

# Taking Food to Heart

Eating a variety of healthy foods—and eating fewer foods that are high in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol—may help to lower the risk of heart disease.

Use this guide to help you decide which foods you should eat more of, which you should eat in moderation, and which you should avoid.

Remember to talk with your doctor about what foods may be right for you.

## MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, BEANS, EGGS, AND NUTS

1 to 3 servings per day (1 serving = 3 oz)



- Select lean or low-fat meat and poultry
- Choose fish that is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, trout, and herring
- Broil, grill, roast, poach, or boil instead of frying
- Eat more fish, beans, and peas instead of meat or poultry as a meal or as a side dish
- Choose nuts as snacks, on salads, or to replace meat or poultry in main dishes

## MILK, YOGURT, AND CHEESE

2 or more servings per day  
(1 serving = 1.5 oz cheese or 1 cup milk/yogurt)



- Choose milk, yogurt, and cheese products that are fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1% or 2%)
- If you are lactose-intolerant, try lactose-free and lower-lactose products, like hard cheese, yogurt, or lactose-free milk. You can also try a lactase dietary supplement to help with digestion
- If you are avoiding milk products, get your calcium from fortified juices, cereals, breads, or soy or rice beverages—or try canned fish, soy products, some kinds of beans, and dark leafy greens

## FATS AND OILS

1 to 2 servings per day (1 serving = 1 tbsp)



- Try to choose fats from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils
- Try to limit solid fats like butter, stick margarine, shortening, and lard
- Try to use fewer plant oils that are high in saturated fats, like coconut oil and palm kernel oil
- Cut down on eating foods that are high in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol, such as fried foods, to help lower the risk of heart disease

## BREAD, CEREALS, PASTA, AND RICE

6 to 11 servings per day  
(1 serving = 1 slice bread, 1/2 cup pasta/rice)



- Try to eat whole-grain bread, cereal, crackers, rice, or pasta—half of the grains you eat each day should be whole-grain
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to choose foods with a high Percent Daily Value of fiber
- Try to steer clear of foods with added sugars, fats, or oils—tip-offs are words in the ingredients like *sucrose*, *high-fructose corn syrup*, *molasses*, and *partially hydrogenated vegetable oils*

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

3 to 5 servings per day (1 serving = 1 cup)



- Choose more dark leafy greens and orange vegetables like squash and sweet potatoes
- Try to lower the amount of salt in your diet. Choose fresh vegetables instead of packaged or processed ones if possible
- Choose fruits that are high in potassium, like bananas, prunes, dried peaches and apricots (limited quantity), cantaloupe, and honeydew
- Cut down on fruit juices—they don't offer the benefits of dietary fiber that whole or cut-up fruit has, and they usually contain more sugar

## SNACKS

(in limited amount)



- Eat nuts and seeds—like sunflower seeds, almonds, and hazelnuts (filberts)
- Choose fat-free or low-fat yogurt, or pudding made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Try whole-grain snack chips, toasted oat cereal, or plain popcorn with no butter or salt
- Eat cut-up vegetables and fruits as a snack—or try whole grapes or berries

Adapted from USDA ChooseMyPlate.gov.