

Heart-Healthy Recipe Tips and Substitutions

Heart-healthy eating involves choosing the right ingredients when you are planning your meals and recipes.



The Dietary Guidelines for Americans promote a diet that includes fiber-rich whole grains, fruits and vegetables, as well as lean meats and non-fat or low-fat dairy. The Dietary Guidelines also recommend no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat and keeping trans fat intake as low as possible. Sources of heart-healthy fats include vegetable oils, fish, nuts and soft spreads made with nutritious plant oils.

Healthy Recipe Substitutions

IF YOUR RECIPE CALLS FOR:	TRY THESE INSTEAD:
Butter	2 grams of fat per serving or less soft spreads or sprays that are low in saturated fat and contain no trans fat per serving
Regular Mayonnaise	Reduced-fat mayonnaise, low-fat yogurt
Whole Milk	Skim (fat-free), 1% or 2% milk
Evaporated Milk	Evaporated skim (fat-free) or reduced fat milk
Whole Milk Yogurt	Low-fat or fat-free yogurt
Whipping Cream	Imitation cream made with fat-free milk
Sour Cream	1% or fat-free sour cream or plain, low-fat yogurt
Cream Cheese	Neufchâtel or light cream cheese, fat-free cream cheese
Cheese	Reduced-calorie, low-fat or fat-free cheese
Whole Milk Cottage Cheese	Skim or part-skim cottage cheese or ricotta cheese
Eggs	2 egg whites for every whole egg or egg substitute
Bacon or Breakfast Sausage	Lean Canadian bacon, turkey bacon or lean ham
1 lb Ground Beef	½ lb extra lean ground beef plus 14 oz can cooked lentils or beans or ground lean turkey or chicken
Chocolate Chips	Raisins, dates or dried fruit
Baking Chocolate (1 oz)	3 tablespoons cocoa powder and 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
Salt	Fresh or dry herbs, garlic or onion powder, lemon or lime juice

With so many healthy food choices, here are simple tips for each meal, recipe or snack to meet these healthy goals and eat well for heart health.

- Slow down on saturated and trans fat. Toss out the butter, shortening or lard and sauté, bake or cook with unsaturated fats, like soft spreads, made with vegetable oil, which are low in saturated fat and contain no trans fat.
- Make it a fiber-rich meal. Use beans or vegetables in common dishes like lasagna, enchiladas, quesadillas, casseroles, soups and stews. When cooking with ground beef, choose lean. And, try adding whole grains like bulgur (cracked wheat) soaked in water or cooked brown lentils to maximize your meal's fiber content.
- Add color to any dish, bowl or recipe. Add fresh or dried fruits to muffin mixes, salads, pizzas or stir fry dishes. Toss vegetables into your pasta sauce, steak wrap, omelet or rice bowl.
- Sift in some whole wheat. If a recipe calls for white flour, add fiber by using ½ whole wheat flour.
- Mix it up with nuts. Add taste, good fat and fiber to your meal with almonds, pecans or walnuts. Toasting nuts can really bring out the flavor. These versatile foods can complement a vegetable dish, like green beans or salad, or add a nutty flavor to your fettuccine.
- Choose heart-healthy unsaturated fats. Add fish such as salmon or trout to your menu a few times per week and use soft spreads made with nutritious vegetable oils as a topping or when cooking.