



10 BEST FOODS FOR HEART HEALTH: TIPS YOU NEED TO LEARN NOW

BY: WELLWORKS FOR YOU

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "heart-healthy diet?" Probably the words "bland," "boring," or "blah". But there's actually nothing bland or boring about these best foods for heart health—and your choices are abundant and delicious.

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QUICK FACT

DID YOU KNOW?

On average, a person's risk for melanoma doubles if he or she has had more than five sunburns. Be sure to be cautious and wear sunscreen while at the beach and pool this summer to avoid increasing your risk!

According to the Centers for Disease and Control Prevention (CDC), approximately 610,000 people die of heart disease in the United States every year. While people commonly associate heart disease with high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and smoking; poor diet is also an important contributing factor.

To keep your heart healthy and your palette satisfied, take a look at 10 of the best foods for heart health to add to your heart-healthy foods list.

Fish

Salmon and other "oily" fish like tuna, sardines, and mackerel are heart-healthy powerhouses. They contain high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which are known to lower the risk of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) and atherosclerosis (plaque build-up).

Nuts

The unsaturated fats in nuts help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise HDL (good) cholesterol. Some nut varieties, like walnuts, are also high in omega-3s. Look for almonds, pistachios, peanuts, walnuts, and macadamias without high amounts of added salt.

Berries

Berries rich in color are packed full of anthocyanins, which are antioxidants that help decrease blood pressure. Berries also contain vitamin C and fiber—and they're delicious!

Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate (at least 70% cacao) contains flavonoids (they promote healthy blood circulation and supple arteries) and polyphenols (antioxidants that reduce inflammation and plaque build-up). Dark chocolate is also an excellent source of magnesium, a mineral essential to heart function.

Legumes

With legumes (beans, lentils, and peas) the possibilities really are endless. They're delicious in soups and salads, with rice, in place of meat in tacos and quesadillas, and when tossed with some spinach and garlic. Beans are full of heart-healthy protein, folate, and cholesterol-lowering fiber.

Lean Meats

A few of the most heart-healthy meats you can eat are skinless chicken, turkey, and other unprocessed lean meats.

Leafy Greens

Broccoli, spinach, kale and other dark leafy greens are loaded with healthy vitamins and minerals. These veggies contain combinations of vitamins A, C, E, K, and several types of B. Dark leafy greens are also packed with antioxidants that have been proven to decrease the risk of heart disease.

Non-Tropical Oils

Instead of vying for tropical oils, use vegetable-based oils such as canola, olive, corn, and sunflower oils. (Remember: with any cooking oil, a little goes a long way.)

Yogurt (Low-Fat)

Eating healthy, low-fat yogurt can help your heart by keeping blood pressure and cholesterol in check. Look for yogurt that contains "live and active" cultures, which also aid in digestion and a healthy metabolism.

Avocado

A quarter of an avocado contains a mere 6 grams of total fat—monounsaturated fat (the good kind!) Add avocado to your toast, a salad, or all by itself. Your heart will thank you.

FEATURED RECIPE: SUMMER VEGETABLE SESAME NOODLES

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium yellow squash
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 8 ounces soba noodles
- ¼ cup ponzu sauce
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1-pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 scallions, sliced
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. Put a large saucepan of water on to boil.
2. Spiralize squash and zucchini into medium-thick "noodles." (Alternatively, cut them lengthwise into long, thin strips with a vegetable peeler. Stop when you reach the seeds in the middle—seeds make the strips fall apart.) Place the vegetable noodles and corn in a large colander.
3. Cook soba noodles in the boiling water according to package directions. Pour over the vegetables in the colander to drain.
4. Meanwhile, combine ponzu, tahini, oil, vinegar and salt in a large bowl.
5. Add the soba and vegetable noodles to the bowl along with tomatoes and scallions. Toss to combine. Serve topped with sesame seeds.

NUTRITION

Serving Size: About 2 cups

Per serving: 387 calories; 13 g fat(2 g sat); 6 g fiber; 61 g carbohydrates; 15 g protein; 76 mcg folate; 0 mg cholesterol; 6 g sugars; 0 g added sugars; 947 IU vitamin A; 27 mg vitamin C; 61 mg calcium; 2 mg iron; 629 mg sodium; 621 mg potassium

Source: <http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/274117/summer-vegetable-sesame-noodles/>



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HEALTH OBSERVANCE UV SAFETY MONTH

Are you one of the many people who look forward to basking in the sun during the summer months? Or perhaps you occasionally hop into a tanning bed for that sun-kissed look for a special occasion. No matter the reason, you need to get on board with UV safety and stay informed! As relaxing as you may find sun-bathing, it is even more important to be cautious and understand the risks of excessive sun exposure and the damages it can cause you. So, grab a hat and some shade and check out our tips below!

Some harmful effects of unprotected sun

- Vision problems and damage to your eyes
- Suppression of the immune system
- Premature aging of the skin
- Skin cancer
- Cataracts
- Sunburn

Ways to minimize sun damage

- Choose the right sunscreen for your skin and apply it correctly, the FDA recommends at least 15 SPF
- Stay in the shade
- Cover up with shade-protective clothing
- Stay away from artificial UV light, such as tanning beds
- Wear sunglasses

While the sun also has health benefits such as increasing Vitamin D levels, the FDA encourages all of us to stay safe this summer by following the guidelines above and not taking advantage of too much sun!

Sources:

https://www.va.gov/QUALITYOFCARE/education/UV_Safety_Awareness_Month.asp, <https://www.fda.gov/radiation-emitting-products/tanning/risks-tanning>, <https://voice.ons.org/stories/raise-awareness-in-july-for-ultraviolet-safety-and-skin-cancer-risk>