

Total Nutrition

Eat To Your Heart's Content

(NAPS)—Recently, the American Heart Association unveiled a new set of dietary guidelines to help keep your heart healthy. Unlike earlier guidelines, this edition makes it easy: It's all about food, not percentage of fat, cholesterol or sodium. In a snapshot, here's how to eat heart healthfully.

1. Choose an overall healthy eating plan that includes:

- At least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day—and the greater the variety the better in terms of vitamins and minerals.
- Six or more grain products daily such as cereals, pastas and breads. Make three or more whole grains. Use the package label to check ingredients—whole grain, such as whole wheat, whole oats or brown rice, should be listed as one of the first ingredients.
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy foods, legumes, poultry and meat.
- At least two servings of fish per week.

These foods contain the vitamins, minerals, fiber and omega-3 fatty acids (in fish) that have a heart-protecting effect, plus they are nutrient-rich without containing an excessive amount of calories. (See Table)

2. Stick to a healthy weight.

This means balancing the calories going in with the calories going out (i.e., exercise). Limiting foods that offer lots of calories but little nutrition helps, as does a regular dose of physical activity. How your clothes fit will tell you if you have struck the right balance.

3. Keep your blood cholesterol level in line.

It's about more than just total cholesterol. Other levels of fat in the blood—including LDLs, HDLs and triglycerides—provide a more

telling picture of what is happening inside arteries. Diet influences these, along with the types of fat you eat. Saturated fat, the fat found in meats and full-fat dairy foods, plus trans-fatty acids found in some processed foods such as baked goods and commercially prepared fried foods, can increase artery-clogging LDLs and lower artery-clearing HDLs (a recipe for heart trouble). In contrast, the fats found in plant foods, including olives and nuts can lower cholesterol levels if they are part of a low-fat diet.

4. Maintain a normal blood pressure.

Following the diet recommendations listed under #1 plus maintaining a healthy weight are essential. So, too, is watching how much salt you eat. Exactly how much of an influence salt has on blood pressure varies from person to person. In people who are at risk for high blood pressure, studies show that cutting back on salt may reduce the risk of hypertension by at least 20 percent. Overuse of alcohol also can raise blood pressure. Recommendations are for no more than two drinks per day for men and one drink or less per day for women.

A Great Start Toward Total Nutrition—It's a package deal when it comes to eating to your heart's content. Whole foods, a wide variety of foods and those rich in nutrition, and a balance in calories are what will win your heart over.

Brought to you by Total cereals, breakfast cereals with 100% of the Daily Value of at least 11 vitamins and minerals.

Heart health foods for your shopping list:

FOOD	WHY
Fruits and vegetables	They contain antioxidants that protect arteries from being damaged.
Whole grain breads, cereals	For their fiber, folic acid and phytochemicals which lower cholesterol and homocysteine levels.
Soy (milk, nuts, burgers, etc.)	The protein in soybeans helps reduce cholesterol levels.
Low-fat dairy foods	Their potassium and calcium help keep blood pressure under control.
Legumes (kidney beans, navy beans, etc.)	Their fiber, folic acid and phytochemicals lower cholesterol and triglycerides.

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