

American Heart
Association®



Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

An Eating Plan for Healthy Americans



The new 2000 food guidelines

Our American Heart Association Diet



GOALS of the American Heart Association **EATING PLAN**

What you eat is important. It may help you prevent a heart attack or stroke.

Healthy food habits can help you reduce three of the major risk factors for heart attack — high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and excess body weight. They'll also help reduce your risk of stroke, because heart disease and high blood pressure are major risk factors for stroke.

This eating plan gives the latest advice of medical and nutrition experts. Following it will help you achieve and maintain a healthy eating pattern. The benefits of that include a healthy body weight, a desirable blood cholesterol level and a normal blood pressure.

- Maintain a level of physical activity that keeps you fit and matches the number of calories you eat. Walk or do other activities for at least 30 minutes on most days. To lose weight, do enough activity to use up more calories than you eat every day.
- Limit your intake of foods high in calories or low in nutrition, including foods like soft drinks and candy that have a lot of sugars.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, *trans* fat and/or cholesterol, such as full-fat milk products, fatty meats, tropical oils, partially hydrogenated vegetable oils and egg yolks. Instead choose foods low in saturated fat, *trans* fat and cholesterol from the first four points on page 2.
- Eat less than 6 grams of salt (sodium chloride) per day (2,400 milligrams of sodium).
- Have no more than one alcoholic drink per day if you're a woman and no more than two if you're a man. ("One drink" means it has no more than 1/2 ounce of pure alcohol. See page 23 for examples.)

This is an easy-to-follow guide to delicious eating — and you don't have to give up your favorite foods. Every meal doesn't have to meet all the guidelines. It's important to apply the guidelines to your overall eating pattern over at least several days.

These guidelines may do more than improve your heart health. They may reduce your risk for other chronic health problems, including type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis (bone loss) and some forms of cancer.

The American Heart Association can help you choose heart-healthy foods when grocery shopping. Just look for products with our special, red heart-check mark. You'll find hundreds of them throughout your grocery store. Visit www.americanheart.org/FoodCertification/ for a list of certified foods. For more AHA Web sites, cookbooks and other helpful resources, see the list on pages 24 and 25.



How Can I Use This Plan?

This booklet lists the basic food groups. It gives you the number of servings per day from each food group, serving sizes and suggested food choices. It's important to select a wide variety of foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol within each food group. Desserts, snacks and beverages are also listed.

Eating the lower number of servings from each food group gives you enough protein, vitamins and minerals — nutrients that your body needs each day. Eat moderate amounts of foods from the meat, fish, poultry, egg and fat groups. You may choose more servings of foods from the other groups if you don't need to lose weight or you want to gain weight.

The secret to success is balance. If you sometimes have a high-fat dish for dinner, balance it with lower-fat foods such as steamed vegetables or a fruit for dessert. The same idea applies to high-fat or salty snacks. Eat small

amounts, and balance them with foods low in fat, cholesterol and sodium, such as fruits, vegetables and fat-free milk products.

The American Heart Association suggests this plan for all healthy Americans and children more than 2 years old. Growing children and teenagers have special needs. They must get enough energy (calories) and nutrients each day. Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding — or people who have a medical disorder such as diabetes, insulin resistance or obesity — should talk to their healthcare provider, a Registered Dietitian, or a licensed dietitian or nutritionist about their special dietary needs.

Eating Plan Tips

To control the amount and kind of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol you eat...

- Eat up to 6 ounces (cooked) per day of lean meat, fish and skinless poultry.
- Try main dishes featuring pasta, rice, beans and/or vegetables. Or create “low-meat” dishes by mixing these foods with small amounts of lean meat, skinless poultry or fish.
- Use cooking methods that require little or no fat — boil, broil, bake, roast, poach, steam, sauté, stir-fry or microwave.
- Use about 5 to 8 teaspoon servings of fats and oils per day for cooking and baking, and in salad dressings and spreads.
- Trim off the fat you can see before cooking meat and poultry. Drain off all fat after browning. Chill soups and stews after cooking so you can remove the hardened fat from the top.

- Limit your average total daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 mg. Eggs and shellfish can be a major source of dietary cholesterol, but they're fairly low in saturated fat and total fat. Egg whites have no fat and no cholesterol.
- Limit organ meats such as liver, brains, chitterlings, kidney, heart, gizzard and sweetbreads.
- Choose fat-free (skim), ½% or 1% fat milk and nonfat or low-fat yogurt and cheeses. Keep the fat in dairy products to 1% or less.

To round out the rest of your eating plan...

