

Foods for a Healthy Heart

Help Chef Metz as he
explores and learns about

**FOODS FOR A
HEALTHY HEART**



Metz
CULINARY MANAGEMENT

The Nutritious Friends program promotes a different fruit or vegetable or healthy food concept each month through posters, decorations, educational materials, point of purchase materials, student interaction and incorporation in the cafeteria menu. Nutritious Friends proves nutrition education can be fun as students take part in promotional games, learn interesting nutrition facts and sample new recipes.

Foods for a Healthy Heart

Top 20 Heart-Healthy Foods

Heart healthy foods are low in fat and cholesterol. They are high in fiber and have a lot of phytonutrients. They are wholesome foods; that is, they are not processed foods. Many are plant-based foods.

1. Extra Virgin Olive Oil

This oil, made from the first press of olives, is especially rich in heart-healthy antioxidants called polyphenols, as well as healthy monounsaturated fats. When olive oil replaces saturated fat (like butter), it can help lower cholesterol levels. Polyphenols may protect blood vessels. Tip: Use for salads, on cooked veggies, with bread. Look for cold-pressed and use within six months.

2. Salmon

A top food for heart health, salmon is rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s lower risk of rhythm disorders, which can lead to sudden cardiac death. Salmon also lowers blood triglycerides and reduces inflammation. The American Heart Association recommends two servings of salmon or other oily fish a week. Cooking Tip: Bake in foil with herbs and veggies, or grill salmon with a yummy rub or marinade. Toss extra cooked salmon in fish tacos and salads.

3. Flaxseed (ground)

This shiny, honey-colored seed has three elements that are good for your heart: fiber, phytochemicals called lignans, and an omega-3 fatty acid found in plants. Tip: Grind flaxseed for the best nutrition. Add it to cereal, oatmeal, homemade muffins or cookies, yogurt, or even mustard on a sandwich.

4. Oatmeal

Oats are rich in soluble fiber. Oats in all forms can help your heart by lowering LDL, the bad cholesterol. A warm bowl of oatmeal fills you up for hours, fights snack attacks, and helps keep blood sugar levels stable over time. Oats are also a good source of magnesium, potassium, folate, niacin, and calcium. Cooking Tip: Swap oats for one-third of the flour in pancakes, muffins, and baked goods. Use oats instead of bread crumbs in cooking. Top hot oatmeal with fresh berries. Oatmeal-and-raisin cookies are a hearty treat.

5. Black or Kidney Beans

Mild, tender beans are packed with heart-healthy nutrients including folate, antioxidants, magnesium for lowering blood pressure, and fiber – which helps control both cholesterol and blood sugar levels. Tip: Give soup or salad a nutrient boost – stir in some beans.

6. Tuna

Tuna is a good source of heart-healthy omega-3s; it generally costs less than salmon. Albacore (white tuna) contains more omega-3s than other tuna varieties. Here's a tasty lunch idea: Salad greens, fresh fruit, canned tuna. Nutrition Tip: Save fat and calories; choose tuna packed in water, not oil.

7. Avocado

Packed with monounsaturated fat, avocados can help lower bad cholesterol levels while raising the amount of good cholesterol in your body. Avocados allow for the absorption of other phytonutrients – especially beta-carotene and lycopene – which are essential for heart health. Tip: Add a bit of avocado to a sandwich or spinach salad to increase the amount of heart-healthy fats in your diet.

8. Nuts

Almonds. Almonds are chock full of vitamin E, plant sterols, fiber, and heart-healthy fats. Almonds may help lower LDL cholesterol and reduce the risk of diabetes. Tip: Slivered almonds go well with vegetables, fish, chicken, even desserts, and just a handful adds a good measure of heart health to your meals. Mix a few almonds (and berries) into low-fat yogurt, trail mix, or fruit salads. Toast to enhance almonds' creamy, mild flavor.

Walnuts. A small handful of walnuts (1.5 ounces) a day may lower your cholesterol and reduce inflammation in the arteries of the heart. Walnuts are packed with omega-3s, monounsaturated fats, and fiber. The benefits come when walnuts replace bad fats, like those in chips and cookies – and you don't increase your calorie count. Tip: Walnuts add flavorful crunch to salads, pastas, cookies, muffins, even pancakes.

9. Fresh Herbs

Fresh herbs make many other foods heart-healthy when they replace salt, fat, and cholesterol. Herbs like oregano, rosemary, thyme, sage also contain antioxidants.

10. Soy

Tofu. Make soy protein the main attraction more often at dinner time by cooking with tofu instead of red meat. You gain all the heart-healthy minerals, fiber, and polyunsaturated fats of soy – and you avoid a load of artery-clogging saturated fat. Tip: Tasty tofu is easy. Chop firm tofu, marinate, then grill or stir-fry, going easy on the oil. Add tofu to soups for protein with no added fat.

