

The Healthy Heart

A GUIDE FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

eat most
vegetables & fruit

eat some

bread, cereals, grains, starchy vegetables

fish, meat, chicken, legumes, eggs

milk, yoghurt, cheese

use some oils, nuts

CUT BACK ON junk foods, takeaways & foods or drinks high in sugar, salt or saturated & trans fats

DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'HEALTHY HEART' VISUAL FOOD GUIDE

The 'Healthy Heart' was developed as a visual communications tool to show a heart-healthy eating pattern. It is a replacement for the old Heart Foundation food pyramid. However, instead of showing the recommended number of serves, it shows the proportional volume of food.

Development of the 'Healthy Heart' followed a rigorous process, which included stakeholder interviews, literature reviews, a needs analysis with the general public, resource scan, pre-testing designs with health professionals, and pre-testing with consumers.

People told us they wanted something that was:

- Simple
- Engaging
- Positive
- Helped them be one or two steps healthier.

They didn't want:

- Numbers
- A circle or plate shape
- Too much detail
- To be told off or told what to do.

Pre-testing the 'Healthy Heart' and poster showed it achieved exactly what it aimed to, because it:

- Got people's attention, was appealing and engaged people by speaking to them on an emotional level
- Felt friendly, positive and supportive – people liked that it focused on what they could eat
- Felt do-able, logical and made sense
- Appealed to everyone regardless of ethnicity – people didn't feel targeted or singled out
- Importantly, people felt confident they could start making these changes
- Acted as a reminder and a prompt towards healthier eating.

As mentioned the 'Healthy Heart' doesn't have information on the number of serves per day or serving sizes. This was too prescriptive and detailed for people. Rather they preferred to work from what they do now and add or subtract – this was particularly in relation to vegetables and fruit, and junk food. Putting in numbers and serves detracted from the do-ability of the messages in the 'Healthy Heart'.

In this background guide, we have included information on servings for each food group, for your information, as the serving amounts are what the guide was based on (converted to volume of food).

We recommend using the poster and the basic 'Healthy Heart' together. They emphasise and reinforce each other. Both resources got people's attention, engaged them and conveyed strong, positive messages. However, the poster created extra motivation and engagement, while the basic 'Healthy Heart' was a great reminder to put on the fridge. The simple steps on the back of the 'Healthy Heart' basic guide are do-able things to help people get started.

This guide gives you some background information on the main messages in the 'Healthy Heart'.

We hope you enjoy using this new visual food guide.

What is the ‘Healthy Heart’?

The ‘Healthy Heart’ represents a dietary pattern that supports heart health (the cardio-protective dietary pattern). It relates to an eating pattern over a day or week.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONCEPTS?

The overarching concept in the ‘Healthy Heart’ is balancing food between food groups.

The ‘Healthy Heart’ shows the proportional volume of each food group to eat over a day.

Foods within each food group can be substituted for each other. For example, in a meal kumara can be eaten instead of wholegrain bread.

There are different ways to have a heart healthy eating pattern, but the common factors are:

- plenty of vegetables and fruit
- some wholegrains, lean meats and poultry, fish and legumes, low-fat milk and yoghurt and healthy oils and nuts
- cutting back on junk food, takeaways and foods high in saturated or trans fat, salt and sugar, until ideally eaten no more than once or twice a week.

As well as type of food, it’s also important to eat the right amount of food to manage body weight.

KEY QUESTION: compared to the ‘Healthy Heart’, what does my intake of vegetables and fruit or junk food look like on a typical day?

Tips

balance, proportion and substitution

- Follow the proportions in the ‘Healthy Heart’ to guide what you eat over a day
- Eat a variety of foods to get a range of nutrients
- Foods can be substituted within each food group
- Eat regular meals with the right amount of food, so you feel satisfied, not full
- Use a smaller sized plate
- Put leftovers in the fridge instead of your tummy



simple steps
to healthier
eating



eat most vegetables & fruit



Vegetables and fruit are full of vitamins, minerals, and fibre. These keep our body and brain working properly and are protective against poor health.

