

Heart Healthy Eating

A lot goes in to heart healthy living: sustainable eating habits, maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active, avoiding smoking, limiting alcohol, managing stress... All these habits can help lower your risk for heart disease and prevent heart disease from worsening. Diet is a factor that plays a particularly important role in heart health, helping you develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Does diet impact risk for heart disease?

Food choices can affect:

- Cholesterol
- Weight
- Blood Pressure
- Blood Sugar

What foods promote a healthy heart?

Foods Rich In:

- Vitamins, Minerals & Fibre

Foods Low In:

- Salt & Saturated Fat



Facts on Fat

- **Cholesterol** is a fat produced by the body and found in animal foods. Our bodies naturally make cholesterol, too.
- **Triglycerides** are fats used by cells and tissues for energy. When levels surpass our needs, triglycerides are stored as body fat.
- **Saturated fats** are found naturally in animal-based foods and oils, and tropical oils (ex. coconut and palm oil).
- **Trans fats** can be naturally- or artificially-occurring, found in hard margarine and some processed foods.

Saturated and trans fats raise cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

- **Unsaturated fats** are found in vegetable oils, soft margarines, fish, poultry, nuts, seeds, avocados, soy products, and more
 - **Omega-3 fats** are found in oily and cold water fish. Plant-based sources include walnuts, flaxseeds, tofu, and avocado.

Unsaturated fats can help lower cholesterol.

- When **cholesterol** and **triglyceride** levels are too high, they can lead to a build up of plaque in the blood vessels, which can restrict blood flow that can lead to heart attack or stroke.

Facts on Fibre

- **Fibre** can help lower cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease. It can help lower blood pressure, keep bowels healthy, improve blood sugars, and aid in weight management.

There are two types of fibre in the diet:

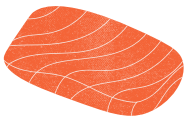
- **Soluble fibre**, found in whole grains such as oats and barley; legumes such as beans and lentils; peas; apples; strawberries; and citrus fruits. Soluble fibres act like a gel and absorb water.
- **Insoluble fibre**, found in the husks of whole grains; nuts and seeds; and the skins, leaves and seeds of vegetables and fruit.

Soluble fibre has the greatest impact on cholesterol levels

Super Foods



PSYLLIUM HUSK has eight times more soluble fibre than oat bran. Soluble fibre can help reduce levels of "bad" cholesterol (LDL-cholesterol) while protecting "good" cholesterol (HDL-cholesterol).



SALMON is a fatty fish and is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s are known to help reduce blood clots and are particularly effective in lowering triglycerides.



OLIVE OIL is an excellent source of monounsaturated fat. This type of fat can help lower bad cholesterol (LDL-cholesterol) while protecting "good" cholesterol (HDL-cholesterol).

Heart-Smart Action Plan

Cut Back on Fat

- Choose lean cuts of meat, skinless poultry & fish.
- Choose deli meals like roast beef, lean ham & turkey.
- Eat beans, peas & lentils.
- Eat an egg white rather than the whole egg.
- Aim for skim or 1% milk, and low-fat yogurt and cheese with 20% milk fat or less.
- Choose low-fat creamers and sour cream.
- Cook with unsaturated oils like olive, canola, avocado and vegetable oils
- Use low fat cooking methods like baking or broiling.
- Reduce high-fat convenience snacks and fast-foods.

Up your Fibre Intake

- Choose whole fruits and smoothies instead of juice.
- Snack on raw fruits and vegetables.
- Eat a rainbow of colours, from red to purple.
- Swap white breads and pastas for whole grain options
- Choose high-fibre cereals with at least 5 g of fibre per serving, like raisin bran, oatmeal and certain granolas.
- Increase your intake of plant-based proteins
- Add nuts and seeds to cereals and salad.
- Look for products that include "whole grain," "whole wheat," "oatmeal," "bran," or "rye" at the beginning of the ingredient list.

Increase Omega-3 Fats

- Aim to eat fish at least twice per week.
- Sprinkle flaxseed and walnuts on oatmeal.
- Add tofu to stir-fry.
- Snack on soybeans or soy nuts.
- Add avocado to salads, sandwiches, wraps, etc.
- Choose eggs that have added omega 3 fats.

