

HEARTier Choices is about making sensible food selections and substitutions as you decide on foods, to enhance your heart health. HEARTier Choices are usually around choosing freshly prepared fresh foods:

- low in saturated fat, devoid of trans fats, and higher in monounsaturated fats
- low in simple-carbohydrates
- higher in dietary fiber

Making HEARTier Choices is also about eating a variety of foods each day – 2 cups of vegetables, 1.5 cups of fresh fruit, and at least 3 servings of low fat dairy.

- Minimize drinking calories – For example eat whole fruit instead of drinking juice.
- Use multi-colored vegetables freely and eat them lightly steamed or sautéed. Do not overcook vegetables.
- Track the number of servings of a food you are actually consuming. 1 serving of cereal is about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup. 1 bowl of cereal can have up to 4 servings and 4 times the calories you may think you are consuming.

CHOOSING HEARTier CARBOHYDRATES

- Make complex-carbohydrate food choices. Substitute brown rice for white rice. Avoid enriched flour white breads; instead check for whole-wheat flour (not just wheat flour) and 3 grams of fiber per slice.
- Instead of eating only rice, try other grains such as cracked wheat, barley, quinoa (available in most stores and high in protein content), and prepare them as if you would use rice in pulaos.
- Use 100% whole-wheat flour to make roti, chapatti, or phulka. Use ghee or oil in limited amounts.
- Try eating whole-wheat pasta, and only thin crust pizzas.

CHOOSING HEARTier FATS

- Replace carbohydrate and oils with high quality, high protein, non-fat paneer, cottage cheese and nuts.
- Choose meats such as white meat chicken, pork, lean red meat, turkey, and oily fish for cooking.
- Use 1% or skim milk dairy products such milk, yogurts, and cheese to lower saturated fat consumption – while making homemade desserts, or while making paneer.
- Cook with a limited amount of oil. Use oils high in monounsaturated fats such as olive or canola. Avoid oils high in saturated fat. Avoid hydrogenated ghee, cream, and tropical oils.
- Use a pastry brush to apply oil to the pan (instead of a spoon) while making parathas. Use a pump oil sprayer such as MISTO (rather than cooking sprays that have chemicals or propellants). Fill with olive oil (for cold, low temperature / short duration cooking) or canola, peanut, or sunflower oil.
- Replace whole eggs with egg whites, avoiding the high cholesterol egg yolks.
- Avoid coconut milk, which is high in saturated fat. Instead, use less than called for or lighter versions.
- Avoid products containing trans-fats (avoid foods that list hydrogenated shortening in the ingredients).
- Avoid frying in previously heated oils.

CHOOSING HEARTier PROTEINS

- Tofu is a good source of high-quality protein. Use it in addition to other high quality proteins such as low-fat paneer as in palak or matar-paneer.
- Buy lean chunks of meat (chicken, beef, turkey, or pork) first, and then ask the grocer to grind it.
- For complete protein, eat rice (preferably brown) and daal together.
- Use small amount of all-natural peanut butter instead of butter – fills up for longer, & provides protein.

REDUCING SALT

- Snacks are high in salt and carbohydrates – Eat papad, namkeen, and pickles in moderation.
- Add salt only as required before serving, not while cooking, to reduce the amount and keep food juicy.
- Instead of using a saltshaker, take the amount required in your palm, sprinkle, & prevent over-salting.
- Use lime or lemon juice instead of salt to add taste to the food. Use rock salt which is mineral rich.
- Use fresh instead of canned vegetables which are rich in salt and may have less nutritional value (or use the “no added salt” variety). Rinse canned food (such as beans, garbanzos before using to remove excess salt).