Eating at least 400g of vegetables and fruit each day has been associated with lower rates of heart disease, cancer and obesity, and lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

Vegetables in particular have a low energy density, which helps manage body weight. The energy in food (calories or kilojoules) is what our body uses to fuel itself. If we consume too much energy, our body stores the fuel leading to weight gain.

Eating plenty of foods with lower energy density, like vegetables and fruit, can help manage body weight because we fill up on foods with fewer calories.

For people with diabetes: fruit should be counted in their carbohydrate allowance. Fruit size matters, eg. choose a bobby banana rather than a large one

For general health: eat 5+ serves a day

For heart health: eat 3-4 serves each of vegetables and fruit (serve = 1/2 cup cooked, 1 cup raw, 1 medium apple)

KEY QUESTION: what proportion of your shopping trolley is vegetables and fruit?

Tips

eat most vegetables and fruit

- Add one more vegetable or fruit to a meal or snack
- Have vegetables and/or fruit at every meal
- Fruit tastes great with breakfast, as an easily portable and affordable snack, or instead of dessert
- Vegetables add flavour and goodness, eg. add lettuce and tomato to a sandwich; or serve half-a-plate of vegetables with dinner
- Choose vegetables and fruit in a variety of colours to get a wide range of nutrients
- Fresh, frozen and canned count
- Around 40% of the food in your weekly shopping trolley should be vegetables and fruit

OTHER RESOURCES

Heart Foundation recipes are free to download from: www.heartfoundation.org.nz/recipes

We also have a free vegetable e-cookbook which can be downloaded from www.heartfoundation.org.nz/vegetable-cookbook

The Healthy Heart visual food guide supports the healthy eating information in the Heart Foundation's *Taking Control* resource

See www.diabetes.org.nz for additional resources for people with diabetes

See www.vegetables.co.nz for more vegetable recipes

True or False

Vegetables and fruit are too expensive to buy

Answer: False. Fruit and vegetables might seem expensive, but often we're not comparing like with like. An apple at \$4.99/kg is cheaper than potato chips at \$10.60/kg (\$1.59 for 150g). Vegetables and fruit should often be eaten instead of other foods, rather than in addition. So swap a muffin for an apple, or eat a bit less meat and add another vegetable at dinner. Frozen veges retain most of their nutritional value and are a cheap way of bulking out a meal. They also minimise waste. Vegetables and fruit are often cheaper at fruit and vegetable stores or Asian food shops.



eat some bread, cereals, grains, starchy vegetables

This food group is a good source of carbohydrate, which provides energy to fuel the body and brain. It includes starchy vegetables because of their high carbohydrate content.

This food group is also a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Choose wholegrain, high-fibre and low glycaemic index (GI) carbohydrate foods as these are protective against heart disease. Fibre helps the bowels work properly and improves cholesterol and glucose levels.

Refined carbohydrates (eg. white bread, white flour, sugar, bakery items, low-fibre cereals) have fewer nutrients, less naturally occurring fibre, and often a high GI. They do not have heart health benefits.

For people with diabetes: have some carbohydrate foods at each meal, but not too much or it will raise blood glucose levels too high. Choose low GI foods, particularly breads and cereals

For general health: eat 6+ serves a day of breads and cereals

For heart health: eat 6+ serves a day including starchy vegetables (serving = 1 slice bread, 1 small potato, 1 small round of taro, 1/2 cup cooked porridge, 1/2 cup cooked rice or pasta). Active people and men may require more serves

KEY QUESTION: which refined carbohydrate foods do you eat that you could swap to wholegrains?

Tips

eat some whole-grains and starchy vegetables

- About a quarter of the weekly shopping trolley should be wholegrain foods and starchy vegetables
- Choose wholegrain breads that are high in fibre
- Choose wholegrain, high fibre and low GI breakfast cereals, eg. traditional oats
- Use only wholemeal flour in chapatis and roti
- At any meal, eat no more than a fist-sized amount of these foods
- Choose just one starchy food at a meal, eg. not potato and bread



WHICH FOODS FIT HERE?

