

## Toolkit No. 10

# Protect Your Heart: Plan and Cook Heart-Healthy Meals

You can protect your heart and blood vessels by making smart choices when you cook. Small changes can make a big difference in your health. See the sections below for tips on how to:

- plan heart-healthy meals and snacks
- cook heart-healthy meals

Place a check mark next to 2 or 3 things you're ready, willing, and able to try this week. Then use this list for more ideas later on.

For healthy recipes and food information, visit [diabetes.org/recipes](http://diabetes.org/recipes)

## Plan heart-healthy meals and snacks

### Choose heart-healthy protein foods.

- Eat fish 2 or 3 times a week. Albacore tuna, herring, mackerel, rainbow trout, sardines, and salmon are great choices.
- Include plant protein foods such as black beans and lentils, tofu and soy-based “burger.”
- Buy poultry such as chicken, turkey, and Cornish hen without the skin (or remove the skin).
- Choose lean cuts of beef such as round, sirloin, and flank steak; tenderloin; rib, and rump roast; T-bone, porterhouse, and cubed steak.
- Pick lean types of pork: ham, Canadian bacon, tenderloin, and rib and loin chops.
- Buy sandwich meats with 3 grams of fat or less in each ounce.
- Other lean choices are leg of lamb, lamp chops, and roast lamb, and game, such as venison.

### Have a meatless meal at least once a week.

- Cook a vegetable pizza or lasagna.
- Try meatless chili with kidney beans.
- Make black bean soup or vegetable soup.
- Stir-fry vegetables with tofu.



Choose heart-healthy foods to protect your heart and blood vessels.

### Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy foods.

- Choose fat-free (skim) milk, ½% milk, or 1% milk.
- Use fat-free or low-fat yogurt and cottage cheese.
- Buy reduced fat cheeses.

### Choose whole-grain foods.

- Buy whole wheat bread instead of white bread. Choose breads with whole wheat as the first ingredient.
- Choose brown rice instead of white rice.
- Eat whole wheat pasta instead of white pasta
- Have whole corn tortilla instead of white flour tortilla
- Try quinoa, barley, bulgur or faro for new flavors.
- Have a snack like popcorn instead of chips or pretzels.

### Eat more vegetables and fruits.

- Have a salad or vegetable soup at lunch and at dinner.
- Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, and salad.

- Eat dark green and dark yellow vegetables every day, such as broccoli, spinach, collards, kale, carrots, squash, and peppers.
- Snack on cut-up raw vegetables and fruit.
- Choose fruit for dessert—or when you're craving something sweet.

**Cut back on salt.**

- Check food labels and choose foods with less salt (sodium).

**Cook heart-healthy meals**

**Use these healthy cooking tips.**

- Broil, microwave, bake, roast, poach, steam, or grill your food.
- Use nonstick pans and cooking sprays.
- Trim fat from meat and poultry.
- Roast food on a rack to let the fat drip off.

- Make soup a day ahead. Then refrigerate the soup. Before you reheat it, lift off the layer of fat that has risen to the top and throw it away.

**Use healthy fats for cooking.**

- Cook with olive oil, canola oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, or safflower oil.
- Avoid lard, bacon grease, butter and stick margarine.

**Boost the flavor with seasonings and sauces instead of salt and fat.**

- Look for recipes that use herbs, spices, and lemon juice for flavor.
- Cook without adding salt.
- Try lemon juice, lemon pepper, or other salt-free seasoning on fish.
- Marinate chicken in low-fat Italian dressing and then bake or grill it.

Smart food choices: What to try and why		
Instead of...	Try this...	Why?
whole milk or 2% milk	fat-free milk or 1% milk	less saturated fat, and less cholesterol
regular cheese	reduced-fat cheese	
snack foods like chips and pretzels	trans fat-free, or low-fat snack foods, popcorn or fruit	less saturated fat and trans fat, fewer calories
regular mayonnaise	reduced fat mayonnaise	less total fat, fewer calories
sour cream	fat-free sour cream or plain Greek yogurt	less saturated fat
regular stick margarine	trans fat-free soft tub margarine	no trans fats, fewer calories
fried chicken	baked chicken	less saturated fat, fewer calories
bologna, salami, or pastrami	sliced turkey, lean ham, or low-fat sandwich meats	less saturated fat, fewer calories
pork chop	pork loin	less saturated fat
short ribs	grilled or baked salmon or tuna, grilled T-bone steak	less saturated fat



**Provided By**



For this and other health education sheets, please call StayWell's Health Management Department at 477-5091 ext. 1185.