- Make 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a part of your day.
- Eat 6 or more servings each day of breads, cereals or grains, pasta, dried beans or starchy vegetables.
- Balance the calories you eat with 30–60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days to avoid gaining weight.





Lean Meat, Poultry and Fish

**High in Protein, B Vitamins, Iron and
Other Minerals**

Servings per day

No more than 6 oz. cooked lean meat,
poultry and fish

Enjoy at least 2 servings of baked or grilled
fish each week.

Serving size

3 oz. cooked (4 oz. raw) lean meat, poultry
or fish

Here are some examples to help you judge serving sizes of meat, poultry and fish. A 3-ounce portion equals

- the size of a deck of playing cards.
- 2 thin slices of lean roast beef (each slice 3" x 3" x 1/4").
- 1/2 of a chicken breast or a chicken leg with thigh (without skin).
- 3/4 cup of flaked fish.

Choose from

- Fish and shellfish. Shrimp and crayfish are higher in cholesterol than most types of fish, but lower in saturated fat and total fat than most meats and poultry.
- Fish high in omega-3 fatty acids such as mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines, albacore tuna and salmon.
- Chicken, Cornish hen and turkey (without skin), ground turkey.
- Lean beef (from the round, chuck, sirloin, loin). Buy “choice” or “select” grades of beef rather than “prime.”
- Lean or extra lean ground beef. Choose ground beef with no more than 15% fat.
- Lean veal (except commercially ground).
- Lean ham, lean pork (tenderloin, loin chop). Ham and Canadian bacon are higher in sodium (salt) than other meats.
- Lean lamb (leg, arm, loin).
- Lean cuts of buffalo, emu and ostrich. These are very low in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.

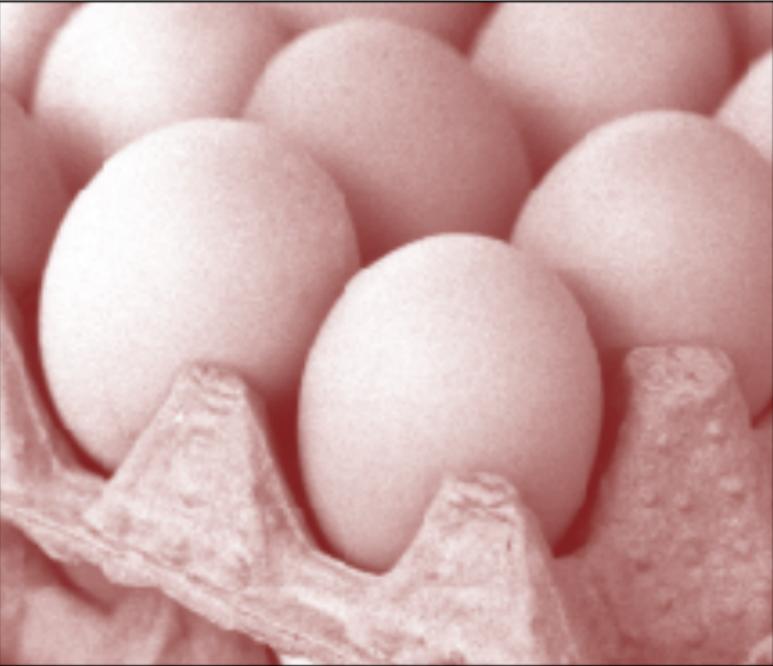
- Wild game — rabbit, venison, pheasant, duck (without skin). These usually have less fat than animals raised for market (duck and goose).
- Processed sandwich meats (low-fat turkey, chicken, turkey ham, turkey pastrami or lean boiled ham). Check the amount of sodium in these meats; some contain 25 percent or more of the daily value.

Shopping and preparation tips

- Choose cuts of meat that have the least amount of visible fat. Trim off the visible fat before cooking.
- Instead of frying, prepare meats by baking, broiling, roasting, microwaving or stir-frying. Pour off the fat after browning.
- Remove the skin and fat under the skin before cooking poultry pieces. (The exception is when roasting a whole chicken or turkey. Then remove the skin before carving and serving the meat.) Choose whole turkeys that have *not* been injected with fats or broths.
- Chill meat juices after cooking, so you can easily skim off the hardened fat. Then add the juices to stews, soups and gravy.
- Look for frozen dinners and entrées that are low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.
- A one-cup serving of cooked beans, peas or lentils — or 3 ounces of soybean curd (tofu) or peanut butter — can replace a 3-ounce serving of meat, poultry or fish.

