

Heart Healthy Diet: Tips for Lowering Cholesterol and Fat in Your Diet

Cholesterol

This fat-like substance is needed for good health. However, high cholesterol levels in the blood can cause heart and blood vessel diseases. Our bodies make cholesterol. We also get it from eating foods from animals, such as meat, milk, eggs, cheese and butter. Foods from plants, like fruits, vegetables and grains, **do not** contain cholesterol.

Saturated Fats

These fats are generally solid at room temperature. They tend to increase the amount of cholesterol in your blood.

Polyunsaturated and Mono-unsaturated Fats

These fats are generally liquid at room temperature. They tend to lower blood cholesterol levels.

How can I lower my blood cholesterol level?

- **Increase fiber (soluble fiber in particular) by including at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day.** Other sources of soluble fiber include oat products and dried beans.
- **Substitute mono-unsaturated fat (olive oil, peanut oil, and canola oil) or polyunsaturated fat (safflower, corn and sunflower oils) for saturated fat in your diet.** Although mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are a better choice than saturated fats, all fats should be used in moderation.

More on next page →

Learn more about your health care.



- **Limit high cholesterol foods** such as egg yolks, fatty meats, organ meats, butter, whole milk, cheese and other high fat dairy products.
- **Decrease total fat intake, especially saturated fat.** Saturated fat is mainly in animal fats, but it is also present in some foods from plants, such as solid shortenings (Crisco), cocoa butter and coconut and palm oils. These products are used in store-bought baked goods, non-dairy whipped toppings, cream substitutes, some peanut butters and some margarines. The names of common saturated fat and cholesterol sources in foods are listed below.

Sources of Saturated Fat and Cholesterol

Animal Fat

- Bacon Fat
- Beef Fat
- Butter
- Chicken fat and skin
- Chocolate
- Cocoa butter
- Coconut
- Coconut oil
- Cream
- Egg and egg yolk solids
- Ham fat
- Hardened fat or oil
- Lamb fat
- Lard
- Meat fat
- Palm kernel oil
- Palm oil
- Partially hydrogenated oil of any type
- Pork fat
- Turkey fat and skin
- Vegetable shortening
- Whole milk solids

To lower the cholesterol and saturated fat in your diet:

Meat and Meat Substitutes

- Bake, broil, roast or grill meats. Do not fry meats. Drain off any fat. Use a non-stick skillet and vegetable spray, such as Pam.
- Trim all visible fat from meats.
- Do not eat poultry skin. Remove skin before or after cooking and thoroughly clean poultry of fat before cooking.
- Refrigerate meat drippings and remove hardened fat. This can also be done with soups.

- Choose lean cuts of red meat such as:
 - ▶ Beef: Round, sirloin, or loin cuts
 - ▶ Veal: All trimmed cuts, except commercially ground
 - ▶ Pork: Loin, sirloin, and tenderloin
 - ▶ Lamb: Leg, arm, or loin
- Use lean ground round or sirloin instead of ground chuck or regular ground hamburger. Better yet, try ground turkey. Be sure the turkey skin has not been ground into the meat. Ground turkey can be used as a substitute for ground beef in any recipe. If you are limiting sodium, do not use turkey sausage or lunch meats, as they are very high in salt.
- Consider replacing a meat meal with fish, beans, vegetable patties, or tofu.
- Fish has a higher content of polyunsaturated fat than red meat. The fat in fish is omega-3 fatty acids. Try adding fish to your diet a few times each week.
- Limit use of egg yolks in baking or eating. Consider using egg whites or egg substitutes (Egg Beaters). Substitute 2 egg whites for one whole egg in recipes.

Dairy Products

- Use skim or 1% milk whenever possible for drinking and cooking.
- Choose low-fat or non-fat dairy products (with 5 grams of fat or less per serving):
 - ▶ Part skim mozzarella cheese
 - ▶ Part skim ricotta cheese
 - ▶ Non-fat plain yogurt or low-fat flavored yogurt
 - ▶ Evaporated skim milk
 - ▶ Non-fat or 1% cottage cheese
- Replace regular sour cream, cream cheese and gravies with reduced fat or fat-free versions.
- Replace cream, half and half, sour cream, whipped cream, non-dairy or frozen whipped toppings with lower fat versions or use these products occasionally in moderation.
- Replace high fat ice-cream with reduced fat ice cream, ice milk, low fat frozen yogurt, sherbet or sorbet.

- If you make pudding or custard, use skim or 1% milk.

Fruits and Vegetables

- Use raw or fresh cooked vegetables, plain frozen vegetables or low-sodium canned vegetables.
- Use fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits. Use canned fruits packed in natural juices or water.
- Avoid deep-fried vegetables such as French fried potatoes, zucchini or mushrooms.
- Use herbs to add flavor without adding fat.

Breads and Starches

- Use enriched or whole grain breads and cereals, bagels and English muffins. Other good choices are spaghetti, noodles, macaroni, rice and tortillas, but watch your portion sizes.
- Limit commercially prepared biscuits, pancakes, cornbread, waffles, muffins, sweet rolls, coffee cakes and baked desserts. These items can be used in moderation if prepared from “scratch” using acceptable margarine or vegetable oil and egg substitutes. Also watch packaged potato mixes, like au gratin or scalloped potatoes.
- If a frozen TV dinner is eaten on occasion, Healthy Choice, Lean Cuisine or other low fat brands are recommended.
- Avoid potato chips, corn chips and buttered popcorn. Use pretzels, fat free chips, air-popped or reduced fat microwave popcorn.

Fats

- Use low calorie or diet margarine instead of butter. Look for liquid vegetable oil or water as the first ingredient on the margarine label. Avoid margarines that list Partially Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils on the ingredient list.
- Use low calorie or fat-free mayonnaise and salad dressings. The fat and calories are much lower. Good choices are:
 - ▶ Hellman's Light or Reduced Fat Mayonnaise
 - ▶ Miracle Whip Light or No Fat Miracle Whip

- ▶ Any Weight Watcher's mayonnaise or margarine
- ▶ Any reduced fat, light or fat free dressings
- When dining out, order salad dressings and mayonnaise to be served on the side, then use only part of the portion they serve you. Dip your fork in the salad dressing and then into your salad.
- Avoid gravies and rich sauces, like Hollandaise or cheese sauces. Use low fat or fat free gravy.
- Avoid cream sauces on vegetables. Avoid any vegetable cooked with meat fat or bacon.
- Avoid fried food, especially if it is breaded. Frying food can actually triple the amount of calories, all from added fat! Use non-stick vegetable oil spray (such as PAM) for quick frying.

❖ **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.**