

Protect Your Heart: Cook with Heart-Healthy Foods

Toolkit No. 8

You can protect your heart and blood vessels by eating less saturated fat and by choosing the types of fats that help your cholesterol levels. The ingredients you use and the way you cook can make a big difference. Try these tips:

- Cook with less fat.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, and pork.
- Choose low-fat dairy foods.
- Substitute lower-fat ingredients in recipes.

Cook with less fat

Use a low-fat or fat-free way to cook. You can cut down on total fat by broiling, microwaving, baking, roasting, steaming, or grilling foods. Nonstick pans and cooking sprays also work well.

Boost the flavor with seasonings and sauces instead of fats. Look for recipes that use herbs and spices for flavor instead of fat. Try these ways to season food:

- Squeeze fresh lemon juice on steamed vegetables, broiled fish, rice, or pasta.
- Try lemon pepper or mesquite seasoning on chicken.
- Use onion and garlic to liven up meats and vegetables.
- Try baking chicken or pork with barbecue sauce or low-fat Italian dressing.

Trim the fat when possible. Cut away visible fat from meat and poultry. Roast food on a rack to let the fat drip off. Make soups a day ahead so you can chill them and then remove the fat that has risen to the top.

Choose lean cuts of beef, poultry, and pork

To help keep your cholesterol on target, choose lean cuts of meat and poultry. Try some of your favorite recipes with these lean choices:



Choosing lean meats with less saturated fat can help lower blood cholesterol.

- When selecting beef, choose lean cuts such as round, sirloin, and flank steak; tenderloin; rib, chuck, or rump roast; T-bone, porterhouse, or cubed steak.
- Choose poultry such as chicken, turkey, or Cornish hen without the skin. The white breast meat is lower in fat than the darker meat in the thigh and leg pieces.
- Lean types of pork include ham, Canadian bacon, pork loin, and center loin chops.

Choose low-fat dairy products

Dairy products can be part of your meal plan. To cut back on saturated fat, choose items made with non-fat or low-fat milk. Some low-fat choices are listed below.

- Milk: Fat-free (skim), 1/2%, and 1% milk and low-fat buttermilk
- Yogurt: low-fat or fat-free yogurt
- Cheese: cottage cheese, grated Parmesan, and any cheese with 3 grams of fat or less per ounce
- For a frozen treat, try low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt instead of ice cream. You can also freeze regular yogurt for a treat.

Substitute lower-fat ingredients in your favorite recipes

Try extra-lean ground beef or ground turkey instead of ground beef. Use low-fat mayonnaise and salad dressings instead of the regular types. Try plain yogurt in place of sour cream or mayonnaise. You can substitute up to half the margarine or butter in some recipes with applesauce.

Wise food choices: What to try and why		
Instead of...	Try this...	Why?
whole milk or 2% milk	1% milk or skim milk	less total fat, less saturated fat, and less cholesterol
regular cheese	low-fat cheese	
snack foods with hydrogenated oil, palm oil, or coconut oil	fat-free or low-fat snack foods	less total fat, less saturated fat
regular mayonnaise	non-fat plain yogurt or low-fat mayonnaise in dips and recipes or mustard on sandwiches	less total fat
sour cream	non-fat sour cream	less total fat, less saturated fat
regular stick margarine	special cholesterol-lowering margarine or soft tub margarine	lowers cholesterol, fewer <i>trans</i> fats
fried chicken	baked chicken	less total fat, less saturated fat
bologna, salami, or pastrami	sliced turkey, lean ham, or low-fat cold cuts	less total fat, less saturated fat
cookies with hydrogenated oil, palm oil, or coconut oil	an orange, an apple, a pear, or some prunes	more fiber, no fat
pork chop	pork loin	less total fat, less saturated fat
short ribs	grilled or baked salmon or tuna, grilled T-bone steak	less total fat, less saturated fat; fish is a source of omega-3 fatty acids

A day of heart-healthy meals			
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Between-meal snacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bran cereal with skim milk and sliced banana • rye toast with cholesterol-lowering margarine • orange juice • coffee with skim milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • split pea soup • tuna salad made with low-fat mayonnaise • whole-grain crackers • celery and carrot sticks • fresh orange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grilled chicken breast without skin marinated in low-fat Italian dressing • rice • steamed broccoli • tossed salad with low-fat salad dressing • fresh pear • oatmeal cookie 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raw vegetables with low-fat dip • fresh fruit • oat bran muffin • whole-grain crackers with low-fat cheese

For more help, ask your health care team for copies of these brochures:

- Toolkit No. 6: *Protect Your Heart: Make Wise Food Choices*
- Toolkit No. 7: *Protect Your Heart: Choose Fats Wisely*
- Toolkit No. 9: *Protect Your Heart: Check Food Labels to Make Heart-Healthy Choices*