- Organ meats are very high in cholesterol. However, liver is rich in iron and vitamins. A small serving (3 ounces) is OK about once a month.

Note: Adults over age 50 should get vitamin B₁₂ from lean meat, fortified foods or vitamin supplements to meet the recommended intake of 2.4 micrograms (µg) of vitamin B₁₂ per day.



Eggs

High in Protein, B Vitamins, Iron and Other Minerals

Servings per week

- Eggs have a high cholesterol content (213 mg per yolk). You should keep track of how many eggs you use as you try to limit your cholesterol intake to less than 300 mg per day. If you do eat an egg, hold the bacon and sausage, which are very high in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Shopping and preparation tips

- Use two egg whites, or one egg white plus 2 teaspoons of unsaturated oil, in place of one whole egg in cooking. You can also use cholesterol-free commercial egg substitutes.
- Eat only cooked eggs and egg whites. Raw egg products can contain dangerous levels of bacteria.

Fruits and Vegetables

High in Vitamins, Minerals and Fiber; Low in Fat, Calories and Sodium...Contain No Cholesterol

Servings per day

5 or more

Serving size

1 medium-size piece of fruit or ½ cup fruit juice

½–1 cup cooked or raw vegetables

Choose from

- All vegetables and fruits except coconut.
- Olives and avocados should be counted as fats (see Fats and Oils section).
- Starchy vegetables are listed with Breads, Cereals, Pasta and Starchy Vegetables because they're similar in calories per serving to the other foods in that group.



Shopping and preparation tips

- Enjoy plenty of fruits and vegetables. If you're watching your weight, these foods will give you vitamins, minerals and fiber with few calories. Be sure to include sources rich in vitamin C and vitamin A.
- Check labels for the sodium content of canned vegetables and soups. Buy those with low amounts.

Low-Fat Milk Products

**High in Protein, Calcium, Phosphorus,
Niacin, Riboflavin, Vitamins A and D**

Servings per day

- 2 for children 1–3 years old
- 2 or more for children 4–8 years
- 4 for children and teenagers 9–18 years
- 3 for adults 19–50 years
- 4 for adults 51 years and older
- 3–4 for women who are pregnant or breast-feeding

Serving size

- 1 cup fat-free, ½% or 1% fat milk
- 1 cup nonfat or low-fat yogurt
- 1 oz. low-fat cheese or ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese

Choose from

- **Milk products with 0–1% fat**
 - skim, fat-free, zero-fat, no-fat or nonfat milk
 - ½–1% low-fat or light milk
 - nonfat or low-fat dry milk powder
 - evaporated skim or fat-free milk
 - buttermilk made from fat-free or 1% fat milk

- fat-free or low-fat yogurt
- drinks made with fat-free or 1% fat milk and cocoa (or other low-fat drink powders)
- frozen low-fat yogurt
- **Low-fat cheeses**
 - dry-curd or low-fat cottage cheese
 - natural or processed cheeses with no more than 3 grams of fat per ounce and no more than 2 grams of saturated fat per ounce
- **Fat-free or low-fat ice cream**
 - no more than 3 grams of fat per $\frac{1}{2}$ cup serving

Shopping and preparation tips

- Fat-free, $\frac{1}{2}$ % fat and 1% fat milk all provide slightly more nutrients than whole milk and 2% fat milk. But they're much lower in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and calories.
- If you're used to whole-milk products (3.5% fat), you may find it easier to taper off slowly. Try 1% low-fat milk first, then change to $\frac{1}{2}$ % low-fat milk. Soon you'll be able to switch to fat-free (skim) milk with no trouble.

Note: The servings per day of milk products are higher to reflect revised recommendations for calcium intake — 1,000 milligrams for all adults until age 50; 1,200 milligrams at age 50 and older. For vitamin D, the revised recommendations are 400 I.U.s (International Units) for everyone age 51 and older; 600 I.U.s for age 71 and older.