Starchy veges: potato, Māori potatoes, kumara, sweetcorn, parsnip, yams, taro, green banana, cassava

Grains: rice, pasta, quinoa, couscous, breads, wraps, rewena, chapatti, roti, breakfast cereals, oats, tapioca, sago, amaranth, congee



Quiz

Which vegetables are classified as starchy vegetables?

- potato, kumara, corn, parsnip, cassava, taro, green banana, yams
- peas, pumpkin, beetroot, carrot
- tomato, green beans, okra, marrow, kamo kamo

Answer : A

WHAT IS A WHOLEGRAIN?

The best wholegrains are the intact grain, where you can see visible chunks of grain. Products can still call themselves wholegrain if they are crushed or ground but contain the same components as the intact grain.

eat some fish, meat, chicken, legumes, eggs



This food group is a good source of protein, which the body uses for growth and repair. It also supplies iron, zinc and B vitamins. Oily fish provides omega 3 fats, which are good for the heart.

Animal foods can be high in saturated fat. Reducing saturated fat and replacing it with unsaturated fats improves cholesterol levels, a risk factor for heart disease. So when choosing meat or chicken, choose lean cuts or remove the fat. On red meat, this is the white fat and on chicken, the skin.

Limit the amounts of processed meats and sausages eaten, as the fat is hidden. Processed meats can also be high in salt, which can raise blood pressure.

Legumes are dried peas, beans and lentils, eg. kidney beans or chickpeas. They can either be soaked and cooked from dry, or bought pre-cooked in cans.

For general health: eat 1-2 serves per day

For heart health: eat fish twice a week (preferably oily) (serving = 1 large fillet, 1 cup mussels, 1/2 cup tuna); eat legumes 4-5 times each week (1 cup cooked); small piece of chicken or lean meat (up to 1-1.5 servings/day) or vegetarian alternative (serving = 1/2 cup mince, 2 chicken drumsticks, 100-120g meat or chicken)

KEY QUESTION: do you remove the visible fat from meat and take the skin off chicken?

Tips

eat some fish, meat, chicken, legumes, eggs

- Cut any visible fat off meat and chicken
- Brown mince in the pan and drain fat before adding other ingredients
- Change the water half way through a boil-up, or skim the fat
- Heat a can of corned beef, then drain the fat
- Use healthy sandwich fillings instead of processed meats, eg. canned fish, roast chicken, peanut butter, falafels, boiled egg, reduced-fat cheese and lots of salad vegetables
- Add a can of kidney beans or chickpeas to a dish and cut back on the meat
- Baked beans are a cheap, filling and nutritious way to eat more legumes

WHICH FOODS FIT HERE?

Beef, lamb, venison, pork, chicken, turkey, muttonbird

Baked beans, chilli beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils, split peas, dhal, falafel, hummus, soybeans, tofu

Fish, canned fish, seafood, eel, toheroa, kina, koura, paua, mussels, oyster, prawns, scallops, squid, crayfish



Quiz

Name some common processed meats

Answer: Sausages, ham, bacon, salami, pastrami, luncheon, smoked chicken

USING LEGUMES

Legumes are a common part of many food cultures around the world, eg. Mediterranean, Turkish, African, Asian, and South American. They are not so commonly used in New Zealand, despite being a cheap and very healthy food. In New Zealand, legumes are most commonly eaten as baked beans.

An easy way to eat more legumes is to add a can of beans to a mixed dish and cut back on the meat. This makes the meal healthier, cheaper and adds more taste. Legumes can also be fully substituted for meat in a meal. Check out the free Heart Foundation e-cookbook *Full o' Beans* at www.heartfoundation.org.nz.

eat some milk, yoghurt, cheese



This food group is a good source of calcium, protein and some carbohydrate. Calcium is important for bone health. As milk is from an animal, it can be high in saturated fat. So when choosing milk, yoghurt or cheese, choose low or reduced-fat varieties.

