<u>10 Diet and Lifestyle recommendations for</u> <u>preventing heart disease</u>





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- 1. Eat a balanced diet with whole grains, a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, a handful of nuts, low-fat dairy, and lean protein sources. Eat more plant-based vegetarian meals using legumes, beans, and soy foods for protein. Avoid processed foods or processed meats.
- 2. Control the portion sizes. Avoid oversized portions of meals. Choose healthier foods when dining out.
- Decrease unhealthy fats, such as saturated and trans fats, which can raise the harmful (LDL) cholesterol and in turn increase the risk for heart disease. Avoid deep-fried foods and foods made with vanaspati ghee, cream, palm/palm kernel oil, and coconut oil.
- 4. Limit refined carbohydrates, especially sugar, sweets, desserts, and sugarsweetened beverages such as sodas, mango lassi, sweet lassi, etc. Also, limit foods such as white bread or white rice. Foods with high amounts of refined carbohydrates can raise triglyceride levels. Elevated triglyceride levels are associated with heart disease.

- 5. Reduce salt intake in foods. Increased salt intake can lead to elevated blood pressure, which is a risk factor for heart attack and stroke. Eat whole, unprocessed foods to limit your salt intake. Flavor foods with herbs, spices, lemon and lime juice instead of salt.
- 6. Avoid whole milk. Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and low-fat yogurt.
- 7. Incorporate more soluble or viscous fiber in your diet, which helps to lower the harmful (LDL) cholesterol. Foods high in soluble or viscous fiber include lentils, beans, oats, oat bran, broccoli, sweet potatoes, apples, pears, etc.
- 8. Choose mostly water instead of sweetened beverages. Stay well hydrated.
- 9. Maintain a healthy weight. Weight gain/obesity is a risk factor for heart disease. Incorporate daily physical activity to raise your good (HDL) cholesterol levels and lower your LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- 10. If you take alcohol, limit it to one drink or less per day for women and two drinks or less per day for men.