Breads, Cereals, Pasta and **Starchy Vegetables**

**Low in Fat and Cholesterol; High in B
Vitamins, Iron and Fiber**

Servings per day

6 or more

Serving size

1 slice bread

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup nugget or bud-type cereal

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot cereal

1 cup flaked cereal

1 cup cooked rice or pasta

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup starchy vegetables

1 cup low-fat soup

Choose from

- **Breads and rolls**

- wheat, rye, raisin or white bread
- English muffins
- hotdog and hamburger buns
- water (not egg) bagels
- pita bread
- corn tortillas (not fried)

- **Crackers and snacks**

- animal, graham, rye crackers
- soda, saltine, oyster crackers
- matzo
- fig bar, ginger snap, molasses cookies
- bread sticks, Melba toast
- flat bread
- pretzels (unsalted)
- popcorn (see “Fats and Oils” for preparation)

- **Quick breads**

- homemade (see “Shopping and preparation tips” on page 18)
- biscuits, muffins, cornbread
- fruit breads, soft rolls
- pancakes, French toast, waffles (homemade — see “Shopping and preparation tips” on page 18)



- **Hot or cold cereals**
 - all kinds (but granola-type may be high in fat or saturated fat)
- **Rice and pasta**
 - all kinds (pasta made without egg yolk)
- **Starchy vegetables**
 - potatoes, corn
 - Lima beans, green peas
 - winter squash
 - yams, sweet potatoes
- **Soups**
 - broth or bouillon
 - chicken noodle
 - tomato-based seafood
 - chowders
 - minestrone
 - onion
 - split pea

Shopping and preparation tips

- Many kinds of crackers and snacks are now available with no added salt or unsalted tops. Some are high in saturated fat, so read the labels. Those made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils may be high in *trans* fat. *Trans* fats raise LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and total cholesterol.
- For homemade quick breads, pancakes, French toast and waffles: Use margarine with liquid vegetable oil as the first listed ingredient or oils low in saturated fat, fat-free or 1% fat milk, and egg whites or egg substitutes (or egg yolks within limits). If you use any egg yolks, be sure to count them in your daily allowance.
- Cereals cooked without salt are lower in sodium than instant cooked cereals. Rice and pasta cooked without salt are lower in sodium than ready-to-eat types.
- Most processed soups are high in sodium and some are high in fat. When buying soups, read labels and choose those lower in sodium and fat. You can also make your own soups and control both sodium and fat.
- French fries, donuts and crackers are major sources of *trans* fat in the diet. *Trans* fats result from adding hydrogen to vegetable oils used in commercial baked goods and for cooking in most restaurants and fast-food chains.

Note: Revised recommendations for folate are 400 micrograms (µg) for adults and 600 micrograms for pregnant women. Many breads, cereals, pasta and other grains are now fortified with folic acid, the synthetic form of folate.



Fats and Oils

Some of these foods are high in vitamins A or E, but all are high in fat and calories.

Servings per day

No more than a total of 5–8, depending on your caloric needs. Limit to 5 servings if you're trying to lose weight.

Serving size

- 1 tsp. vegetable oil or regular margarine
- 2 tsp. diet margarine
- 1 Tbsp. salad dressing
- 2 tsp. mayonnaise or peanut butter
- 3 tsp. seeds or nuts
- $\frac{1}{8}$ of medium avocado
- 10 small or 5 large olives

Choose from

- Vegetable oils and margarines with liquid vegetable oil as the first listed ingredient and no more than 2 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon. Examples are canola, corn, olive, safflower, sesame, soybean and sunflower.
- Liquid or tub margarines that are low in saturated fat and *trans* fat. *Trans* fats raise LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and total cholesterol.
- Reduced-fat and no-fat salad dressings and mayonnaise with no more than 1 gram of saturated fat per tablespoon.
- Almond, avocado and hazelnut oils are high in monounsaturated fat.

Shopping and preparation tips

- Use fats and oils sparingly — and use the ones lowest in saturated fat and cholesterol.
- Use hydrogenated shortenings sparingly and choose those made from vegetable fat. They’re lower in saturated fat than those made from animal- or vegetable-fat blends.
- Use cooking styles that add little or no fat to food, and ask for foods cooked that way when you eat out.
- Remember to count the “hidden fat” in bakery and snack foods as well as the fats used in cooking and on vegetables and breads.
- Remember that coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil are high in saturated fat, even though they’re vegetable oils and have no cholesterol. *Read food labels carefully.*

Desserts

Choose

- Desserts low in saturated fat, cholesterol and calories. You can also cut down by sharing a dessert portion with someone.

First choices (low in fat and saturated fat)

- Fruit — fresh, frozen, canned or dried
- Low-fat yogurt with fruit
- Crackers and cookies (as listed in the Breads section)
- Angel food cake
- Frozen fat-free, low-fat or nonfat yogurt
- Low-fat ice cream with no more than 3 grams of fat per ½ cup
- Flavored gelatin
- Water ices, sherbets or sorbets

Special occasions only (higher in fat and calories)

- Homemade desserts (cakes, pies, cookies, puddings) — using margarine with liquid vegetable oil as the first listed ingredient or oils low in saturated fat, fat-free or 1% fat milk, and egg whites or egg substitutes (or egg yolks within your daily cholesterol limit).
- Store-bought desserts — many are now made with unsaturated oils and are either low-fat or nonfat. Be sure to read ingredient lists.

