

Heart-healthy, low-cholesterol food guide

By making simple and healthy food choices, you may be able to lower your cholesterol levels.

Print this chart and place it in your kitchen for guidance and inspiration when planning meals, choosing snacks and shopping for groceries.

Food group	Enjoy!	Limit	Skip	Tips
Grains, Cereals, Pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole grain products (bagels, tortillas, bread, pasta, rice) Oatmeal, oat bran Brown rice, wild rice, quinoa, millet, bulgur, spelt, buckwheat, teff, amaranth Oat, corn, whole-wheat or multi-grain cereals Homemade baked goods using healthy oils, non-fat or 1% milk, egg substitute (quick breads, biscuits, pancakes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most granola and muesli unless fat-free Commercially baked goods (cookies, muffins, croissants, doughnuts) White rice, white bread, white pasta 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim for 4-6 servings a day Limit refined and processed grains, cereals and pastas Avoid high-fat butter and cream sauces on your pasta Opt for whole grains: Look for the words "whole wheat" or "sprouted wheat" on the label
Fruits & Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh or frozen (unsweetened) Dried fruits Tomato sauce, vegetable puree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canned fruits packed in syrup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetables in cream or butter sauces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim for 2-4 fruit and 3-5 vegetable servings a day (a serving is roughly a handful) Steam, grill, stir-fry or roast vegetables Leave skins on when appropriate
Oils & Spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquid vegetable oils (olive, canola, almond, macadamia nut, peanut) Flax oil, hemp seed oil Margarines made with plant sterols or stanols Light or non-fat mayonnaise and salad dressings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetable oil spreads with no trans fats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butter Solid shortening Tropical oils (coconut, palm) Bacon fat Regular mayonnaise and salad dressings Partially hydrogenated vegetable oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook with canola and olive oils rather than nut and flax oils, which can form trans fats when heated
Nuts & Seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walnuts, almonds and other nuts Flax seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds All-natural peanut butter, other natural nut butters 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peanut butter that contains hydrogenated vegetable oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nuts are high in calories: Limit intake to a handful Use nuts in salads to replace foods high in saturated fat like cheese or meat
Beans & Legumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black beans, navy beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, adzuki beans, mung beans Lentils, black-eyed peas, split peas Bean soups 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refried beans that contain lard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat beans and legumes several times a week, if not daily Watch the salt (sodium) levels on packaged soups
Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oily fish such as salmon, trout, black cod, sardines and herring White fish such as cod, mahi mahi, halibut, tilapia, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swordfish, king mackerel, shark, tilefish and tuna (fresh and canned) Shellfish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fried fish (such as fried shrimp, oysters, catfish, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim for at least 2 servings of fish a week Poach, grill, bake or broil Limit heavy creams. Use lemon to enhance flavor

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Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White meat from chicken and turkey • Ground turkey or chicken made from white meat • Turkey or chicken hot dogs with no nitrates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark meat from chicken and turkey • Duck, goose and game hens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fried chicken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sauté, grill, bake, broil or roast • Remove visible fat before cooking • Remove skin before eating
Meat & Meat Substitutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean and well-trimmed cuts of beef, lamb, pork, veal • Game meats (buffalo, venison, etc.) • Tofu and tempeh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold cuts • Bacon, sausage • Spare ribs • Lean or extra lean ground beef • Lean beef hot dogs (with no nitrates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular hot dogs • Organ meats (liver, sweetbread, kidneys, brain) • Regular ground beef • Marbled or prime cuts of meat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit meat servings to 2-3 per week • Grill, bake, broil or roast • Remove visible fat before cooking • Lean cuts of beef include sirloin, chuck, loin and round
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg whites • Cholesterol-free egg substitutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg yolks 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit egg yolk intake to no more than 3-4 a week. Limit yolks to 2 a week if you have heart disease or high cholesterol. • There is no limit on egg white and egg substitute use
Dairy & Non-dairy Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fat-free, low-fat and 1% dairy • Low-fat or nonfat coffee creamer • Low-fat or nonfat yogurt, cheeses, cottage cheese, sour cream • Soy, hemp or nut milks • Soy yogurts, cheeses • Non-dairy almond cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2% dairy, such as milk, cream, and half and half • Regular cheeses • Full fat cream cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream • Ice milk • Soy cream cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole milk (fluid, evaporated, condensed) • Ice cream • Half and half • Whipping cream • Whipped topping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for 2-3 servings per day • If you use whole or 2% dairy products, gradually try to switch to low-fat and fat-free
Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air popped or light popcorn • Rice cakes, whole grain crackers • Hummus and veggies (baby carrots, grape tomatoes, snap peas, snow peas) • Apple and all-natural peanut butter • Nuts • Energy bars with no added sugars or oils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked chips • Low-fat angel food cake, fat-free or low-fat brownies and cakes • Pudding made with 1% or fat-free milk • Fat-free or low-fat animal crackers, soda crackers, graham crackers, ginger snaps • Sorbets, sherbet, fruit ices and popsicles • Gelatin desserts • Fat-free frozen yogurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato chips • Buttered popcorn • High-fat crackers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy low-fat snacks and sweets as special treats. They may be low in fat but can be high in calories.
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Green tea, white tea, herbal teas • Reduced sodium tomato or other vegetable juice • 100% fruit juice • Non-caloric flavored sparkling water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee with non-fat milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sodas • Drinks with added sugars or high-fructose corn syrup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of noncaffeinated, nonalcoholic beverages daily • Aim for of 72 oz. of water for women and 96 oz. for men each day