

Food for Thought



Health Promotion Newsletter

February 2018

Heart Healthy Diet: 8 Steps to Prevent Heart Disease



Although you might know that eating certain foods can increase your risk for heart disease, it can be difficult to change your eating habits. Here are eight [heart healthy eating habits](#) that can help you make a change.

1. **Control Your Portion Size.** Overloading your plate and going for seconds can lead to eating more calories than you should. Use a small plate or bowl to control your portions.
2. **Eat More Vegetables and Fruits.** Eat larger portions of fruits and vegetables. Both are good sources of vitamins and minerals, low in calories, and rich in dietary fiber. Choose recipes that have vegetables or fruits as the main ingredients, such as vegetable stir-fry or fresh fruit mixed into salads.
3. **Select Whole Grains.** They are a good source of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health.
4. **Limit Unhealthy Fats.** Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is an important step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease.
5. **Choose Low Fat Protein Sources.** Lean meat, poultry and fish, low-fat dairy products, and eggs are some of your best sources of protein.
6. **Reduce the Sodium in Your Food.** Healthy adults have no more than 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium per day (about a teaspoon of salt).
7. **Plan Ahead.** Create daily menus using the six strategies listed above.
8. **Allow Yourself an Occasional Treat.** Allow yourself an indulgence every now and then. But don't let it turn into an excuse for giving up on your healthy-eating plan.

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IT'S NOT JUST A MAN'S DISEASE.

An estimated **43 million women** in the U.S. are affected by cardiovascular disease.

Since 1984, **more women than men** have died each year from heart disease and stroke.

On February 2 Wear Red for Women.

American Heart Month: Put Your Heart Health First



February marks American Heart Month, a great time to make small changes that can lead to a lifetime of heart health. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women. However, [small changes](#) can make a big difference.

Schedule a visit and talk with your doctor about heart health. It is important to have regular check-ups even if you are not sick. Partner with your doctor and health team to set goals for improving your heart health.

Add exercise to your daily routine. Start off the month by walking 15 minutes, 3 times per week. By mid month, increase your time to 30 minutes. Within a few months you will be able to build up to walking 30 minutes every day!

Increase healthy eating. Cook heart healthy meals at home at least 3 times per week, limiting salt by using dried herbs and spices, and limiting red meat.

Take steps to quit smoking. If you currently smoke, quitting can cut your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Take medication as prescribed. High blood pressure and cholesterol medications are important for reducing your risk of heart disease when coupled with diet and exercise.

Heart Healthy Fats

Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is an [important step](#) to reduce cholesterol and lower risk of coronary artery disease. The American Heart Association recommends less than 7% of total daily calories come from saturated fats, and less than 1% of total daily calories come from trans fat.

Reduce saturated and trans fats in your diet by limiting the amount of solid fats — butter, margarine and shortening — when cooking and serving. Reduce the amount of saturated fat by trimming fat off meat or choosing lean meats with less than 10 percent fat.

When using fats, choose monounsaturated fats, like olive oil or canola oil. Polyunsaturated fats, found in certain fish, avocados, nuts and seeds, are also good choices for a heart healthy diet.



Recipe of the Month



Dark Chocolate Brownies

Ingredients

For the Brownies

- 3/4 cup white whole wheat flour
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 tbsp. coconut oil, melted
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/2 cup frozen unsweetened raspberries, mostly thawed and diced

For the Drizzle (optional)

- 10 tsp. confectioner' style stevia
- 1 3/4 tsp. nonfat milk
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract

Method

1. Preheat oven to 300 F and lightly grease a 8" square baking pan
2. Whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt.
3. In a separate bowl whisk butter, eggs and vanilla. Stir in Greek yogurt, maple syrup, and the flour mixture until incorporated. Fold in the raspberries.
4. Spread the batter into the pan and bake for 15 - 19 minutes. Cool in pan until room temp.
5. Before serving, prepare the drizzle by mixing the stevia, milk, and almond extract. Transfer to a Ziploc bag and drizzle over cooled brownies. Enjoy!

Questions? Contact Me.

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