For people with diabetes: the natural sugars (and any added sugars) in milk and yoghurt contribute to carbohydrate intake

For general health: eat at least 2 serves per day

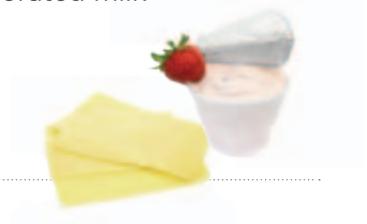
For heart health: eat 2-3 servings each day (or replace with soy products if milk isn't eaten) (serving = 1 glass milk, 1 pottle yoghurt, 3 Tbsp grated cheese)

KEY QUESTION: do you choose reduced-fat milk and yoghurt?

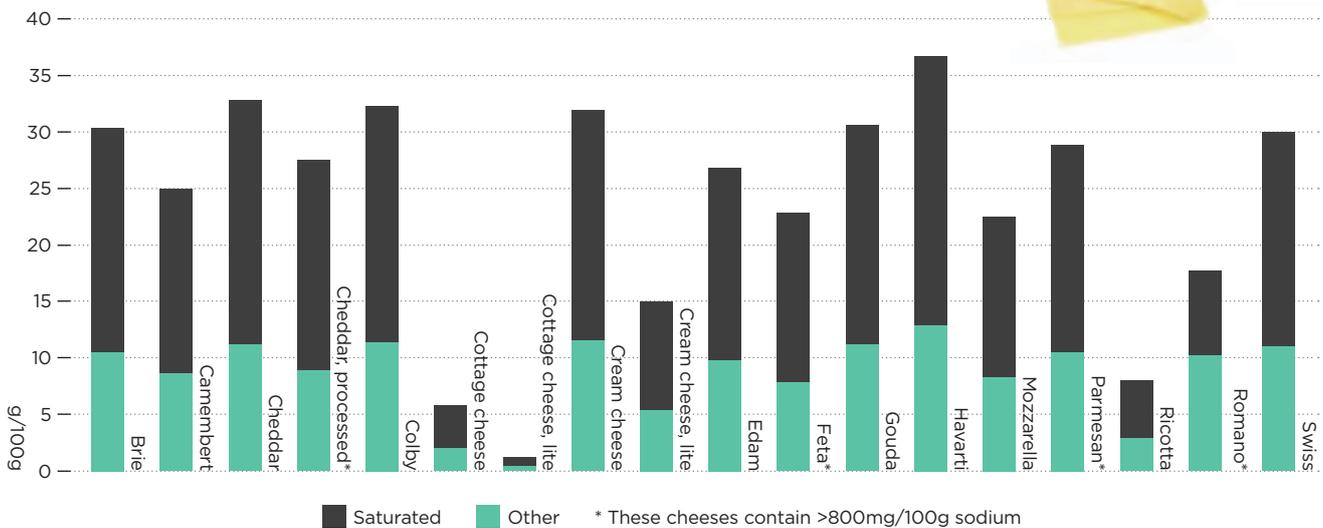
Tips

eat some milk, yoghurt, cheese

- Choose green, yellow, or lite blue-topped milk
- Choose reduced-fat yoghurts, but check the sugar content. Yoghurt makes a great snack or healthy dessert
- Use only small amounts (~40g) of Edam or reduced-fat cheeses
- Replace cream with yoghurt or evaporated milk



FAT CONTENT OF CHEESE



use some oils, nuts

This food group contains vegetable oils, avocado, nuts, seeds and spreads based on oils or nuts (eg. margarine or peanut butter). It also contains foods high in oil, such as mayonnaise or vinaigrette.

The type of fat eaten is very important to heart health. Vegetable oils (other than palm and coconut oil), nuts and seeds contain mostly unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated). So, they are an ideal replacement for foods that contain a lot of saturated fats.

For heart health: eat 6+ servings a day (1 tsp margarine or oil, 1 Tbsp nuts and seeds, 1 Tbsp avocado)

Q: How many nuts should I eat?

