

# Quick Information for Your Health

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

## Eating for a Healthy Heart



### Eat Healthy to Help Prevent Heart Disease

What kills Americans most? Heart disease. It's the No.1 cause of death in this country.

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is to choose foods carefully. For a healthy heart, eat:

- less fat
- less sodium
- fewer calories
- more fiber.

### Eat less FAT

Some fats are more likely to cause heart disease—saturated fats and trans fats. These fats are usually found in foods from animals, such as meat, milk, cheese, and butter. They also are found in foods with palm and coconut oils. Eat less of these foods.

### Eat less SODIUM

Eating less sodium can help lower some people's blood pressure. This can help reduce the risk of heart disease.



Sodium is something we need in our diets, but most of us eat too much of it. Much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food at the table or that food companies add to their foods. So, avoid adding salt to foods at the table.

### Eat fewer CALORIES

When we eat more calories than we need, we gain weight. Being overweight can cause heart disease. When we eat fewer calories than we need, we lose weight.

### Eat more FIBER

Eating fiber from fruits, vegetables, and grains may help lower your chances of getting heart disease.



### Diet Tips for a Healthy Heart

- Eat a diet low in saturated fat, especially animal fats and palm and coconut oils.
- Add foods to your diet that are high in monounsaturated fats, such as olive oil, canola oil, and seafood.
- Eat foods containing polyunsaturated fats found in plants and seafood. Safflower oil and corn oil are high in polyunsaturated fats.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- Maintain or improve your weight.
- Eat plenty of grain products, fruits, and vegetables.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 260	Calories from Fat 120
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 13g	<b>20%</b>
Saturated Fat 5g	<b>25%</b>
Trans Fat 2g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 660mg	<b>28%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram: Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

## Read the Food Label

The food label can help you eat less fat and sodium, fewer calories, and more fiber.

Look for certain words on food labels. The words can help you spot foods that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease. The FDA has set rules on how these words can be used. So, if the label says “low-fat,” the food must be low in fat.

Look at the side or back of the package. Here, you will find “Nutrition Facts.” Look for these words:

- Total fat
- Saturated fat
- Cholesterol
- Sodium.

Look at the % Daily Value listed next to each term. If it is 5% or less for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, the food is low in these nutrients.

That’s good. It means the food fits in with a diet that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease.



Instead of ...	Do this ...
whole or 2 percent milk, and cream	use 1 percent or skim milk
fried foods	eat baked, steamed, boiled, broiled, or microwaved foods
lard, butter, palm, and coconut oils	cook with unsaturated vegetable oils, such as corn, olive, canola, safflower, sesame, soybean, sunflower, or peanut
fatty cuts of meat, such as prime rib	eat lean cuts of meat or cut off the fatty parts
one whole egg in recipes	use two egg whites
sour cream and mayonnaise	use plain low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, or low-fat or “light” sour cream
sauces, butter, and salt	season vegetables with herbs and spices
regular hard and processed cheeses	eat low-fat, low-sodium cheeses
salted potato chips and other snacks	choose low-fat, unsalted tortilla and potato chips and unsalted pretzels and popcorn



**Eat a variety  
of foods.**

### **Tips for Losing Weight**

- Eat smaller portions.
- Avoid second helpings.
- Eat less fat by staying away from fried foods, rich desserts, and chocolate candy. Foods with a lot of fat have a lot of calories.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.

### **Eating for a Healthy Heart**

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is through your diet.

#### **Remember:**

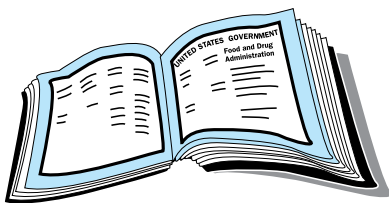
- Eat less fat and sodium.
- Reduce your calories if you're overweight.
- Eat more fiber.
- Eat plenty of bread, rice, and cereal. Also eat lots of vegetables and fruit.
- If you drink beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

### **Some Other Things You Can Do**

Ask your doctor to check your cholesterol level. This is done with a blood test. The test will show the amount of cholesterol in your blood with a number. Below 200 is good. The test will also show the amount of "good" and "bad" cholesterol. Your doctor can tell you more about what these numbers mean.

If your cholesterol is high, your doctor may suggest diet changes, exercise, or drugs to bring it down.

Regular exercise—such as walking, swimming, or gardening—can help you keep your weight and cholesterol down.



### **For More Information**

If you have questions, you can call your nearest FDA office. Look for the number in the blue pages of the phone book.

Or call the FDA's toll-free Food Information line at (888) SAFEFOOD (723-3366).

Or look for the FDA on the Internet at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

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The Food and Drug Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that makes sure that foods are safe, wholesome, and honestly labeled.

FDA05-1110C