

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 fat may have heart-health benefits, but eating too much saturated and trans fat 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

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- ¹¹Mayo Clinic
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-healthy-diet/>

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