

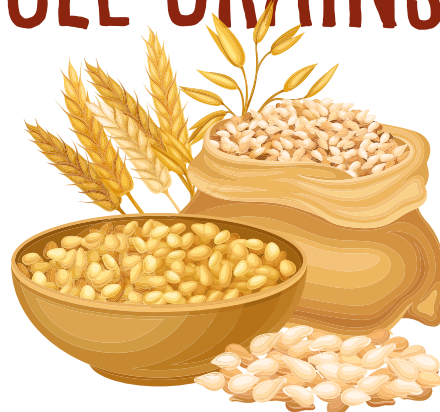


EATING FOR HEART HEALTH

February is **American Heart Month**, and a great time to take a closer look at developing heart-healthy habits. One of the ways to improve your heart health, is to eat a “clean” diet. It’s easy to do, but with so many conflicting references to eating clean, and the many fad diets that appear on social media, it’s easy to get confused about what a clean diet actually is. Here are some quick tips, along with common myths (and the facts) about healthy eating.

LOAD UP YOUR MEALS WITH

VEGETABLES, FRUITS, & WHOLE GRAINS



Get the Facts

MYTH Only fresh fruits and vegetables are healthy.

FACT A healthy diet can include fresh, frozen, canned and dried produce.

MYTH I should avoid the middle aisles of the grocery store.

FACT There are many foods throughout the grocery store that can be part of a healthy eating pattern.

MYTH Healthy food costs a lot of money.

FACT Healthy choices are easily affordable if you plan your meals and snacks and buy fresh fruits in season, and frozen foods year-round.

MYTH All processed foods are bad.

FACT Most foods you see at the grocery store have been processed in some way. Processed foods that don’t have a lot of added sugar or sodium can be a part of a healthy diet. Think: baby carrots, whole grain bread, plain yogurt, or chopped nuts.

MYTH Coconut oil is a healthy superfood.

FACT Coconut oil also contains up to 92% saturated fat. Coconut oil raises both good and bad cholesterol, with the rise in bad cholesterol outweighing the rise in good cholesterol.

Sources:

American Heart Association (heart.org)

Centers for Disease Control (cdc.gov)

Mayo Clinic (mayoclinic.org)

Heart Foundation of Australia (heartfoundation.org.au)



Low-fat &
Non-fat Dairy



Skinless
Poultry



Fish



Beans &
Legumes



Nuts &
Seeds



Nontropical
Vegetable Oils

INCLUDE THESE FOODS

HEALTHY EATING TIPS

- Prepare food at home to control what is added.
- Bring out the natural flavors in foods by using healthier cooking methods such as grilling, braising, roasting, searing, and sautéing.
- Add flavor with herbs, spices, black pepper and citrus juices instead of sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.
- Moderate your consumption of:
 - Salt/Sodium
 - Sugary drinks
 - Sweets
 - Fatty or processed meats – choose lean or extra-lean meats instead
- Compare food labels and choose nutritious foods with the lowest amounts of sodium.
- Be aware of portion and serving sizes and total calories eaten.

WAYS YOUR FOOD CHOICES AFFECT YOUR HEART'S HEALTH

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol
- Blood sugar

LIMIT YOUR INTAKE OF

- Coconut
- Meats and vegetables with creamy sauces
- Fried and breaded vegetables
- Canned fruit packed in heavy syrup
- Frozen fruit with sugar added
- Too much alcohol, which can raise your blood pressure. (Men should have no more than two drinks per day, women no more than one).

CHOOSE (AND COOK WITH) LOW-FAT PROTEIN SOURCES

- Low-fat dairy products like skim milk, low-fat (1%) milk, or yogurt
- Eggs
- Lean ground meats
- Fatty, cold-water fish such as salmon
- Legumes (beans, peas, and lentils)
- Soybeans and soy products like tofu
- Skinless poultry

Go Nuts for Heart Health!

Looking for a great snack that is good for your heart? The American Heart Association recommends eating up to four servings of unsalted nuts per week. Nuts make great snack foods, and are an inexpensive, delicious and portable option for taking with you on the go.

What's so special about nuts? Besides being packed with protein, most nuts contain at least some of these heart healthy substances: unsaturated fats, Omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, vitamin E, plant sterols, and L-arginine.

Bear in mind that nuts are high in calories; you'll want to limit your portion to roughly 1.5 ounces (a small handful). Be sure to choose raw or dry-roasted nuts, rather than nuts cooked in oil or nuts with added sugars, salts, chocolate, or flavorings.

