols/stanols). Reduced fat cheese e.g. cottage, curd cheese, half-fat Edam, 'extra light' cheese spread.	Semi-skimmed milk. Reduced fat evaporated milk. (Greek) half-fat yogurt. Medium fat cheese e.g. half-fat cheddar, mozzarella, feta, 'light' cheese spread, quark.	Full fat milk. Sheep's, goat's milk. Evaporated or condensed milk. Clotted, double, whipping, soured, single cream. Creme fraiche. (Greek) yogurt, thick & creamy yogurt. High fat cheese e.g. cream cheese, mascarpone, brie, camembert, stilton, edam, parmesan, full fat cheese spread.
OILS & FATS Small amounts of fats are essential in the diet. When considering fats, remember, not all fats are equal. Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats in the diet has been shown to lower cholesterol.* Use saturated fats as little as possible.	Unsaturated soft spreads, spreads with plant sterols/stanols. Liquid margarine. Vegetable oils high in unsaturated fat such as rapeseed, sunflower, olive oil.		Butter, lard, suet, dripping, ghee, hard margarine high in saturated fats. Coconut oil.
WATER	(Mineral) water. Coffee & tea.		

WHOLEGRAINS

People with a healthy heart tend to eat more wholegrain foods as part of a healthy lifestyle. Plant sterols/stanols** and beta-glucan*** as present in oats/barley help to lower cholesterol* as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

FRUIT & VEGETABLES

A portion (80g) of fruit and vegetables is:
 • 1 cereal bowl of mixed salad • 1 piece of fruit – e.g. 1 apple • 2 pieces of small fruit – e.g. 2 tangerines • 1 handful of grapes, strawberries • 1 heaped tablespoon dried fruit • 3 tablespoons vegetables or fresh fruit salad • 1 medium glass of fruit juice (150ml) (can only count as one portion each day).

OILY FISH

Oily fish are rich in omega 3 fatty acids which are especially good for heart health. Try to eat fish at least twice a week, incl. one portion of oily fish.
 1 portion = 140g of fish.

ALCOHOL

Keep to sensible limits: No more than 1 glass daily for women and no more than 2 glasses for men.



*High cholesterol is a risk factor in the development of coronary heart disease. As coronary heart disease has multiple risk factors, more than one may need to be improved to reduce overall risk.

**A daily intake of 1.5-3g plant sterols can lower cholesterol in 2-3 weeks as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle including plenty of fruit and vegetables.

***A daily intake of 3g beta-glucan can lower cholesterol.