



Get the good eating habit



Key points to remember about healthy eating

- Enjoy a wide variety of foods.
- Eat more wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and legumes.
- Choose healthier fats.
- Avoid adding salt.
- Snack wisely.
- Limit your alcohol intake.

Why do I need 'the good eating habit'?

Healthy eating and drinking is an important part of looking after your health and reducing your risk of heart problems.

Enjoying a variety of foods will give you the energy and nutrients that you need to stay healthy.

How do I change what I eat?

Changing what you eat can be a lot easier than you think. Here are some tips to help you to make changes and stick to them.

- **Make a list**

Write down all the changes that you think you can make and place this list somewhere handy, such as on your fridge.

- **Start small**

Make one or two changes to start with. For example, try reduced fat milk instead of full fat milk. When you are comfortable with one change, make another.

- **Rally support**

Tell your friends and family about the changes you are making and ask for their support. You could even encourage them to join you.

What is 'healthy eating'?

Enjoy a wide variety of foods

Eat a variety of foods, including:

- vegetables
- wholegrains
- lean meats
- oily fish
- fruit
- reduced fat dairy
- vegetable and seed oils.



Remember to also include nuts, seeds and legumes.

Eat more wholegrains, vegetables, fruit and legumes

Make plant-based foods the main part of each meal. Include vegetables, wholegrains, fruit, nuts and seeds every day.

- Include five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit every day.
- Choose wholegrain breads and cereals, and include pasta, noodles and rice.
- Include legumes and pulses in at least two meals a week. Legumes and pulses include rinsed canned beans (e.g. baked beans, kidney beans and three bean mix), dried peas (e.g. split peas), dried beans (e.g. butter beans and broad beans), chickpeas or lentils.



Choose healthier fats

Fats are an important part of a healthy balanced diet and you shouldn't try to exclude them. However, the **type** of fats that you include is really important. Choosing the healthier unsaturated fats instead of saturated and trans fats will reduce your risk of coronary heart disease – and can be done more easily than you might think.

- Choose from a variety of vegetable and seed oils when you are preparing food. Healthier choices include canola, sunflower, soybean, olive, sesame and peanut oils.
- Replace butter with spreads such as avocado, nut butter or tahini. If you use margarine make sure it is made from canola, sunflower or olive oil.
- Make your own healthy salad dressing by mixing healthy oils (such as olive oil) with balsamic vinegar or lemon juice in a small bowl, and drizzling over your salad or vegetables.



- Eat two to three serves of oily fish a week. A serving size of fish is 150 grams or approximately the size of your whole hand.



- Select lean meat and poultry (meat trimmed of all visible fat and chicken without skin). Avoid processed meats (e.g. sausages) and deli meats (e.g. salami).
- Plan your meals ahead to help you stay away from take away foods such as pastries, pies, pizza, burgers and chips. Healthier take-away choices include sushi or sashimi, Asian stir-fries, tomato-based pasta dishes, grilled fish, chicken and lean meat.

Eggs

The saturated and trans fat that we eat have more impact on our blood cholesterol levels than the cholesterol in foods. Therefore it is alright to include eggs as part of a healthy balanced diet.



- A healthy balanced diet can include a serve of eggs (two eggs) in two to three meals a week.

Dairy foods

An easy way to reduce your saturated and trans fat intake is to choose reduced fat dairy foods every day.

- Choose reduced fat unflavoured milk and yoghurt.
- Include small portions of cheese (one to two slices or 20–40 grams) up to four times a week. Lower fat cheeses, such as light tasty cheddar, ricotta, cottage and light mozzarella, are healthier choices.



Avoid adding salt

Most of us use much more salt than we need to. Eating less salt can help us prevent high blood pressure.



- Use herbs and spices to flavour foods instead of salt.
- Make core foods (e.g. vegetables, fruit, wholegrains) the main part of your diet. These foods are naturally low in salt.
- When shopping choose foods labelled 'no added salt', 'low salt' or 'salt reduced' where possible.

Snack wisely

Everyone likes a snack sometimes. However, many snacks are high in saturated and trans fat, sugar and salt. To stay healthy, it's important that you choose the right kind of snack foods.

- Healthy snacks include vegetable sticks with hummus, a piece of fresh fruit, a handful of dried fruit, a pot of reduced fat unflavoured yoghurt or a handful (30 grams) of plain, unsalted nuts.
- These healthy snacks are not only good for your heart health but will also help you to avoid unhealthy choices such as cakes, biscuits, pastries and fried foods.

Limit your alcohol intake

Alcoholic drinks are high in energy (kilojoules) and provide no important nutrients. Drinking too much alcohol increases your risk of high blood pressure, coronary heart disease and stroke, and may cause other health problems. Healthy men and women should limit their intake to two standard drinks per day.

- Drink water or plain mineral water to quench your thirst before having an alcoholic drink.

- Alternate a glass of alcohol with water or plain mineral water.
- Where appropriate, mix your alcoholic drink with plain mineral water or soda water.
- Use only half-measures of spirits.
- Choose a low alcohol or light beer.
- Always have water available at the table, whether you are dining out or at home.
- Drink slowly.
- Drink from smaller glasses.

Remember

Healthy eating is about enjoying a variety of healthy food choices.

What else can I do to look after my heart?

Enjoying healthy eating is just one important part of looking after your health and reducing your risk of heart problems. Other important things that you need to do are to:

- be smoke-free
- be physically active
- control your blood pressure and cholesterol
- achieve and maintain a healthy body weight
- maintain your psychological and social health
- take your medicines as prescribed.

If you have diabetes, you should aim to maintain your blood glucose levels within the normal non-diabetic range and follow individual advice from your doctor or accredited diabetes educator.



For heart health information,
please contact us
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heartfoundation.org.au



If you need an interpreter,
call TIS National on 131 450.

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