

# Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

What you eat makes a difference to your heart. A heart-healthy eating plan emphasizes vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, includes fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and limits foods high in saturated fat and sugar-sweetened beverages and sweets. Use the guide below to determine how much you should eat from each food group.\*

## Food Group

## Heart-Healthy Options



### Whole Grains

Bread, cereal, starchy vegetables, rice, and pasta (6 ounces for women and 8 ounces for men)

- ♥ Whole grain versions of sliced bread, sandwich buns, dinner rolls, pita, English muffins, bagels
- ♥ Unsalted, low-fat crackers (such as graham crackers), pretzels, and popcorn
- ♥ Cooked hot cereals (not instant) and whole grain cold cereals
- ♥ Rice and pasta (such as whole grain noodles, spaghetti, and macaroni)



### Vegetables

(without added fat)  
(2½ cups)

- ♥ Fresh, frozen, or no-salt-added canned vegetables (such as green beans, string beans, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, squash, broccoli, and okra)



### Fruits

(2 cups)

- ♥ Fresh, frozen, canned (in fruit juice rather than syrup), or dried fruits



### Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products

Milk, yogurt, and cheese  
(3 cups)

- ♥ Fat-free or low-fat (1 percent) milk
- ♥ Fat-free or low-fat yogurt
- ♥ Cheeses lower in fat and sodium



### Protein

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, and legumes  
(5½ ounces)

- ♥ Chicken or turkey without the skin
- ♥ Fish
- ♥ Lean cuts of beef, such as round, sirloin, chuck, loin, and extra-lean ground beef
- ♥ Lean cuts of pork, such as the leg, shoulder, tenderloin, and lean ham
- ♥ Eggs
- ♥ Cooked dry beans and peas (such as field peas, crowder peas, black-eyed peas)
- ♥ Frozen butter beans and lima beans
- ♥ Nuts and seeds



### Fats and oils

(less than 22 grams of saturated fat)

- ♥ Soft tub margarine
- ♥ Oils (canola, corn, safflower, olive, peanut, or sesame)



### Sweets and added sugars

Limit sugar and other sweeteners. Ask your healthcare provider about how much sugar or other sweetener is okay for you.

- ♥ Frozen desserts (such as frozen juice pops, low-fat frozen yogurt, or low-fat ice cream)
- ♥ Low-fat cake and cookies (such as angel food cake, fig bar cookies, ginger snaps, animal crackers, vanilla wafers, and graham crackers)

\*Serving sizes depend on how many calories you need, which is based on your age, gender, and physical activity.

