



HEART UK
THE CHOLESTEROL CHARITY



Healthy Eating Guide

Advice for those keen to lower their cholesterol

HEART UK – The Cholesterol Charity

providing expert support, education and influence

Eatwell Guide

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy	Fat	Saturated	Sugars	Salt
1046kJ 260kcal	3.0g	1.3g	34g	0.9g
	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day



Eat less often and in small amounts

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar



6-8 a day

Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.
Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



Dairy and alternatives
Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Oil & spreads
Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

YOUR AT A GLANCE GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING

Dietary advice to help lower your cholesterol (and triglycerides*) and help keep your heart healthy

www.heartuk.org.uk



FOOD GROUP	KEY MESSAGES	BEST CHOICE	OCCASIONALLY	BEST AVOIDED
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES	Eat at least 5 or more portions everyday. Choose a wide variety.	Fresh, frozen, dried, canned fruit and vegetables ♡. Canned in natural juices and water. Vegetable based soups (without cream).	Canned fruit in syrup (drain the syrup), fruit juice.	Coleslaw, vegetables fried in batter (onion rings etc.), pakoras and samosas.
POTATOES, BREAD, RICE, PASTA AND OTHER STARCHY CARBOHYDRATES	Eat more 🌾 wholegrains and high fibre versions.	🌾 Wholegrain varieties of bread, chapatti without fat, pitta bread, flour tortillas, bagel, pasta, rice, noodles. 🌿 Wholegrain breakfast cereals, ♡ oats, couscous, pearl barley, bulger wheat, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yam and plantain. Breadsticks, rye crispbreads, water biscuits, plain rice cakes, fruit teacakes, crumpets, malt bread, English muffins.	Naan bread, paratha, roast potatoes, oven chips. Crackers and semi-sweet biscuits (check label for lowest saturated fat content), Homemade cakes and puddings (using best choice ingredients) such as carrot cake, muffins, cereal bars, fruit loaves, fruit based puddings.	Garlic bread, croissants, waffles, puris, pilau, biryani and fried rice. Sugar and chocolate coated breakfast cereals. Deep fried chips, pizza with fatty meat or too much cheese. Cakes, pasties, pies, steamed and sponge puddings, doughnuts, filled or coated fancy biscuits, shortbread.
BEANS, PULSES, FISH, EGGS, MEAT AND OTHER PROTEINS	Eat more beans and pulses; 2 portions of fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat, and no more than 500g cooked weight a week.	♡ Pulses including baked beans, peas, kidney beans, chick peas, lentils. Rinse if canned in salt/sugar. Reduced fat hummus. ♡ Soya products such as soya mince, soya/edamame beans, tofu, soya nuts. Quorn pieces, Quorn mince. All fish and shellfish ^{FH} . Oily fish 🐟 include fresh/canned mackerel, sardines, pilchards, salmon, trout and herrings. Eggs boiled, scrambled, poached. 3-4 a week ^{FH} . ♡ Nuts and nut butters with less than 10% saturated fat, all seeds (flaxseed, sunflower, pumpkin, sesame etc). Lean pork, ham, lamb, beef, extra lean mince. Kidney ^{FH} . Chicken and turkey without skin. Veal, rabbit, game, ostrich.	Hummus. Vegetarian dishes, vegetarian sausages and burgers. Canned fish in oil (drain oil), fish in batter (remove batter), fish fingers, fish cakes. Fried eggs and omelettes. 🍳. Nut and seed bars, reduced fat coconut milk. Lean bacon, low fat sausages, low fat burgers, mutton, liver ^{FH} , coated meat, meatballs. Read labels to find lowest saturated fat versions.	Seafood in rich creamy or cheesy sauces such as Hollandaise, lobster, Marie Rose sauce. Quiche, scotch eggs, cheese omelettes. Coconut, coconut cream, full fat coconut milk. Salted nuts, nut and seed butter with more than 10% saturated fat. Fatty cuts of meat - belly pork, lamb, duck, goose. Sausages, streaky bacon, sausage rolls, pies, pasties, chicken Kiev.
DAIRY AND ALTERNATIVES	Choose lower fat and lower sugar options.	Skimmed milk, 1% milk, buttermilk, skimmed milk with plant sterols, soya ♡ and oat drinks with added calcium. Low fat, low sugar yogurt or soya alternatives to yogurt. Virtually fat free fromage frais. Yogurts and mini drinks with added plant sterols/stanols ♡. Low fat and reduced fat cheese such as cottage, curd, quark, ricotta, extra light cheese spread.	Semi-skimmed milk (2%), reduced fat evaporated milk. Fromage Frais. Modest portions of medium fat cheese e.g reduced fat cheddar, edam, brie, camembert, soft goat's cheese, mozzarella, feta, paneer. Light cheese spread.	Full fat cows, sheeps or goats milk. Evaporated or condensed milk. Full fat, thick and creamy yogurts. Coconut yogurts. High fat cheese e.g cream cheese, mascarpone, stilton, cheddar, gouda, parmesan, fried paneer. Full fat cheese spread.
OILS AND SPREADS	Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and use in small amounts.	Olive, rapeseed, sunflower, soya, corn and nut oils. Spreads made from vegetable oils such as sunflower or olive oil. Spreads with added plant sterols/stanols ♡.		Partially hydrogenated vegetable oil on food labels. Oils that have been reheated several times. Palm, coconut, shea fats and oils. Butter, lard, suet, dripping, ghee, hard cooking fats.
SUGARY, SALTY AND FATTY FOODS	Eat sugary, salty and fatty foods less often.	Sugar free jelly, sweeteners. Pepper, herbs, spices, lemon juice, garlic, chutney and pickles made with minimum oil. Use lemon juice, vinegar, herbs, yogurt, olive oil for salad dressings. Thicken sauces and gravies with flour or tomato puree. Tomato based sauces and ketchup.	Dark chocolate, boiled sweets, gums, honey, jam, marmalade, sorbet, low fat or non-dairy ice cream. Reduced salt soy sauce and stocks. Salad cream and mayonnaise (use light/low calorie versions where possible), half-fat crème fraiche, oat and soya alternatives to cream.	Milk/white chocolate, fudge, toffee, sugar, treacle, syrup, Indian sweets, meringue, cheesecake, trifle, full fat dairy ice cream. Salt, garlic salt, celery salt, soy sauce, oily pickles. Rich sauces made with butter, cream or full cream milk. Cream: clotted, double, whipping, soured or single. Crème fraiche.
DRINKS	6-8 cups/glasses per day.	Tap, mineral or soda water, tea, coffee with low fat milk, no sugar/syrup. Sugar free/diet squashes and fizzy drinks.	Fruit juice, fruit smoothies. Alcohol 🍷.	Where sugar or syrup is added: squash, fizzy drinks, flavoured waters, energy drinks, hot drinks.
LABELLING	NUTRIENT	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Per 100gms of food (per 100mls of drink)	Total Fat	3g or less (1.5g or less)	3g-17.5g (1.5g-8.75g)	17.5g or more (8.75g or more)
	Saturates	1.5g or less (0.75g or less)	1.5g-5g (0.75g-2.5g)	5g or more (2.5g or more)
	Total Sugars	5g or less (2.5g or less)	5g-22.5g (2.5g-11.25g)	22.5g or more (11.25g or more)
	Salt	0.3g or less (0.3g or less)	0.3g-1.5g (0.3- 0.75g)	1.5g or more (0.75g or more)