Edamame. These green soybeans are moving beyond Japanese restaurants, where they're a tasty appetizer. They're packed with soy protein, which can lower blood triglyceride levels. A half cup of edamame also has 9 grams of cholesterol-lowering fiber – equal to four slices of whole-wheat bread. Tip: Try frozen edamame, boil, and serve warm in the pod.

11. Low-Fat Yogurt

While fat-free/low-fat dairy is most often touted for bone health, these foods can help control high blood pressure, too. Milk is high in calcium and potassium, and yogurt has twice as much of these important minerals. To really boost the calcium and minimize the fat, choose low-fat or non-fat varieties. Tip: Use low-fat or fat-free milk instead of water in instant oatmeal, hot chocolate, and dried soups.

12. Berries

Berries like strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, and blueberries contain antioxidants which can help reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer. For example, look at blueberries. The list of healthy nutrients in blueberries is long: anthocyanins give them their deep blue color and support heart health. Blueberries also contain ellagic acid, beta-carotene, lutein, vitamin C, folate, magnesium, potassium, and fiber. Tip: Add fresh or dried blueberries (or any berries!) to salads, cereal, pancakes, or yogurt. Puree a batch for a dessert sauce.

13. Carrots

The latest research on carrots shows these sweet, crunchy veggies may help control blood sugar levels. They're also a top cholesterol-fighting food, thanks to ample amounts of soluble fiber – the kind found in oats. Cooking Tip: Baby carrots are sweet for lunch. Sneak shredded carrots into spaghetti sauce and/or muffin batter.

14. Dark green leafy vegetables

Spinach. Spinach is high in lutein (a carotenoid); folate, potassium, and fiber. These nutrients can keep your heart in great shape! Tip: Pick spinach (not lettuce) for nutrient-packed salads and sandwiches.

Swiss Chard. The dark green, leafy vegetable is rich in potassium and magnesium, minerals that help control blood pressure. Fiber, vitamin A, and the antioxidants, lutein and zeaxanthin, add to the heart-healthy profile. Tip: Serve with grilled meats or as a bed for fish. Sauté with olive oil and garlic until wilted, season with herbs and pepper.

15. Broccoli

In studies, broccoli has been shown to protect the heart from damage during a heart attack. Broccoli's key nutrients include selenium, which may also curb cancer risk. Tip: Chop fresh broccoli into store-bought soup.

16. Sweet potato

Sweet potatoes are a hearty, healthy substitute for white potatoes. Lots of fiber, vitamin A, and lycopene add to their heart-healthy profile. Tips: Enhance sweet potatoes natural sweetness with cinnamon and lime juice, instead of sugary toppings. Microwave in a zip-lock baggie for lunch. Eat plain, or with pineapple bits.

17. Oranges

This sweet, juicy fruit contains the cholesterol-fighting fiber pectin – as well as potassium, which helps control blood pressure. A small study shows that OJ may improve blood vessel function and modestly lower blood pressure through the antioxidant hesperidin. Nutrition Tip: A medium orange averages 62 calories, with 3 grams of fiber.

18. Tomatoes

Tomatoes are loaded with vitamins A and C, as well as the phytonutrient lycopene, which has been shown to reduce heart disease risk. Nutrition Tip: Processed tomato foods actually have a higher bioavailability of lycopene, so making salsa and pasta sauce may be an even better source of lycopene than raw, uncooked tomatoes.

19. Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe contains beta-carotene, which is an antioxidant and can be converted to vitamin A in the body. Antioxidants fight cellular damage from free radicals and can protect the heart. Tip: A fragrant ripe cantaloupe is perfect for breakfast, lunch, potluck dinners. Simply cut and enjoy!

20. Dark chocolate

Dark chocolate and cocoa can reduce blood pressure, improve blood flow, have mild anti-clotting effects and may help prevent plaque formation in arteries. Dark chocolate has the phytonutrients resveratrol and cocoa phenols (flavonoids). Tip: A dark chocolate truffle a day may help lower blood pressure, but choose 70% or higher cocoa content.