Around 30g (2 Tbsp) nuts or nut spread per day. Preferably choose varieties without added salt or sugar.

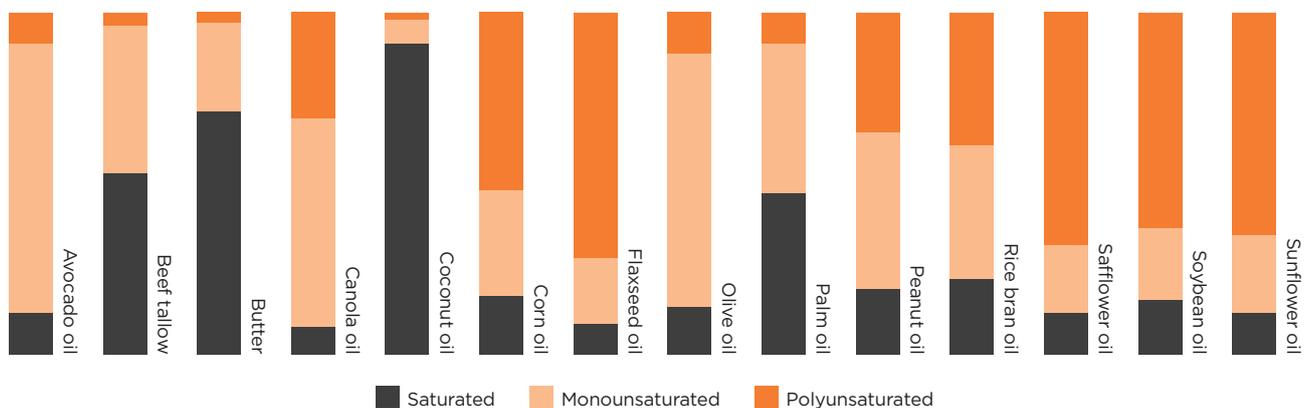


Tips

eat some milk, yoghurt, cheese

- Use vegetable oils, margarine, mashed avocado, peanut butter, mayonnaise or hummus instead of butter or ghee
- Have a handful of plain nuts for a snack instead of chips or bakery items
- You can roast your own nuts in the microwave or oven (at 100°C)
- Choose salad dressings that have some oil to help absorb nutrients better
- Choose oily varieties of fish for its omega-3 fats
- Use the right type of oil for your cooking method

OILS: FAT TYPE PERCENTAGE



For heart health: replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats. Choose oils and fats from the graph above that have proportionally less saturated and more unsaturated fats.

CUT BACK ON junk foods, takeaways & foods or drinks high in sugar, salt or saturated & trans fats

These foods are high in energy (calories/kilojoules) and provide little nutritional value. They are often high in saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, refined carbohydrate and/or salt and low in fibre. Eating and drinking smaller amounts of these foods and eating them less often, allows people to enjoy their favourites without having to give them up altogether.

The type of food we eat influences how we feel, how much energy we have and how well we can live our lives. Many people have experienced how much better they feel when they start making changes and cutting back on the unhealthy food they eat or drink.

But our food environment often works against these changes, and encourages us to over-eat the wrong foods.

Families can start cutting back by setting up their food environment at home so it's easier to make healthy choices. Keep mostly healthier foods and drinks at home and use the proportions in the 'Healthy Heart' to guide food purchases for the week. Get equipped with a set of 10-20 quick and easy recipes that are the regular 'go to' recipes. The Heart Foundation website has a lot of recipe ideas.

Cutting back on unhealthy food is also important for our kids. They learn eating habits in childhood that stick into adulthood. There is a perception that healthy eating doesn't matter until people get sick, but what children eat impacts on the future health of their heart. The best way for kids to learn is role modelling from family and whānau preparing and eating healthy meals.