ADULT'S DAILY REFERENCE INTAKE - Total Fat: less than 70g. Saturates: less than 20g. Total sugars: 90g. Salt: less than 6g. This information is intended as a guide only and is not individual advice.

KEY SYMBOLS AND NOTES

Wholegrains	Oily fish	Cholesterol lowering foods	Alcohol	Cooking with fat	FH Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH)	Fruit and vegetables
Packed with the goodness from the whole grain they are higher in fibre, vitamin and minerals than their refined equivalents. People with healthy hearts tend to eat more wholegrains.	Rich in omega 3 fats which help your heart beat more regularly and prevent your blood from clotting. Aim for at least one portion (140g) per week.	Foods fortified with plant sterols and stanols, nuts, oats and soluble fibre from pulses, vegetables and fruits.	Keep to sensible limits. For men and women no more than 14 units per week, avoid binge drinking, have alcohol free days each week. Women who are planning a pregnancy, pregnant or breastfeeding should not drink any alcohol.	We all need some fat but too much can cause weight gain. When you cook with fat choose heart healthy vegetable oils more often and use small amounts. For less fat - steam, microwave, poach, boil and casserole.	If you have FH you may be sensitive to the effects of foods high in cholesterol such as egg yolks, kidney, liver, shellfish. Speak to a dietitian or doctor about limiting your intake of these.	A portion is: one large (apple, orange, tomato); 2 small (plums, satsumas, beetroot); a handful (grapes, strawberries, sprouts); a heaped tablespoon dried fruit; 150ml, 100% unsweetened fruit juice or smoothie (counts as a maximum of 1 portion a day); 3 tablespoons vegetables/chopped fruit; a small bowl of salad; 3 heaped tablespoons of pulses and beans (counts as a maximum of 1 portion a day).

*Triglycerides are a type of fat. The amount of triglyceride in the blood rises after a meal and then slowly decreases. If your triglyceride levels remain high after a meal you may be asked to reduce the amount of sugar, alcohol or fat in your diet.

The Mediterranean diet

A traditional Mediterranean diet helps protect our bodies from heart and circulatory disease and can help manage cholesterol levels too – it’s full of healthy fats (olive oil, nuts, seeds, oily

fish), vegetables, fruits, pulses, wholegrains and wholegrain cereal products. It also contains moderate amounts of white meat and low fat dairy foods. Red meat is eaten less often.

Check out how you score on our Mediterranean check list and then decide where you can improve.

TICK THE BOXES THAT APPLY TO YOU	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Do you have at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day? A portion is roughly a handful.			
Do you have 3 portions of wholegrains each day? (wholemeal bread & pasta, wholegrain breakfast cereals, brown rice, oats, bulger wheat etc.)			
Do you use olive, rapeseed and sunflower oils and spreads made from these as your main spreading and cooking fats and in salad dressings?			
Do you eat unsalted nuts and seeds each day? (as snacks, cereal and dessert toppings, in recipes)			
Do you have at least 2 portions of fish or seafood per week, one of which is oily?			
Do you use onions, leeks, tomatoes and garlic in sauces, stews, casseroles and soups at least twice a week?			
Do you have at least 2 meat free days each week?			
Do you include pulses (beans, peas and lentils) in meals at least twice a week?			
Do you cook most of your meals from basic ingredients?			

If you answered mostly **YES** – well done, carry on. Where you answered **NO** or **SOMETIMES** – these are areas you can change or improve on.

HEART UK – The Cholesterol Charity

HEART UK saves lives by helping people avoid heart attacks and strokes caused by high cholesterol.

We provide expert support, education and influence, by;

- campaigning for proper diagnosis, treatment and care
- helping people manage high cholesterol
- providing education and training for healthcare professionals

ALL OUR MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR FREE

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