Snacks

Choose snacks from other food groups, such as

- Fruits and juices
- Raw vegetables and low-fat dips
- Low-fat cookies
- Low-fat crackers
- Plain unsalted popcorn
- Unsalted pretzels
- Hard candy, gum drops
- Sugar, syrup, honey, jam, jelly, marmalade (as spreads)





Beverages

First choices

- Fruit or vegetable juice, coffee, tea, plain or flavored mineral water, low-sodium broth and low-sodium bouillon

Other choices

- Fruit punches made with calorie-free soft drinks
- Alcoholic beverages — If you drink them, do so in moderation. Have no more than one drink per day (for women) or two drinks per day (for men) of wine, beer or liquor, and only when caloric limits allow. Here are the amounts to count as one drink ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce pure alcohol):
 - 12 oz. beer
 - 1½ oz. 80-proof spirits (bourbon, gin, rum, Scotch, tequila, vodka, whiskey)
 - 1 oz. 100-proof spirits
 - 4 oz. wine (red, white, rosé)

If you don't drink, don't start!

For More Information

Here are some American Heart Association publications you may enjoy:

- *American Heart Association Cookbook, 25th Anniversary Edition*. Has more than 600 recipes. Available in hardcover, trade paper, mass market and large print editions.
- *American Heart Association Low-Fat, Low-Cholesterol Cookbook, Second Edition*. Contains more than 200 recipes. Available in spiral-bound hardcover, trade paper and mass market editions.
- *American Heart Association Low-Salt Cookbook*. Features over 170 recipes. Available in hardcover, trade paper and mass market editions.
- *American Heart Association Quick and Easy Cookbook*. Features over 200 recipes. Available in spiral-bound hardcover and spiral-bound softcover.
- *American Heart Association Around the World Cookbook*. Available in spiral-bound hardcover.
- *American Heart Association Kids' Cookbook*. For children ages 8 to 12. Available in hard cover.
- *American Heart Association Brand Name Fat and Cholesterol Counter, Second Edition*. A pocket reference listing over 4,000 branded foods consistent with AHA dietary guidelines; gives their total fat, saturated fat, calories, cholesterol, and sodium content. A mass market paperback.

- *American Heart Association 6 Weeks to Get Out the Fat*. A mass market paperback.
- *American Heart Association 365 Ways to Get Out the Fat*. A mass market paperback.

(All books above are published by Times Books, a division of Random House, Inc.)

- *American Heart Association Meals in Minutes Cookbook*. Features more than 200 recipes you can prepare in just 30 minutes or less. Available in spiral-bound hardcover. (Published by Clarkson Potter Publishers.)
- *American Heart Association The Healthy Heart Walking Book*. A book that offers a simple walking program for a lifetime of fitness. Available in spiral-bound softcover. (Published by Macmillan, a division of Simon & Schuster.)
- *American Heart Association The Healthy Heart Walking Tape*. A tape that presents two complete 30-minute walking workouts — one for beginning walkers and one for intermediate walkers. Includes an illustrated booklet with diary. (Published by Simon & Schuster Audio.)

You may also find these American Heart Association brochures helpful.

- *Easy Food Tips for Heart-Healthy Eating*
- *Tips for Eating Out*

For more information about nutrition, heart health and heart disease, contact your nearest American Heart Association office, or call toll-free 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721). You may also visit us online at www.americanheart.org, at our nutrition site, www.deliciousdecisions.org, or our physical activity site, www.justmove.org.

Notes

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Heart Attack Warning Signs

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back
- Pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck or arms
- Chest discomfort with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath

Not all these warning signs occur in every heart attack. If some start to occur, don't wait. Get help immediately! **Heart attack is a medical emergency — call 9-1-1.**



Stroke Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Not all these warning signs occur in every stroke. If some start to occur, don't wait. Get help immediately! **Stroke is a medical emergency — call 9-1-1.**

For more information,
call 1-800-AHA-USA1
(1-800-242-8721) or contact
your nearest office. You
can also visit us online at
www.americanheart.org

For information on life after
stroke, please call our
Stroke Family "Warmline"
at 1-800-553-6321. The
American Stroke Association,
a division of the American
Heart Association, handles
these calls.

Your contributions will
support research and
educational programs that
help reduce disability and
death from America's
No. 1 killer.



Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

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