Tips

cutting back on junk food and unhealthy food

- Sugary drinks and alcohol can add a lot of calories but don't create a feeling of fullness, making it easy to gain weight
- Keep fizzy for special occasions, and have water and plain milk for everyday drinks
- Learn to cook quick and easy meals at home and pack your own snacks. Get the kids involved in cooking
- Try pepper, herbs and spices for flavour rather than salt
- Try homemade instead of bought takeaways – it can be quicker and healthier
- Aim to have takeaways no more than once a week
- Avoid deep-fried foods
- Downsize from a large to a smaller sized takeaway and eat off a smaller plate
- Check food labels for the saturated fat, sugar and sodium (salt) content
- Walk past unhealthy aisles in the supermarket
- Look for partially hydrogenated fats on food labels to identify trans fat



OTHER RESOURCES

Heart Foundation recipes are free to download from:

www.heartfoundation.org.nz/recipes

Healthy Heart resources

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Heart Foundation

simple steps to healthier eating

simple steps

Healthier eating can be easy. Why not start by taking one simple step? Here are some ideas to add goodness to your kai:

vegetables & fruit : a variety of colours my step

- 'Add one' more vege to dinner
- 'Add one' salad vege to your sandwich
- 'Add one' coleslaw to a takeaway meal
- 'Add one' piece of fruit to breakfast or lunch

bread, cereals, grains, starchy vegetables : wholegrain & high-fibre my step

- Swap from white bread to wholegrain
- Choose baked potatoes or kumara instead of deep fried
- Use wholemeal instead of white flour
- Choose just one starchy or grainy food at a meal

fish, meat, chicken, legumes, eggs : lean & skinless my step

- Cut the fat off meat and skin off chicken
- Drain the fat from canned corned beef
- Add a can of legumes to a dish and use less meat
- Steam, grill or pan fry fish instead of deep frying

milk, yoghurt, cheese : reduced fat

- Switch to lite blue, green or yellow top milk
- Swap from full fat to reduced fat cheese
- Swap from a sweet bakery item to reduced fat yoghurt

oils, nuts

- Swap from butter or ghee to oils or margarine
- Choose a handful of nuts for a snack instead of potato chips
- Add avocado to a sandwich or salad

junk food & takeaways : cut back

- Try homemade instead of bought takeaways
- Downsize from a big plate to a smaller size
- Swap a can of fizzy to water or milk
- Swap from two scoops of ice cream to one scoop

The 'Healthy Heart' basic guide and simple steps A5 tear-off pad
 Order from www.heartfoundation.org.nz/order-resources

eat most

vegetables & fruit

a variety of colours

eat some

bread, cereals, grains, starchy vegetables

wholegrain & high-fibre

fish, meat, chicken, legumes, eggs

lean & skinless

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The 'Healthy Heart' visual food guide poster available in A1, A3 or A4 sizes
Order from www.heartfoundation.org.nz/order-resources

WE NEED

your help to keep Kiwi hearts beating

When you support the Heart Foundation you make a difference to the lives of thousands of New Zealanders.

There are 15 people today who will lose the fight against heart disease. People you may even know. And worse, many of these deaths are premature and preventable. For every one of those people, many more are affected – husbands, daughters, brothers, friends, me, you. So much lost potential, so many lost dreams.

Help us fight the disease that cuts short too many lives and too many stories before they're told.

As an independent charity, we rely on the generosity of New Zealanders. Your donations are crucial to our ongoing work – funding vital life-saving research, helping people make healthy living choices, and continue running community programmes that encourage Kiwi heart health.

Every dollar you give helps another Kiwi live out their lifetime.

Please take a moment to donate

www.heartfoundation.org.nz/donate

Phone us on 0800 830 100

Thank you for your support.

Other tools to support the 'Healthy Heart':

A range of tools are available or under development to support use of the 'Healthy Heart'. These are available from www.heartfoundation.org.nz/order-resources/index

Heart Foundation, PO Box 17160, Greenlane, Auckland 1546

T 09 571 9191 F 09 571 9190 E info@heartfoundation.org.nz www.heartfoundation.org.nz

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