

WHAT FOODS DO YOU EAT?



Your eating habits can be a powerful tool

The foods you eat can help you reduce your chances of having a heart attack or stroke. In just a few minutes, you can learn how well your food choices are working for you. Follow these three steps:

1. For each type of food, put a check mark in the column that shows what you **typically** eat.
2. For each column, add up your check marks and write down how many checks you made in that column in the space called "Number of check marks in column". Make sure to include checkmarks from both pages.
3. Look at the "Number of check marks in column" totals to learn how well your eating habits are serving your health goals. The more check marks you have in the green column, the healthier your eating habits are.

How often do I eat these foods?	✓	✓	✓
Vegetables	3 or more times every day	2 or more times every day	Once a day or less
Fruits	3 or more times every day	2 or more times every day	Once a day or less
Beans & legumes (lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans)	Every day	Every other day	Occasionally
Whole grains, oatmeal, oat bran	2 or more daily	Every 1-2 days	Occasionally
Nuts, seeds, nut milk, nut butters (peanut or almond butter)	Every day	Every other day	Occasionally
Tofu, soy milk, soy yogurt	Every day	Every other day	Occasionally

How often do I choose these?	✓	✓	✓
Egg whites or egg substitutes	Always	Occasionally	Rarely or Never
Baked or broiled chicken, turkey (no skin), fat-free lunch meats	Always	Occasionally	Rarely or Never
Fish (not fried) high in omega-3 (salmon, herring, mackerel, trout, sardines)	Always	Occasionally	Rarely or Never
Nonfat dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese)	Always	Occasionally	Rarely or Never
Monounsaturated fats (such as olive, canola oils)	Always	Occasionally	Rarely or Never

In a typical week, how often do I eat the following?	Rarely or never	✓	Occasionally	✓	Usually	✓
Bacon, sausage, lunch meat, hotdogs	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Organ meats such as liver and kidneys	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Beef, pork, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, roasts	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Fried foods: fried chicken, potato chips, french fries	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Cheeses (other than nonfat cheeses or nonfat cottage cheese)	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Doughnuts, pastries, pies, cakes, cookies, ice cream, chocolate	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Whole or 2% milk	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	

In a typical week, I eat:	Rarely or never	✓	Occasionally	✓	Usually	✓
Whole eggs	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Fast foods or restaurant foods high in fat	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Butter or margarine on food or food cooked in butter or margarine	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Mayonnaise, sour cream, or creamy salad dressing (not low calorie or nonfat)	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Skin on chicken or turkey	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Foods high in coconut or palm oil, coconut milk, or trans fats	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Nondairy creamer in coffee or frozen nondairy toppings on desserts (not nonfat)	Rarely or never		Occasionally		Usually	
Number of check marks in column:						

What does your score mean?

More check marks in the green column (on the left) means your food choices are helping to reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

If most of your check marks are in the green column (on the left), congratulations! You are following an ideal, plant-based, high-fiber, heart-healthy diet.

If most of your check marks are in the yellow column (in the center), you are working toward a low-fat, high-fiber diet. Having a diet that is low in fat and high in fiber can help decrease your risk of heart attack and stroke. Consider moving in the direction of a more plant-based diet for even more benefit.

If most of your check marks are in the red column (on the right), you could be facing more health risks by continuing to eat this way. Try to find changes in the green column you are willing to make to help lower your cholesterol and improve your health.

Ways to improve your diet

The more you can move toward a plant-based eating plan, the more your food choices can help reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke. Try these techniques when you decide what to eat:

- Choose whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and beans most of the time.
- If you eat meat, select lean cuts that are baked, grilled, or broiled. Keep meat portions small.
- Include nuts, seeds, tofu or other soy-based foods instead of meat or poultry.
- Try calcium fortified soy, nut or rice milk as a plant based alternative to cow's milk.
- Consider taking a multi-vitamin to get adequate calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B-12, especially if you are vegan.
- Avoid added fats. If you add fats, choose monounsaturated fats such as olive or canola oil.
- Try nonfat foods (without added sugar) more often.
- Avoid large portion sizes. Eating more calories than your body needs can contribute to weight gain. Being overweight puts you at higher risk of having a heart attack or stroke.
- Limit the amount of foods and beverages you consume that contain salt, sugar and fat. Consider eliminating or at least limiting french fries, potato chips, fried foods, alcohol, and sweets.

Additional Resources

If you would like more information about choosing foods to reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke:

Contact your Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center or Department for additional information, programs, and other resources.

Connect to kp.org to access health and drug encyclopedias, interactive programs, health classes, and much more.

At kp.org/healthylifestyles you can use the online HealthMedia Nourish® program to create your own personalized heart healthy eating plan.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.

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