

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONDITION:

# CARDIAC DIET

The poor diet typical for most Americans is the single most predictive risk factor for heart disease. Eating the calorie-rich and processed standard American diet causes plaques to form in blood vessels. This can lead to heart disease and early death.<sup>1</sup> The standard American diet also promotes high blood pressure, high serum cholesterol and inflammation. These factors increase the risk of heart disease.

The plaques that form on the artery walls (atherosclerosis) can restrict blood flow, rupture, and cause chest pain (angina). Atherosclerosis can also cause heart attacks and strokes.

### One out of every six deaths in the United States is due to coronary heart disease alone.

A major contributor to the poor diet typical of most Americans is saturated fat and trans fat.<sup>2</sup> These fats are found in animal-based foods such as beef, chicken, fish, sea food, eggs, milk, cheese and yogurt. You can also find saturated fat in coconut products and palm oil. Studies show that choosing fish and poultry over beef and pork makes no significant changes on total cholesterol.<sup>3</sup> It is better to focus on eating fiber-rich plant foods<sup>4</sup> which do not have saturated fats or trans fats. Fiber-rich plant foods also contain fiber, which can lower total cholesterol.<sup>5</sup> Choosing a plant-based diet is the best thing you can do for your heart.<sup>6</sup>

### Four things you can do today.

Your lifestyle choices effect your risk of heart disease. Change your lifestyle, change your life.<sup>7</sup> Studies show that a plant-based diet gives the best chances for protection against heart disease and survival from heart disease.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1. Eat more fiber-rich plant foods.

At every meal, eat high-fiber plant foods such as beans, vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and 1–2 servings of nuts and seeds per day.<sup>9</sup> This will provide fiber, nutrients, and plant protein for optimal heart health.

#### 2. Use the 2–2–2 Method.

If you feel you cannot remove animal proteins, try limiting fish or seafood to 2 times a week, poultry to 2 times a month, and beef or pork to 2 times a year.<sup>10</sup> Consider them treats instead of a staple in the diet. For optimal heart health, eliminate them completely.

#### 3. Reduce eggs and dairy.

The saturated fat in eggs and dairy makes them high-risk for heart failure. For optimal health remove them completely. If you can't remove them completely, limit eggs to 2 times a week and dairy to 2 times a month (including low fat dairy products).

#### 4. Limit your salt intake.

The highest food sources of sodium are chicken, cheese, processed meats, bread, frozen dinners, fast food, and canned soup. Limit your intake of these foods and replace them with high-fiber plant foods.



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## For the healthiest heart, eat more plant-based fiber.

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### 1. Beans

Buy canned, dried, frozen, or fresh beans. Use whatever is easiest. Look for low-sodium or no-salt-added canned beans or buy regular beans and rinse with water. Rinsing the bean juice also reduces symptoms of gas and indigestion.

### 2. Vegetables

Add fresh, frozen, or canned (low sodium) vegetables to meals several times a day. Eat vegetables raw, steamed, baked, grilled, or boiled.

### 3. Fruits

Add fresh, frozen, or dried (unsweetened) fruits of any kind.

### 4. Whole grains and starchy vegetables

Any type of potatoes, yams, squash, corn, or whole grains such as oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, etc. For bread products, try bread made with sprouted whole grains and beans instead of flour.

### 5. Nuts and Seeds

Enjoy 1–2 serving a day of salt-free walnuts, almonds, peanuts, cashews, natural nut butter, flax or chia seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.

## Heart healthy menu options

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### Breakfast

Any cooked whole-grain cereal or muesli, fruit, seeds or nuts.

- Oatmeal with berries, banana or raisins, and nuts or seeds.
- Sprouted bread with nut butter and fruit (berries recommended).

### Lunch

Any beans, vegetables, starchy vegetables or whole grains, and fruit.

- Dark leafy green salad, baked potatoes, beans, steamed vegetables, and fruit for dessert.
- Brown rice and steamed vegetables with grilled tofu, edamame beans, or lentil soup.

### Dinner

Vegetable soup, salads, wraps, sandwiches, potatoes, grain and bean bowls, fruit, etc.

- Brown rice, black beans, corn, low-sodium salsa, guacamole, and a dark leafy green salad.
- Vegetable soup, sprouted bread, and dark leafy green salad.

### Snacks

Fruit, vegetables and hummus, beans, leftovers, nuts or fruit trail mix, avocado or peanut butter toast, small bean burrito, unsweetened apple sauce, small bowl of oatmeal, etc.



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## Resources

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<sup>1</sup>Micha, R., G. Michas, and D. Mozaffarian, *Unprocessed Red and Processed Meats and Risk of Coronary Artery Disease and Type 2 Diabetes – An Updated Review of the Evidence. Current Atherosclerosis Reports, 2012. 14(6): p. 515-524.*

<sup>2</sup>Horowitz, J.F., et al., *Changes in markers for cardio-metabolic disease risk after only 1-2 weeks of a high saturated fat diet in overweight adults. PLOS ONE, 2018. 13(6): p. e0198372.*

<sup>3</sup>*A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials that compare the lipid effects of beef versus poultry and/or fish consumption Maki, Kevin C. et al. Journal of Clinical Lipidology, Volume 6, Issue 4 , 352 - 361*

<sup>4</sup>Tharrey, M., et al., *Patterns of plant and animal protein intake are strongly associated with cardiovascular mortality: the Adventist Health Study-2 cohort. Int J Epidemiol, 2018. 47(5): p. 1603-1612.*

<sup>5</sup>*The effect of combining plant sterols, soy protein, viscous fibers, and almonds in treating hypercholesterolemia Jenkins, David J.A et al. Metabolism - Clinical and Experimental, Volume 52, Issue 11 , 1478 - 1483*

<sup>6</sup>Key, T.J., et al., *Mortality in vegetarians and non-vegetarians: a collaborative analysis of 8300 deaths among 76,000 men and women in five prospective studies. Public health nutrition, 1998. 1(1): p. 33-41.*

<sup>7</sup>Chiuve, S.E., et al., *Healthy lifestyle factors in the primary prevention of coronary heart disease among men: benefits among users and nonusers of lipid-lowering and antihypertensive medications. Circulation, 2006. 114(2): p. 160-167.*

<sup>8</sup>*Updating a 12-year experience with arrest and reversal therapy for coronary heart disease (an overdue requiem for palliative cardiology) Esselstyn, Caldwell B, American Journal of Cardiology, Volume 84 , Issue 3 , 339 - 341*

<sup>9</sup>Tuso, P.J., et al., *Nutritional update for physicians: plant-based diets. The Permanente Journal, 2013. 17(2): p. 61.*

<sup>10</sup>Dr. Wayne Dysinger, [www.lifestylemedicinesolutions.com](http://www.lifestylemedicinesolutions.com)

**If you have any questions or concerns, contact your Landmark provider or primary care physician.**

The information provided herein is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting with a qualified healthcare provider. Please consult your healthcare provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your condition.



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