



EATING FOR HEART HEALTH

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE (CVD)

is a collective term for the conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels. The most common one is atherosclerosis which is a hardening of the arteries.

Atherosclerosis is a narrowing of the arteries caused by a build-up of fatty materials (fats and cholesterol) in the blood vessel walls. This makes the blood vessels less elastic and reduces the blood flow to vital organs. If a blockage occurs, stopping the flow of oxygen containing blood to the organs, a heart attack or stroke can occur.

WHAT YOU CAN CHANGE

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Overweight
- Poor diet
- Type 2 diabetes
- Insufficient activity
- Depression, social isolation
- Excessive alcohol intake

WHAT YOU CAN'T CHANGE

- Family history of CVD and ethnicity
- Age
- Gender
- Body shape
(e.g. "Apple" shape has a higher risk than "Pear" shape.)



YOUR DIET CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH:

FATS

Saturated and trans fats can increase blood cholesterol levels. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated (omega 3 and omega 6) fats help lower cholesterol levels. For heart health, reduce saturated fats and substitute them with unsaturated fats in your diet.

HEALTHY HEART TIPS



Use margarines made from poly and monounsaturated oils instead of butter

Remove the fat and skin off chicken and meat, use trim cuts and avoid processed meats

Choose lower fat milk, yoghurt, and cheese

Keep pastries and biscuits for special occasions only. Include fish in your meals at least twice per week

ENERGY BALANCE

Eating more kilojoules (energy) than you burn through activity leads to weight gain. For heart health, keep your weight in the healthy weight range by choosing foods low in energy (kilojoules) and high in nutrients.

HEALTHY HEART TIP



Eat less foods high in fat and sugar and reduce the portion size of your meals - include regular activity, but consult your doctor before starting an exercise program

SALT

There is clear evidence linking high salt intake with increased blood pressure. High blood pressure places increased stress on the heart. For heart health, if you have high blood pressure, have your blood pressure monitored regularly and limit the amount of salt that you eat.

HEALTHY HEART TIPS



Don't add salt to cooking and don't put the salt shaker on the table

Improve the flavour of food by using lemon juice, fresh herbs or spices in place of salt

Choose unsalted nuts or unsalted popcorn

FIBRE

Soluble fibre helps maintain healthy blood fat levels by helping reduce cholesterol absorption. For heart health, choose foods with soluble fibre, like wholegrain cereals, especially oats and barley, fruits and vegetables such as legumes.

HEALTHY HEART TIPS



Start the day with wholegrain cereal, oats or baked beans on wholegrain toast

Include legumes by adding hummus to sandwiches, or adding mixed beans to salad

Relax with a cup of green tea

Snack on fruit and at meal times fill half your plate with vegetables or salad

Enjoy dark berries like blueberries and blackberries for a delicious dessert

This fact sheet contains general information. Please consult your healthcare professional for specific advice for your personal situation. If you would like current information about our products please go to www.nestle.co.za

REFERENCES

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