

# Diet Recommendations for Heart Health



**To keep your heart healthy, one should adopt a healthy lifestyle. Do not smoke. Cut down on or quit drinking completely. Do regular physical activities and keep a positive mindset, learn to manage stress and find ways to relax. Also, having healthy eating habits and maintaining an optimal body weight are just as important. Healthy eating habits include having a balanced diet and limiting foods that can affect heart health.**



# I. A balanced diet

Having a balanced diet means to eat according to the recommendations of the Healthy Eating Food Pyramid. Grains should make up the bulk of our daily diet, along with more vegetables and fruits. Eat moderate amount of meat, fish, eggs and alternatives such as dried beans, and milk and alternatives, such as calcium-fortified soy milk. Eat the least amount of foods that are high in fat/oil, sodium (salt) and sugar.

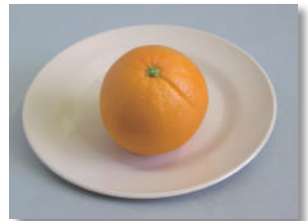


## (1) Eat more vegetables and fruits

- Vegetables and fruits are rich in vitamins, minerals, and dietary fibre.
- It is better to choose different colours and varieties of vegetables (e.g. Chinese flowering cabbage, broccoli, cabbage, spinach, carrot, eggplant, etc) and fruits (e.g. oranges, apples, papayas, kiwifruit, bananas, pitahayas, etc).

### 2 plus 3 every day

- Eat at least 2 servings of fruits and 3 servings of vegetables every day.
- 1 serving of fruits equals: 1 medium-sized fruit (e.g. an orange or pear) or half a bowl of fruit pieces (e.g. papaya or watermelon)
- 1 serving of vegetables equals: half a bowl of cooked vegetables (e.g. spinach or zucchini)



Note: 1 bowl = 250-300 mL

(2)

## Choose more fibre-rich foods

- Eating foods rich in soluble fibre helps to reduce the level of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (often known as “bad cholesterol”) and prevent heart disease.
- Rich sources of soluble fibre include vegetables, fruits, oatmeal, and dried beans such as soy beans and red beans.
- Fruit juice is low in dietary fibre and should not be considered as a major source of fibre.



(3)

## Choose lean meat, dried beans, and eat more fish

- Choose lean meat and skinless poultry, and pick the non-deep-fried bean products.
- Choose fishes that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, tuna, sardines, and sole. However, avoid using high-fat cooking methods such as pan-frying and deep-frying and avoid high-fat sauces such as cream sauce and mayonnaise.
- Eat moderate amount of meat, fish, egg and dried beans, which is around 5-6 taels per day. (1 tael of meat is about the size of a table tennis ball.)



## (4)

### Points to note while cooking

- Adopt low-fat cooking methods, such as steaming, stewing, boiling, simmering, and baking. Use a non-stick pan or sauté with little oil to limit the amount of cooking oil used.
- Cook with vegetable oils, such as canola oil, peanut oil, corn oil and olive oil suitable for cooking. Avoid using oils that are high in saturated fats such as lard, butter or chicken fat. Using a measuring spoon or oil kettle can help limit the amount of oil used.
- Use natural seasonings such as ginger, green onion and garlic to cut down the amount of salt intake, which can help control your blood pressure.
- Limit the use of sauces and condiments that are high in sugar content, such as sweet and sour sauce and granulated sugar, to reduce sugar intake and prevent obesity.





## EatSmart Restaurant Star+

To eat healthier while dining out, visit a restaurant that has joined the “EatSmart Restaurant Star+ Campaign” and choose dishes with one of the following logos on the menu.



### The “More Fruit and Vegetables” Logo

means that either fruit or vegetables are the sole ingredients of the dish or they occupy at least twice as much the amount of meat and its alternatives present in the dish.



### The “3 Less” Logo

means that the dish has less fat or oil, salt and sugar, meeting the “3 Less” requirement.



### The “EatSmart Promotion” Logo

means that a daily promotional offer is available for the “More Fruit and Vegetables” dishes or “3 Less” dishes.

## II. Limit intake of foods that can affect heart health

Foods that are high in saturated fat, trans fat, salt and cholesterol will affect heart health. Excessive intake of these kinds of food can increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

(1)

### Limit intake of foods that are higher in saturated fat

- Saturated fat is mainly found in foods of animal origin, for example, fatty meat or meat with skin e.g. roast pork, belly meat, chicken wings and chicken feet, as well as full-fat dairy products.
- In addition to animal fats such as lard and butter, certain foods of plant origin, such as coconut oil, palm oil and cocoa butter, are also high in saturated fats.



(2)

### Limit intake of foods that contain trans fat

- Most trans fats are formed when liquid plant oils are turned into solid fats during a process called hydrogenation.
- Many processed foods contain trans fats, such as French fries, potato chips, doughnuts, pastries, croissants, cakes, cream-filled biscuits and cookies.
- In order to limit the intake of trans fat, read the nutrition labels on prepackaged foods such as bread and biscuits, and choose the products lower in total fat and trans fat.



(3)

### Limit intake of foods that are higher in salt

- Frequent consumption of foods that are higher in salt may cause high blood pressure. Therefore, choose more fresh foods and eat less preserved, canned or heavily seasoned foods, such as pickled mustard-greens and roots, fermented soy beans, salted fish, sausages and luncheon meat.
- Use natural seasonings such as ginger, green onion, garlic, and pepper can help reduce the amount of salt intake.



(4)

### Limit intake of foods and beverages that are higher in sugar

- Excessive intake of sugary foods and beverages, coupled with insufficient physical activities, can lead to obesity and increase the risk of coronary heart disease.
- Reducing the intake of foods and beverages with added sugar, such as cakes, sweet biscuits and soft drinks, which can help maintain an optimal body weight.



## Recommendations on Cholesterol Intake

- Dietary cholesterol is found only in foods of animal origin, such as egg yolk, dairy products, seafood, meats, and poultry. Although there is not enough evidence to recommend the upper limit of daily cholesterol intake at present, cholesterol should be consumed as little as possible.
- For the sake of heart health, foods relatively high in cholesterol, e.g. goose liver and fish roe, should be consumed as little as possible.
- Foods which are both relatively high in cholesterol and in saturated fats, such as pork intestine, Portuguese egg tart and cheese cake, should be avoided.
- For a healthy person, foods which are relatively high in cholesterol but relatively low in saturated fats, such as eggs, prawns and squids, can be included as part of a balanced diet, as long as these types of food are consumed in moderation. They should be consumed alternately with other choices under the “Meat, Fish, Egg and Alternatives” food group.
- Individuals with dyslipidemia, particularly those with diabetes or at risk of heart failure, should seek professional advice from dietitians or other healthcare professionals for their limit of cholesterol intake.

**For any enquiries on the above information, please seek advice from dietitians or other healthcare professionals.**

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