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Low Cholesterol Diet

A sensible diet for reducing cholesterol in coronary heart disease prevention.

The dietary recommendations made by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food panel on diet and cardiovascular disease, intended for the population as a whole, state that total dietary fats should be reduced 35% or less of the total energy intake, saturated fat intake no more than one third of fat intake, and cholesterol intake to less than 300 mgs daily. Early trails of diet in patients with CHD utilizing reduced saturated fat intake did not give convincing results. More recent trials, utilizing diets low in saturated fat and supplemented with polyunsaturated fatty acids, mainly from omega-3 fatty acids (three helpings of oily fish per week, fish oil capsules and alpha-linoleic acid margarine) have shown significant reductions in coronary mortality and improved survival.

Use the following chart to locate particular items of your diet. The first column are foods that you are allowed, the second for those you can take in moderation and the third those to avoid.

But first, a few general tips to reduce the fat in your diet:

- Always chose lean cuts of meat and trim off fat before cooking.
- Eat smaller portions of meat. Extend meat and poultry dishes by using pulses, vegetables and cereals.
- Eat chicken, turkey and fish more often as these are lower in fat than meat. Remove all skin from poultry.
- Grill, steam, poach, bake, braise, microwave or casserole instead of frying or roasting with extra fat.
- Substitute polyunsaturated margarine for butter and use in moderation
- Use polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oil in moderation.
- Use skimmed milk instead of full-cream milk. Children under five should not use skimmed milk.
- Replace ordinary hard cheeses with low-fat or reduced fat varieties.
- Roast without adding fat by wrapping food in foil or roasting bags to retain juices and prevent drying out. Meat can be cooked on a rack over a bain-marie.
- Low-fat sauces can be made with mixing flour or corn flour with cold water, skimmed milk or stock before cooking to thicken.
- Skim off fat from stews and soups by removing it with absorbent kitchen paper or, if the dish is allowed to cool first, the fat could be taken off with a spoon.

- Look out for new low-fat reduced-fat products in the shops. Check labels for fat content and type of fat used in processed foods. A good guide is to choose made up dishes containing 5 grams or less per serving.

Foods	Allowed Daily	Moderation	Avoid
Fats	Limit ALL fats	Oils or margarine labeled 'high in polyunsaturates'. Sunflower oil, corn oil, soya oil, safflower oil, sesame oil, cottonseed oil, olive oil, low-fat spreads	Butter, dripping, lard, suet, palm oil, margarines not high in polyunsaturates, cooking or vegetable oil of unknown origin. Hydrogenated fats and oils.
Meats	Chicken, turkey, veal, rabbit, game	Lean beef, bacon, ham, pork, lamb, lean mince, liver	Visible fat on meat (including crackling), breast of lamb, belly pork, streaky bacon, sausages, salami pate, luncheon meat, duck, goose, port pies, meat pasties. Skin on poultry.
Egg & dairy foods	Skimmed milk. Low-fat cheeses (e.g. cottage cheese) quark (skimmed milk soft cheese), curd cheese. Egg white. Very-low-fat yogurt.	Semi-skimmed milk. Feta and ricotta cheese; Parmesan in small quantities; half fat cheeses (fat content 20-40% dry weight) Two whole eggs a week. Low-fat yogurt.	Full-cream milk, evaporated or condensed milk, cream, imitation cream. Regular fat cheeses, cream cheeses, Full-fat yogurt
Fish	All white fish, e.g cod, haddock, plaice. Oily fishy, e.g. herring, mackerel, sardines, tuna, salmon.	Fish fried in suitable oil. Oysters, mussels. Occasional scampi, prawns, shrimps, lobster.	Fish roe, fish fried in hard fats.
Nuts	Walnuts, chestnuts	Almonds, brazil nuts, hazelnuts	Coconut
Cereal Products	Whole meal flour, whole meal bread, wholegrain cereals, oatmeal, cornmeal, porridge oats, sweet corn, wholegrain rice and pasta, crisp breads, oatcakes, matzos.	White flour, white bread, sugary breakfast cereals, oat bran, white rice & pasta, plain semi-sweet biscuits.	Fancy breads, e.g. croissants, brioche: savory cheese biscuits
Desserts	Low-fat puddings, e.g. jelly, sorbet, skimmed milk pudding. Low-fat yoghurt. Low-fat sauces	Cakes, pastry, puddings, biscuits and sauces made with suitable margarine or oil. Low-fat ice creams. Home-made snacks with polyunsaturated fat	Commercially made cakes and biscuits made with saturated fats. Suet dumplings and puddings: butter and cream sauces. All proprietary puddings

			and sauces. Snacks deep fried in solid fats. Dairy ice cream
Beverages	Tea, coffee with skimmed milk, mineral water, slim line or sugar-free soft drinks, unsweetened fruit juice. Clear soups, home-made vegetable soup. Low alcohol beer	Sweet soft drinks, low-fat melted drinks or low-fat chocolate (occasionally). Packet soups, meat soups. Alcohol.	Irish coffee. Full-fat malted drinks, drinking chocolate. Cream soups. Non-dairy coffee whitener.
Sweets	Clear pickles, sugar-free sweeteners, e.g. saccharin tablets or liquid; aspartame sweetener.	Sweet pickles and chutney, jam, marmalade, honey, syrup, marzipan, peanut butter, lemon curd. Boiled sweets, pastilles, peppermints. Sugar, sorbitol, glucose, fructose.	Mincemeat containing suet. Chocolate spreads, candy bars, toffees, fudge, butterscotch, chocolate, coconut bars.
Spices & Dressings	Herbs, spices, mustard, pepper, vinegar. Low-fat dressings, e.g. lemon or low-fat yogurt. Low calorie salad cream or low-calorie mayonnaise.	Meat & fish pastes; bottled sauces. French dressing, ordinary salad cream, mayonnaise or soy sauce.	Cream or cream cheese dressings.
Fruits & Vegetables	All fresh & frozen vegetables. Sweet corn peas, beans of all kinds (e.g. haricot, red kidney, butter beans) lentils, chick peas, are particularly high in 'soluble fiber'. Jacket or boiled potatoes – eat skins whenever you can. Fresh fruit, unsweetened tinned fruit dried fruit.	Chips and roast potatoes cooked in suitable oil or polyunsaturated fat. Avocado pears, fruit in syrup; crystallized fruit	Chips or roast potatoes cooked in solid fat. Oven chips. Potato crisps