

Heart Healthy Eating

Following the healthy eating tips in this handout can help you lower your risk of heart disease.

Healthy weight

If you're at a healthy weight, try to stay there.

If you have extra weight, losing even 5–10% of your weight may help to lower your risk for heart disease and other diseases.

- For example, a 200 lb (91 kg) person would aim to lose 10–20 lbs (4.5–9 kg).
- A healthy weight loss is 1–2 lbs (0.5–1 kg) each week.

Eat lots of vegetables and fruit

Choose many kinds of vegetables and fruit everyday. Include dark green and orange vegetables like spinach and carrots.



Choose whole grains and high fibre foods

Eat foods higher in fibre, like whole grains, beans, peas, lentils, vegetables, and fruit.

Soluble fibre is heart healthy. Find it in cereals with psyllium, oat bran, oatmeal, dried peas, beans and lentils, barley, ground flax, apples, strawberries, and citrus fruits.

Eat fish at least 2 times each week

Eat fish high in omega-3 fats: salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, trout, and tuna. Choose fresh, frozen, or no salt added canned fish.

Use heart healthy fats every day

Use small amounts of healthy fats like the ones below (up to 2–3 Tbsp or 30–45 mL every day).

- olive, canola, peanut, sunflower oil
- soft margarines with 0 grams trans fat
- ground flax, whole chia seeds, or hemp seeds; add these to foods like yogurt or hot cereals
- small amounts of nuts like walnuts, almonds, pecans, or pistachios

Limit your intake of saturated fats

- Read labels to choose foods with less than 2 grams saturated fat in a serving.
- Choose lower fat dairy products (skim or 1% milk), leaner meats, dried peas, beans, and lentils, and tofu.

Avoid trans fats, if possible

Look for foods with 0 grams trans fat in the Nutrition Facts table on the food label.

Reduce your intake of foods and drinks with added sugar

- Limit sugar and sweets like honey, molasses, brown and white sugar, syrups, candies, chocolates, sweet desserts like pastries, and high-calorie baked goods.
- Reduce your intake of drinks with added sugar like regular soft drinks, sweetened teas and coffees, juices, and fruit flavoured drinks.

Choose and prepare foods with little or no added salt (sodium)

- Limit salty foods, and processed and packaged foods such as pickles, crackers, snack foods, deli meats, canned and dry soup, sauces, and condiments.
- Avoid shaking salt on food, and use little or no salt in cooking.

Limit the alcohol you drink

- If you use alcohol, follow Canada's Low Risk Alcohol Drinking guidelines: 2 or less drinks per day for women and 3 or less drinks per day for men.
- One drink of alcohol is:
 - 12 ounces (341 mL) of beer
 - 5 ounces (142 mL) of wine
 - 1½ ounces (43 mL) of liquor

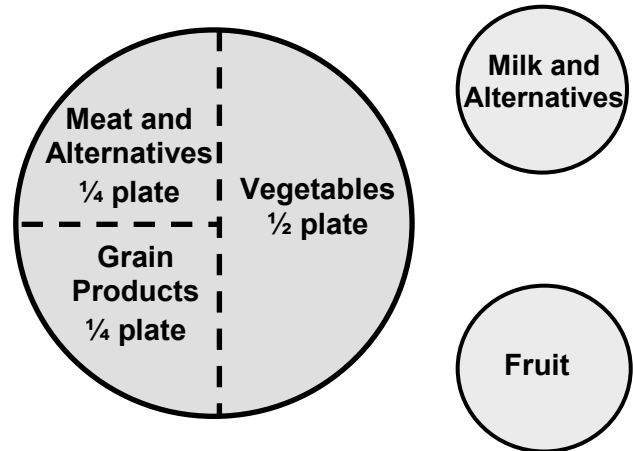
When you eat food prepared outside your home:

- Order small servings or share an order to help manage portions.
- Choose menu items that have been baked, boiled, steamed, grilled, or barbequed.
- Limit foods that are fried, deep-fried, crispy, sautéed, creamed, or in sauces.
- Choose milk, water, or sugar-free drinks.

Follow Canada's Food Guide

Plan your meals using Canada's Food Guide. Choose foods from each of the 4 food groups. For a copy of the food guide, visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide.

A healthy meal based on Canada's Food Guide looks like the one below:



Guide to healthy food choices

Use the food lists below to pick heart healthy choices from the 4 food groups for your meals and snacks.

Choose **less** of these foods:



= Foods high in salt (sodium)



= Foods high in sugar

Vegetables and Fruit

Examples of 1 serving:

- ½ cup (125 mL) fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables or fruit
- 1 cup (250 mL) raw, leafy vegetables
- 1 medium fruit
- ½ cup (125 mL) 100% pure fruit or vegetable juice
- ¼ cup (60 mL) dried fruit

Choose:

- vegetables and fruit, fresh or frozen
- fruit canned in water or juice with no added sugar
- soups, low sodium or salt-reduced
- fruit, dried



Not recommended:



- fruit canned or frozen in syrup
- vegetables, canned or pickled
- French fries and hash browns
- vegetables in sauces
- soups, regular store-bought

Grain Products

Examples of 1 serving:






- 30 g cold cereal
- 1 slice of bread (35 g)
- ½ pita, tortilla, muffin (35 g)
- ½ cup (125 mL) cooked pasta or rice
- ¾ cup (175 mL) hot cereal
- ½ hot dog, roll, or hamburger bun
- ½ bagel (45 g)
- 2 cups (500 mL) popcorn, popped

