

Heart Disease & Nutrition

1 in 3 adults have some form of heart/cardiovascular disease. Many related deaths and risk factors are preventable, and food choices have a big impact on your heart's health, even if you have other risk factors.

If you are at risk or already have heart disease, then a heart healthy diet is the perfect prescription to reducing risk factors and becoming healthier. Adopting a heart healthy diet and lifestyle is a great way to reduce or eliminate risk factors. To lower your risk, your diet should be:

- **Low in saturated and trans fats-** Saturated fats can increase LDL or “bad” cholesterol levels in the blood
- **Increase whole grain consumption-** Eating whole grains is associated with a lower risk of heart disease, because it is high in fiber and important vitamins
- **High in fiber-** Soluble fiber found in fruits and vegetables reduces cholesterol and the progression of atherosclerosis
- **Low in salt, sodium and sugar-** Salt and sodium increase blood pressure, and sugar can lead to weight gain

~Heart Healthy Recipe~

Black Bean-Smothered Sweet Potatoes

Serves 2

Ingredients

2 medium sweet potatoes
1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed
1 medium tomato, diced
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

Directions

Prick sweet potatoes with a fork in several places. Microwave on High, until tender all the way to the center, 12 to 15 minutes. (Alternatively, place in a baking dish and bake at 425°F until tender all the way to the center, about 1 hour.)

Meanwhile, combine beans, tomato, oil, cumin, coriander and salt in a medium microwave-safe bowl; microwave on High until just heated through, 2 to 3 minutes. (Alternatively, heat in a small saucepan over medium heat.)

When just cool enough to handle, slash each sweet potato lengthwise, press open to make a well in the center and spoon the bean mixture into the well. Top each with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkle of cilantro

Nutritional Analysis	Per serving
Calories Per Serving	309
Total Fat	7 g
Saturated Fat	2 g
Monounsaturated Fat	4 g
Cholesterol	6 mg
Sodium	492 mg
Carbohydrates	52 g
Fiber	13 g
Protein	11 g
Potassium	1020 mg

Ways to Help Make Your Diet *Heart Healthy*

Limit fats: Look for lean cuts of beef and pork, especially ones that have “loin” or “round” in the name. Remove fat from meat before cooking; take the skin off chicken and turkey. Eat plant foods as sources of protein, including soybeans, pinto beans, lentils and nuts. Limit baked goods and processed foods as they are large sources of trans fats. Check food labels and avoid products with partially hydrogenated oils.

Increase whole grains: Use recipes that call for whole grains or whole grain flour when baking. Mix whole grain pasta in with regular pasta. Use whole grain tortillas.

Increase fiber: Try to get at least 3 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruits a day. Don't peel the skin of fruits like apples and peaches; most of the fiber is in the skin. Look for products with at least 20% daily value of fiber. Increase fiber in the diet slowly.

Reduce salt & sodium: Season foods with herbs, spices, garlic, onions, peppers and lemon or lime juice to add flavor. Rinse off canned vegetables to reduce sodium up to 40%! Use as little salt in cooking as possible. You can cut at least half the salt from most recipes.

Six Popular Foods High in Sodium

1 BREADS & ROLLS
Some foods that you eat several times a day, such as bread, add up to a lot of sodium even though each serving may not seem high in sodium. Check the labels to find lower-sodium varieties.

2 COLD CUTS & CURED MEATS
One 2 oz. serving, or 6 thin slices, of deli meat can contain as much as half of your daily recommended dietary sodium. Look for lower-sodium varieties of your favorite lunch meats.

3 PIZZA
A slice of pizza with several toppings can contain more than half of your daily recommended dietary sodium. Limit the cheese and add more veggies to your next slice.

4 POULTRY
Sodium levels in poultry can vary based on preparation methods. You will find a wide range of sodium in poultry products, so it is important to choose wisely.

5 SOUP
Sodium in one cup of canned soup can range from 100 to as much as 940 milligrams—more than half of your daily recommended intake. Check the labels to find lower sodium varieties.

6 SANDWICHES
A sandwich or burger from a fast food restaurant can contain more than 100 percent of your daily suggested dietary sodium. Try half a sandwich with a side salad instead.