



Heart-Healthy Eating – DASH Style

Advice from the National Lipid Association Clinician's Lifestyle Modification Toolbox

Why follow a heart-healthy eating pattern?

A heart-healthy eating pattern will lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. It can lower your cholesterol and triglycerides. Eating heart-healthy can help manage other risk factors like blood pressure and blood sugar.

Basics of a heart-healthy eating pattern

A heart-healthy eating pattern has lots of plant foods like vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and legumes. It has low-fat (1%) or fat-free dairy foods, and a variety of protein foods like fish, poultry without skin, lean red meat, and nuts. One heart-healthy eating pattern you can follow is known as, **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension**, or DASH for short.

Tips for Heart-Healthy Eating – DASH Style (1,600 calories a day)*



Choose fiber-rich whole grains

Up to 6 servings a day

- 1 slice whole grain bread
- 1 c. whole grain dry cereal
- ½ c. cooked cereal, brown rice, quinoa, or pasta

Choose colorful vegetables

3-4 servings a day

- 1 c. raw leafy greens
- ½ c. raw or cooked vegetable
- ½ c. low-salt vegetable juice

Choose fruit with no added sugar

4 servings a day

- 1 medium piece of fruit
- ¼ c. dried fruit
- ½ c. canned fruit in its own juice
- ½ c. 100% fruit juice

Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy foods or dairy-free options

2-3 servings a day

- 1 c. skim or 1% milk
- 1 c. low-fat yogurt with no added sugar
- 1 c. fortified soy and nut milks with no sugar

Choose a variety of lean protein foods

3-6 ounces a day

- Fish like salmon and tuna
- Chicken or turkey with no skin
- Lean red meat like “round” and “loin” cuts
- Soy (tofu) and dried beans and lentils



Choose healthy fats and oils

2 servings a day

- 1 tbsp liquid oils like canola, corn, olive, safflower, sunflower
- ¼ avocado
- 2 tbsp almond or peanut butter
- 1 oz. unsalted nuts or seeds



Limit foods high in cholesterol

- Limit egg **yolks** to 2-3 per week
- Egg **whites** have **no cholesterol** - use them as often as you like
- Avoid organ meats like liver, gizzards, and brain

Avoid foods with **trans fat**

- Look for “partially hydrogenated oil” on the ingredient list

Limit sodium (salt) to 1,500-2,300 mg a day

- Read the % Daily Value of sodium on the Nutrition Facts labels on your food
- Flavor your food with herbs, spices, citrus juices, and vinegars

*The number of servings listed are based on 1,600 calories. You may need more or less calories each day.

A registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) can help you make a heart-healthy meal plan that works best for your lifestyle.