Choose:

- bread, whole grain
- hot cereals, such as oatmeal and oat bran
- cold cereals with 2 grams fibre or more per serving
- crackers with less than 3 grams of fat and 2 grams or more fibre per serving 
- pasta, couscous, rice, whole grain
- popcorn, air popped with no topping
- English muffins and bagels, whole grain (look for the lowest % Daily Value for sodium)
- quinoa, barley, bulgur, millet
- tortilla, naan, roti, pita, bannock, whole grain
- pancakes, whole grain
- rice cakes, plain or flavoured 



Not recommended:

- store-bought garlic bread, egg bread, cheese bread
- butter rolls, croissants, store-bought muffins 
- granola-type cereal, regular 
- chips: potato, taco, and nacho 
- noodle, rice, and sauce mixes 
- donuts, pies, cakes, Danishes, and streusels 






Milk and Alternatives

Examples of 1 serving:

- 1 cup (250 mL) milk
- ½ cup (125 mL) evaporated milk
- 1½ oz (50 g) cheese
- 1 cup (250 mL) fortified soy beverage
- ¾ cup (175 mL) yogurt
- ½ cup (125 mL) cottage cheese





M.F. = Milk Fat

Choose:

- milk, skim or 1%
- evaporated milk, skim
- buttermilk, fat-free or 1% M.F. 
- fortified soy beverage
- cheese with less than 20% M.F. 
- cottage cheese, fat free or 1% M.F. 
- yogurt, plain, fat free or 1% M.F.
- yogurt, flavoured, fat free or 1% M.F. 
- frozen yogurt, ice cream or soy frozen desserts, low fat or fat-free 



Not recommended:


- milk, 2% M.F. or homo (3.25% M.F.)
- evaporated milk, 2% M.F. or whole
- buttermilk, 3.25% M.F. 
- cheese with more than 20% M.F. 
- cottage cheese, 2% or 4% M.F. 
- ice cream, regular
- sweetened condensed milk 

Meat and Alternatives

Examples of 1 serving:





- 2½ oz (75 g) or ½ cup (125 mL) cooked lean meat, fish, or shellfish
- ¾ cup (175 mL) tofu
- ¾ cup (175 mL) cooked dried peas, beans, or lentils
- 2 eggs

Choose:

- fish like salmon, sardines, tuna, herring, mackerel and trout; fresh or canned with no salt added
- chicken and turkey, skinless
- beef, pork, lamb, and veal, lean
- ground beef, extra lean or lean
- shellfish including clams, oysters, lobster, crab, mussels and shrimp
- dried beans, peas, and lentils
- meat alternatives: tofu, soy products, soy nuts
- unsalted nuts: almonds, walnuts, pistachios
- peanut butter
- wild game
- deli or processed meat, low fat 
- eggs
- baked beans without pork 




Not recommended:

- bacon, sausage, bologna, smokies, and wieners 
- ground beef, regular
- duck, goose
- organ meats
- fish, canned in oil, battered, or breaded 
- meats, heavily marbled
- chicken wings
- deli or processed meats, regular 
- fried food and breaded meats, such as chicken fingers 


Oils and Fat

Choose:

- vegetable oils such as canola, olive, peanut
- soft tub margarine labelled as *non-hydrogenated margarine* with 0 grams trans fats
- salad dressings made with canola and olive oils
- cream cheese, light
- sour cream, low fat (less than 7% M.F.)
- flaxseed, ground
- hempseed
- chia seeds
- avocados
- olives, in moderation 



Limit saturated fats:

- butter and lard
- tropical oils such as palm or coconut oil
- gravies
- cream cheese, regular
- cream
- flavoured coffee creamers 
- sour cream, regular (14% M.F.)




Avoid trans fats, if possible

Avoid foods with the fats below in their ingredient lists:

- hydrogenated oils
- hard margarines
- shortening

High fat baked goods like cakes, donuts, cookies, and store-bought muffins often have trans fats. Read labels, and limit or avoid these foods.

Sample Meal Plan

Sample menu	My menu
Breakfast	
<p>Hot cereal</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) oatmeal</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) strawberries</p> <p>1 cup (250 mL) skim or 1% milk</p> <p>1 slice whole grain toast</p> <p>1–2 tsp (5–10 mL) non-hydrogenated margarine</p> <p>1 egg</p>	
Lunch	
<p>Tuna Wrap</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) canned tuna</p> <p>1 whole wheat tortilla or pita</p> <p>½ cup raw spinach leaves or sliced vegetables</p> <p>1 Tbsp (15 mL) mayonnaise or salad dressing</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) carrot sticks</p> <p>1 apple</p> <p>¾ cup (175g) yogurt</p>	
Supper	
<p>2½ oz (75 g) baked chicken breast</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) cooked barley</p> <p>½ cup (125 mL) baked squash</p> <p>1 cup (250 mL) tossed salad</p> <p>1 Tbsp (15 mL) salad dressing made with canola or olive oil</p> <p>1 cup (250 mL) fortified soy beverage</p>	
Snacks	
<p>¼ cup (60 mL) walnuts, almonds, or peanuts</p> <p>or</p> <p>1 orange</p> <p>or</p> <p>2 Tbsp (30 mL) peanut butter on 1 slice whole wheat toast</p>	