Foods for a Healthy Heart

10 FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR HEARTS

1. Early Egyptians believed that the heart and other major organs had wills of their own and would move around inside the body.
2. The average adult heart beats 72 times a minute; 100,000 times a day; 3,600,000 times a year; and 2,500,000,000 times during a lifetime.
3. Grab a tennis ball and squeeze it tightly: that's how hard the beating heart works to pump blood.
4. Though it weighs just 11 ounces on average, a healthy heart pumps 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels each day.
5. A kitchen faucet would need to be turned on all the way for at least 45 years to equal the amount of blood pumped by the heart in an average lifetime.
6. Every day, the heart creates enough energy to drive a truck 20 miles. In a lifetime, that is equivalent to driving to the moon and back.
7. The heart pumps blood to almost all of the body's 75 trillion cells. Only the corneas (in the eyes) receive no blood supply.
8. A woman's heart typically beats faster than a man's. The heart of an average man beats approximately 70 times a minute, whereas the average woman has a heart rate of 78 per minute.
9. When you are exercising, it takes about 10-12 seconds for your blood to go from your heart to your big toe and back again. That is fast!
10. Your body has about 6 quarts of blood. These six quarts of blood circulate through the body three times every minute. In one day, the blood travels a total of 12,000 miles—that's four times the distance across the US from coast to coast.

Bonus!

lub-DUB, lub-DUB, lub-DUB. Sound familiar? If you listen to your heart beat, you'll hear two sounds. These "lub" and "DUB" sounds are made by the heart valves as they open and close.

Chef Metz Cooks Up

HEART HEALTH



Chef Metz knows that a strong heart will keep us healthy now and into the future. How do we keep a healthy heart? Eating right and being physically active, of course!

Eat Right!

Eat a Rainbow: Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are nutrition powerhouses! Cholesterol-free, high in fiber, and most are low-fat/low-calories. Different colored fruits and veggies provide our bodies with a variety of wonderful phytonutrients. "Phytonutrients" are chemical compounds naturally found in foods like fruits and veggies. Phytonutrients may act as antioxidants, protect our immune system, and may even be protective against heart disease.

Focus on Fiber.

Fiber does great things for the body! It helps keep our digestion running smoothly and keeps our hearts healthy by lowering cholesterol levels. Find foods high in fiber and eat some everyday!

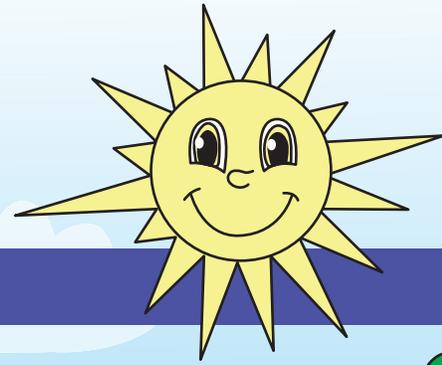
Of course, there are fruits and veggies, but also consider whole grains (like brown rice, whole wheat bread, or oatmeal), nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews), and legumes (like peanuts, black beans, chick peas, or lentils) as fabulous fiber foods. High fiber is heart-smart! Oh and Chef Metz also reminds us that when eating high-fiber foods, be sure to drink more water too!

Maintain an active lifestyle!

To keep a healthy heart, boys and girls need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Being active doesn't have to mean joining a gym or a sports team. We can simply try to be more active in our everyday lives too! Ten minutes of activity here; ten minutes of activity there - it all adds up! Some great ways to be active:

- Cut the grass, vacuum the house, everyday chores around the house - keeps your heart healthy and our families will appreciate it!
- Take the stairs instead of escalators or the elevator. Have mom or dad park the car farther away from the store and walk across the parking lot.
- Having fun - playing tag with friends, riding a bike, or walking the dog. It all adds up to your 60 minutes!

Super Foods Make Super Kids



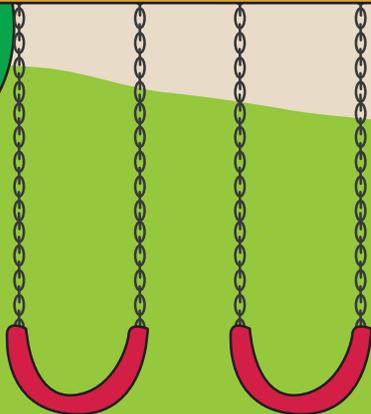
Being Healthy is Fun!



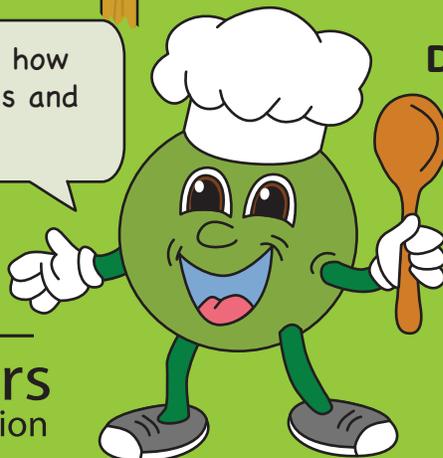
Tase T Lentil



Chel C Chickpea



Come with us to see how nutritious peas, lentils and chickpeas are!



Dan D Pea



Northern
Pulse Growers
Association

Meet Chel C Chickpea, Dan D Pea and Tase T Lentil. They would like you to join their adventure!