

## *Healthier Eating for You and Your Heart*

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|--|-----------------------|---|
| Three Fs are the keys to healthier eating: |                       |   |
| Eat more <b>F</b> ruits and vegetables     | Eat more <b>F</b> ish | Eat more unsaturated <b>F</b> at and less saturated <b>F</b> at |

**Fruits & vegetables: Aim for at least 5 portions\* each day.**

These help stop the development or growth of fatty deposits in your blood vessels.

Best to eat some fruit and/or vegetable with every meal.

Also eat more cereals or grains, by planning meals with bread, pasta, potatoes, rice and breakfast cereals. Choose whole grain varieties whenever possible. Adjust the portions depending on your weight and activity.

\*One portion = a banana, an apple, a small salad, 1/4 cup of vegetables, etc.

**Fish: Aim for at least twice a week.**

Best choices = salmon, herring, mackerel, sardines.

These “oily” fishes contain more of the special ingredients that help the heart.

When eating meat, choose small to medium portions of lean red meat, pork, and poultry. Also, add beans and lentils in place of some of the meat in dishes like chili, casseroles, and stews.

**Fat:** Unsaturated fats work to either lower LDL cholesterol or increase HDL cholesterol, which protects against heart disease.

Mono-unsaturated fats = olive oil, rapeseed oil, canola oil, some margarine, etc.

Poly-unsaturated fats = sunflower oil, corn oil, some margarine, etc.

***Eat more of these!***

Saturated fat, however, raises LDL cholesterol—the type of cholesterol that causes fatty deposits to form. These fats come mainly from butter, cheese, meat products, pies, and pastries. ***Eat less of these!***

Note: Cholesterol-rich foods (eggs, liver, shellfish) have, surprisingly, only a small effect on blood cholesterol levels.

### *So what can I do?*

Try to reduce the saturated fat you eat. Some experts suggest trying to eat a more “Mediterranean”-type diet—with more fish, more olive oil, more fruits & vegetables, and more pasta. Start by deciding what changes in food choices you can make...

| Category   | FOODS I CAN EAT MORE OF...   | FOODS I SHOULD EAT LESS OF...                                  |
|------------|--|--|
| Breakfast  | fruit, oatmeal, porridge, multi-grain cereal, whole-grain bagels, low-fat bran muffins           | bacon, sausage, omelettes, hashbrowns, pastries                |
| Snacks     | fresh fruit (diced apples, grapes), raw veggies (carrot sticks), air-popped popcorn, fig bars    | potato chips, french fries, chocolate bars                     |
| Main meals | fish, skinless chicken, tofu, steamed foods, pasta, brown rice, lentils, all-you-can-eat veggies | red meat, organ meats (liver), fried or deep-fried foods       |
| Desserts   | fresh fruit, graham wafers, angel food cake, yogurt, sherbet                                     | cheesecake, doughnuts, pastries, ice cream                     |
| Dairy      | skim milk, skim milk cheese (mozzarella, low-fat cheddar, ricotta), fat-free yogurt              | cream, cream sauces and dressings, sour cream, full-fat cheese |
| Fats       | canola, olive oils   | butter, hard margarine, shortening                             |

**(continued)**

## *Helpful Hints*

### **COOKING OILS AND SPREADS**

- Grilling and stir-frying are alternatives to frying. Fry only occasionally, using small amounts of sunflower, olive, corn, canola, rapeseed, or soya oils.
- Try foods without spread or use reduced fat spreads high in mono- or polyunsaturates in place of butter or other margarines. **Spread thinly.**
- Choose fat-free alternatives to sauces, salad dressing and mayonnaise.

### **MILK AND DAIRY FOODS**

- **Aim for 2-3 portions per day.** (A portion is 1/3 pint milk, small pot of either yogurt, cottage cheese or fromage frais, small matchbox size of cheddar cheese.)
- Choose reduced fat dairy products, e.g. semi-skimmed milk, low fat or diet varieties of yogurts and fromage frais, reduced fat hard cheeses, reduced fat cheese spreads, and cottage cheese.
- Use less cheese by grating, slicing or spreading thinly.

### **CAKES, BISCUITS, PASTRIES, AND SWEETS**

- Eat fewer cakes, biscuits, pastries, crisps, nuts, sweets, and chocolate. **Eat fruit instead.**
- Drink fewer sugary drinks. Change to diet drinks instead.
- Use less sugar in tea, coffee, on breakfast cereal, and in cooking. Try artificial sweeteners.

### **ALCOHOL**

As a guide, an alcohol intake of **up to 3 units a day for men and up to 2 units a day for women** with some alcohol free days is acceptable for good health. Count a unit as 1 glass wine, 1 measure spirit/liquor, or ½ pint of beer.

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### *Helpful websites:*

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/nutrition/pube/foodguid/foodguide/html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/nutrition/pube/foodguid/foodguide/html) (Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating)

[www.ccs.ca](http://www.ccs.ca) (Canadian Cardiovascular Society)

[www.healthyheartkit.com](http://www.healthyheartkit.com) (Healthy Heart Kit)

*This handout has been adapted from:*

The Example diet sheet, Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), website: [www.sign.ac.uk](http://www.sign.ac.uk).

Fenske TK, Elhatton M, "Dietary Advice for Your Post-MI Patient". *Patient Care Canada* June 2001;12(6):72-83.



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