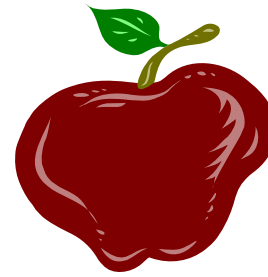


# The American Heart Association's Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations (2016)



D.I.E.T. = Develop Intelligent Eating Techniques

A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight cardiovascular disease. It's not as hard as you may think! Remember, it's the overall pattern of your choices that counts. Make the simple steps below part of your life for long-term benefits to your health and your heart.

## **Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups.**

You may be eating plenty of food, but your body may not be getting the nutrients it needs to be healthy. Nutrient-rich foods have minerals, protein, whole grains and other nutrients but are lower in calories. They may help you control your weight, cholesterol and blood pressure.

## **Eat an overall healthy dietary pattern that emphasizes:**

- a variety of fruits and vegetables, (4-5 ½ cup servings/day of each is ideal)
  - Eat a variety of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits without high-calorie sauces or added salt and sugars. Replace high-calorie foods with fruits and vegetables. Avoid fried vegetables, vegetables in butter/margarine, cream sauce, or cheese sauces
- whole grains, to help reach a goal of 20-35 grams of fiber per day (fruits, veg, whole grains, beans, nuts)
- low-fat dairy products, Select fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) dairy products.
- skinless poultry and fish.
  - prepare them in healthy ways without added saturated and trans fat. Eat a variety of fish at least twice a week, especially fatty fish containing omega-3 fatty acids (such as halibut, herring, mackerel, salmon, sardines, trout, albacore tuna).
- nuts and legumes
- Limit sodium and sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages,
  - Choose foods with less sodium and prepare foods with little or no salt. To lower blood pressure, aim to eat no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium per day. Reducing daily intake to 1,500 mg is desirable because it can lower blood pressure even further. If you can't meet these goals right now, even reducing sodium intake by 1,000 mg per day can benefit blood pressure.

Salt: A teaspoon of salt contains approximately 2000mg of Sodium.

\*Reduce the amount of salt you use at the table.

\*Reduce the amount of high sodium seasonings you use, such as:

Soy sauce

Steak sauce

Mustard

Garlic & Onion Salt

Boullion

Catsup

Baking powder

Party dips

Bacon bits

Worcestershire sauce

\*Consult with your physician before using Salt Substitutes and many of them are made from Potassium Chloride. For some people too much potassium can be as harmful to the body as too much sodium.

\*Softened water contains a fair amount of sodium. If you have a water softener, you may wish to buy bottled water or get water from a source that is unsoftened.

- Limit saturated fat and avoid trans-fat. If you choose to eat red meat, compare labels and select the leanest cuts available. (Look for cuts that contain loin or round, usually indicates leanest cuts)
  - Avoid foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans-fat in your diet.

Limit unhealthy fats:

Saturated fatty acids (<7% of total calories) like coconut, palm, palm kernel oils, meat fats, and lard

Trans fats (<1% of total calories), like stick margarine, foods with hydrogenated vegetable shortening, purchased baked items, most microwave popcorn

Choose Heart Healthy types of fats:

Poly-unsaturated fatty acids like safflower, sunflower, corn and sesame oils or tub margarines

Mono-unsaturated fatty acids-, like olive, canola and peanut oil

Omega-3 fatty acids like flaxseed oil and fish such as those noted above.

Fats with Stanol and sterol Esters like vegetable spreads containing these esters (Examples: Promise active Spread, Benecol Spread)

Here's an alphabetical list of common cooking oils that contain more of the "better-for-you" fats and less saturated fat.

Canola	Corn	Olive	Peanut
Safflower	Soybean	Sunflower	

- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you're a woman and no more than two drinks per day if you're a man.
- Follow the American Heart Association recommendations when you eat out, and keep an eye on your portion sizes.

One of the diets that fits this pattern is the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan. Most healthy eating patterns can be adapted based on calorie requirements and personal and cultural food preferences.

**Eat less of the nutrient-poor foods.**

The right number of calories to eat each day is based on your age and physical activity level and whether you're trying to gain, lose or maintain your weight. You could use your daily allotment of calories on a few high-calorie foods and beverages, but you probably wouldn't get the nutrients your body needs to be healthy. Limit foods and beverages high in calories but low in nutrients. Also limit the amount of saturated fat, *trans* fat and sodium you eat. Read Nutrition Facts labels carefully — the Nutrition Facts panel tells you the amount of healthy and unhealthy nutrients in a food or beverage.

**Use up at least as many calories as you take in.**

- Start by knowing how many calories you should be eating and drinking to maintain your weight. Nutrition and calorie information on food labels is typically based on a 2,000 calorie diet. You may need fewer or more calories depending on several factors including age, gender, and level of physical activity.
- If you are trying not to gain weight, don't eat more calories than you know you can burn up every day.
- Increase the amount and intensity of your physical activity to match the number of calories you take in.

- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity – or an equal combination of both – each week.

Regular physical activity can help you maintain your weight, keep off weight that you lose and help you reach physical and cardiovascular fitness. If it's hard to schedule regular exercise sessions, try aiming for sessions of at least 10 minutes spread throughout the week.

If you would benefit from lowering your blood pressure or cholesterol, the American Heart Association recommends 40 minutes of aerobic exercise of moderate to vigorous intensity three to four times a week.

**Fat: Limit overall fats to 25-35% of your total calories.**

Below is a chart for an easy way to find how many grams of fat are permitted each day.

<u>Calories</u>	<u>Total fat (grams)</u>			<u>Saturated fat (grams)7%</u>
	<u>25%</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>35%</u>	
1200	33	40	47	9
1500	42	50	58	12
1800	50	60	70	14
2000	56	66	78	15
2200	61	73	86	17

**Hints for Low-Fat Cooking:**

- \*When the recipes say “fry” or “saute”, try boiling, poaching, steaming or grilling.
- \*Use a non-stick skillet and spray with non-stick coating for sautéing or pan cooking. To get a browning color one can use concentrated apple juice to sauté in.
- \*Trim the fat off all meats and skin poultry before cooking or baking.
- \*The amount of fat or oil can be reduced by ¼ in recipes for baked goods.
- \*Use hamburger that is 90% lean or leaner Or use skinless ground turkey in place of ground

beef.

Drain ground beef as well as possible using a strainer.

- \*Experiment with low-fat and fat-free products available till you find a suitable replacement to please your tastebuds.

**Label Reading:**

- \*Can be very helpful in knowing what you are eating, especially when using processed foods.
- \*Make sure you look at what is a serving size and adjust fat grams and sodium according to the portion you will eat.
- \*Look at the total grams or milligrams rather than the percentage information.

**Dining Out:**

- \*Plan ahead: try to choose more carefully if you plan to go out.
- \*Choose the restaurant carefully: Avoid “all you can eat” eating your money’s worth is not a good idea.
- \*Choose food choices carefully: avoid fried, gravies, sauces, stuffings, or sautéed items.
- \*Ask how items are prepared if unsure.
- \*Ask for extras on the side, such as butter, salad dressing or sauces and gravies.

**Sources:** American Heart Association website and the 12th Edition Simplified Diet manual.