

Heart Health: Cholesterol Lowering and Weight Reducing Dietary Advice

Fruit and vegetables

- Fruit and vegetables provide important vitamins that can be protective against the effects of cholesterol.
- These may be fresh, frozen or tinned.
- Potatoes are not included as they belong to the 'starchy food' group.
- Aim to eat 5 portions a day of fruit and vegetables



One portion is:

2 small fruits e.g. plums or satsumas
or, 3 tablespoons cooked vegetables
or, a small mixed salad

Fish

- A cardioprotective diet includes eating more fish and less meat.
- White fish is a good source of lean protein and the oily fish can be beneficial for the circulation because of its oil.
- Everyone should aim for 1 serving of oily fish and 1 serving of white fish per week.
- A serving is 140g (approximately 5oz) per serving.
- Oily fish include herring, mackerel, salmon, pilchards, sardines and trout (fresh or tinned in brine or tomato sauce).



A maximum of 4 portions of oily fish per week is recommended for men and women who are not planning a pregnancy, pregnant or breast feeding. Pregnant or breastfeeding women should eat no more than 2 portions of oily fish per week and avoid marlin, shark and sword fish

Pulses, nuts and seeds

can help lower cholesterol levels
Aim to include these four or five times a week.
Pulses include lentils, chickpeas, peas and beans;
Unsalted nuts or seeds include almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, flaxseeds or sesame seeds.

Starchy foods

- Choose wholemeal/wholegrain bread, pasta and rice where possible. These foods are filling and low in fat. Do not add too much fat.



Foods containing fat

- Cut down on all fat but particularly saturated (animal) fats, such as, butter, lard, fatty meat, full-fat cheese and cream. Pastry, cakes and biscuits have a high fat content. Avoid frying and grill, bake, microwave, poach or steam food instead.
- All oils are high in fat and calories.
- Monounsaturated fats or oils are the best type to use for occasional frying or for stir-frying. Try small amounts of rapeseed, olive oil or walnut oil.
- For spreading on bread a reduced fat, 'light' spread is a good choice. Spread thinly. Sunflower, soya and other margarines are higher in fat and therefore calories.
- Choose low-fat dairy foods, such as low-fat milk, half-fat and 'Light' cheeses and low fat yoghurts.
- Choose chicken and lean meats in moderate amounts. Have 75 – 100g (3-4oz) for a main meal.

Aim to gradually reduce your weight.

- Take some regular exercise
- Reduce your fat intake (see ideas above)
- Reduce your sugar intake
- Reduce your alcohol intake if you drink regularly.

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	Choose	Eat in Moderation	Avoid
FATS		Use a low fat spread on bread e.g. Gold, Flora Light and super-markets own brand “light” spread. Always use sparingly.	All margarines, butter, fats and oil (oil is still high in calories). Brush a little oil into a pan to stir-fry – preferably rapeseed or olive oil.
MEAT	Chicken, turkey, veal, rabbit or game. Skin should be removed from poultry. Liver*.	LEAN beef, bacon, ham, pork, lamb, lean mince.	Visible fat on meat (including crackling), sausages, pate, duck, goose, salami, corned beef, streaky bacon. Meat pies and pastries.
DAIRY	Skimmed milk, cottage cheese, natural low fat yoghurt, natural low fat fromage frais. Low calorie fruit yoghurt e.g. Muller Light, Weight Watchers, Onken Lite and supermarket versions. Eggs*.	Semi-skimmed milk, medium fat cheeses e.g. Edam, half fat hard cheeses and “light” cheese spreads. Low fat fruit yoghurt and fruit fromage frais.	Whole milk, coffee whiteners, all creams, evaporated and condensed milk. Hard cheeses e.g. Cheddar, Cheshire. Blue cheeses, cream cheese. Thick and creamy yoghurts, full fat yoghurt, Greek yoghurt.
FISH	All white fish, all oily fish. Tinned fish in tomato sauce or brine. Shellfish.		Fried fish, fish tinned in oil. Fish roes.
FRUIT & VEG	All fresh, frozen and tinned fruit & vegetables. Peas, beans and lentils (tinned or dried). Boiled and jacket potatoes. Fruit tinned in natural juice.	Dried fruit. Oven chips.	Chips, crisps, roast potatoes. Nuts (including coconut), peanut butter, avocado pears, olives. Fruit tinned in syrup.
CEREALS	Bread, breakfast cereals, oats, rice and pasta, crispbreads. White (low fibre) versions may be eaten if you dislike the high-fibre types.	Muesli, cream-crackers, water biscuits, plain semi-sweet biscuits.	All cakes & pastries, croissants & brioches. Savoury cheese biscuits. Sweet, fancy and chocolate biscuits. Sugar-coated cereals.
DESSERTS	Sugar-free jelly. Fruit tinned in natural juice. 	Custard and milk puddings made with low-fat milk and a sweetener. Sugar-free instant whips made with low-fat milk. Sorbets. Ice-cream (1-2 scoops).	All pies and puddings. Custard, milk puddings and sauces made with full-cream milk and sugar.

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	Choose	Eat in Moderation	Avoid
DRINKS	Tea and coffee, mineral water. Diet/Slimline/Sugar-free squash or fizzy drinks. Clear soup, low calorie soup. "40 calories" per serving bedtime drinks e.g. Options or Highlights.	Unsweetened fruit juice. "Light" bedtime drinks. Alcohol.	Sugar sweetened squash and fizzy drinks. Cream soups. Full-fat bedtime drinks.
MISC.	Meat and yeast extracts, clear pickles e.g. pickled onions, red cabbage. Artificial sweeteners e.g. Canderel, Sweetex and Splenda.	Sweet pickles, chutney, piccalilli. Reduced sugar jams and marmalade. Reduced calorie or fat-free salad dressings. Salt.	Jam, marmalade, honey, syrup. Lemon curd, mincemeat, chocolate spread. Full fat salad dressings and mayonnaise. Sugar. Sweets and chocolates.

* These foods contain cholesterol and only need to be restricted if recommended by your Doctor or Dietitian.

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information to help you make the recommended changes to your diet. If you need more detailed advice or if you are following a special diet that makes it difficult to make these changes, please ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian.