



Choosing Foods for Heart Health

Simple substitutions for better heart health + best choices for common foods.

Instead of this...	Try this...
Beer & Liquor	Red Wine Red wine (limit 2 glasses/day for men or 1/day for women) offers antioxidants; but if you don't drink, don't start! Alcohol-free beverages are also available that provide the taste of alcohol without the alcohol.
Bread & Bagels	Sprouted Wheat Bread, Cracked Wheat Bread, Pumpernickel Bread and wheat tortillas Limit breads made with flour which can spike blood sugar.
Margarines	Nut Butters, Hummus, Mashed Avocado Even "healthy" margarines are highly processed; if you crave butter, use one pat of the real thing.
Chips & Pretzels	Red Bell Peppers, Jicama, Carrots, Apples, or Berries These fresh, raw vegetables and fruits offer crunch and fiber without being heavy in calories, fat or glycemic load.
Coffee	Tea (Especially White, Green and Oolong)—Or limit coffee to 2 cups/day Teas provide healthy antioxidants. Coffee appears to reduce the risk for diabetes, probably due to polyphenol content, but limit to 2 cups/day to avoid caffeine overload.
Cookies & Candy	Unsweetened Dried Fruit, Dark Chocolate, Fresh Fruit All of these offer healthy compounds, but eat chocolate sparingly.
Eggs	No Substitution Needed! Even yolks are OK—just choose omega-3 enriched or eggs from free-range chickens and limit to 7 per week.
Mayonnaise	Dijon Mustard or Horseradish Both avoid unhealthy fats; if you crave mayonnaise, choose one made with canola oil.
Ice Cream & Other Desserts	Dark Chocolate, Fruit Sorbets, Fresh Fruit, Fruit Yogurt (choose low sugar varieties - yogurt naturally contains about 12 grams of sugar/6 oz. due to the milk content) All offer healthy compounds or ingredients without unhealthy butterfat, flour or oils.
Milk	Low fat Milk or Soymilk Low fat milk contains fewer unhealthy hormones (organic preferable) and soymilk provides protective isoflavones. Other plant-based milks, such as almond milk, are also good choices.



Instead of this...	Try this...
Pasta	Whole Grain Pasta, Bean Thread, Soba, Udon or Rice Noodles The glycemic index of pasta increases as it cooks, so eat it al dente (still a bit firm, with some “tooth” to it).
Potatoes	Sweet Potatoes and Yams Both are actually sweet potatoes and both are healthier and carry lower glycemic loads.
Salt	Turmeric, Curry, Ginger, Garlic, Chile, Basil, Cinnamon, Rosemary, Thyme All of these spices provide flavor plus protective compounds in place of excess sodium. Limit sodium to 2-3 grams per day.
Soda & Diet Soda	Seltzer Water, Unsweetened Iced Tea If you crave a carbonated drink, try cold seltzer with fresh fruit and/or a touch of natural sweetener.
Sugar	Stevia or Sucralose; small amounts of Honey or Maple Syrup Stevia has no sugar (and no calories). Among artificial sweeteners, sucralose (Splenda®) is a better choice but still a processed food.

Best Fruits

Choose colorful fruits like berries, peaches, nectarines, oranges, pink grapefruit, red grapes, plums, pomegranates, cherries, apples and pears for antioxidant and anti-inflammatory flavonoids and carotenoids.

Best Vegetables

Select dark leafy greens, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, kale, bok choy, turnips, carrots, beets, onions, peas, squashes and sea vegetables: all are rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory components.

Best Fish & Meat

Choose fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids and low in mercury, such as wild Alaskan salmon (especially sockeye), herring, sardines and black cod—all strongly anti-inflammatory. Organic turkey and chicken are also great choices.

Best Oils

Use expeller-pressed extra virgin olive oil, nut oils and flax seed oil or, for flavorless oils, expeller-pressed canola oil or grapeseed oil—healthy fats that don’t harm (and can even help!) cholesterol levels.

Choose organic whenever possible, especially for fish and poultry, milk, fruits and vegetables.