Heart Healthy Eating on Your Kidney Diet

Heart attack and stroke are the most common causes of death for people with kidney disease. Having high cholesterol levels can increase your risk of these diseases. To help lower your risk of heart attack or stroke:

- stay at a healthy weight
- be physically active
- do not smoke or use tobacco products
- eat more fibre
- watch the amount and types of fat you eat
- limit the amount of added sugar you eat
- limit alcohol

Ask your doctor if you need medication to help lower your cholesterol levels.

Healthy weight

Your heart disease risk will decrease if you lose extra weight from body fat. If you are overweight, the best way to lose weight is to eat smaller portions of healthy food and increase your physical activity every day. Aim for weight loss of no more than 1 to 2 pounds (0.5 to 1 kg) per week. Ask your dietitian about how to manage your weight.

Fats

- Healthy fats in small amounts will help reduce your blood cholesterol levels.
- Limit fats that you add to food or use in cooking such as margarine, oil, salad dressing, and mayonnaise to 2 to 3 Tbsp (30 to 45 mL) each day.
- Don’t eat deep-fried foods such as French fries, donuts, chicken fingers, and fish sticks.

Choose these healthy fats:

- Vegetable oils such as canola or olive oil
- Non-hydrogenated soft margarines and salad dressings
- Unsalted nuts* such as almonds, walnuts, and peanuts
- Natural peanut butter and almond butter*, without added fat, sugar, or salt
- Ground flaxseed (2 Tbsp or 30 mL per day) and flaxseed oil
- Omega-3 eggs
- Fatty fish such as salmon, herring, trout, sardines or mackerel

* Nuts, seeds and nut butters are high in phosphorus and potassium. You may need to limit your intake of these foods to no more than 2 Tbsp (30 mL) per day. Talk with your dietitian.

Tips:

- Try to eat fatty fish (listed above) at least twice a week. These fish are higher in omega-3 fats, which may reduce your risk of heart disease.
- Omega-3 eggs are a better choice than regular eggs, but you should still limit the yolks.
- Remember to remove bones from fish, as these are high in phosphorus.
- Some omega-3 supplements may have ingredients that could harm you. Talk to your healthcare provider if you plan to use a supplement.
Limit saturated fat and trans fat in your diet. These types of fats raise your blood cholesterol levels the most.

Limit these sources of saturated fat:
- Butter and lard
- Tropical oils such as palm, palm kernel and coconut oil
- Regular salad dressings and mayonnaise
- Bacon and processed meats
- Rich gravies
- Fatty meats and poultry skin
- 2% or whole milk**
- Cheese**
- Regular sour cream**
- Whipping cream**
- Cereal cream**

*Egg whites are a good source of protein.

Fibre
Eating more fibre has many benefits. It can help lower your blood cholesterol levels and lower your risk of heart disease.

Choose whole grain, high fibre foods every day
- Choose whole grain foods such as whole grain bread. Whole grain foods are high in phosphorus. Ask your dietitian if you need to limit them.
- Have nuts and legumes such as dried peas, beans and lentils in small amounts as these are high in phosphorus and potassium.
- Choose oatmeal or try corn bran cereal for breakfast.
- When baking choose recipes that contain oats. Use oats instead of bread crumbs when making meat loaf, meat balls, and hamburgers, and in bread coatings for pork chops or chicken.
- Add ground flaxseed to foods like oatmeal, applesauce, casseroles, and when baking.
- Use barley in soups, casseroles, and pilafs.

Avoid these sources of trans fats:
- Vegetable shortening
- Hard or block margarine
- Hydrogenated or partially-hydrogenated oil or margarine
- Coffee whiteners such as Coffee Mate®
- Pre-packaged or ready-made foods such as muffins, Danishes, croissants, cookies, crackers, pancake mixes
- Whipped toppings such as Cool Whip®, Dream Whip®

**These high fat milk products are high in phosphorus and potassium. You may need to limit your intake of milk products to no more than 2 servings per day. Talk with your dietitian.

Choose vegetables and fruit more often
Vegetables and fruit can lower your risk of heart disease.

Choose a variety of low potassium vegetables and fruit such as:
- apples
- pears
- strawberries
- blackberries
- raspberries
- green peas
- broccoli
- carrots

If you are not sure how many servings are safe for you, ask your dietitian.

Cholesterol
Cholesterol in food is found in animal products such as organ meats (liver, kidney, heart), egg yolks, shrimp, and squid. Foods high in cholesterol may increase your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Food products labeled as “cholesterol-free” can still be high in saturated and trans fat.
Fibre supplements
Ask your dietitian if a fibre supplement is right for you.

Sweet foods
Sweet foods and foods high in added sugar may increase your level of blood fats (triglycerides). If your blood level of triglycerides is too high, your risk of heart disease goes up.

Limit the amount of foods and drinks with added sugar such as pop, fruit drinks, cakes, pastries, and candy.

Limit unsweetened fruit juice to ½ cup (125 mL) per day. Choose whole fruit instead.

Alcohol
Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about using alcohol. Some medications and alcohol should not be taken together. If your blood level of triglycerides is too high, you may need to stop drinking all alcohol.

If you choose to drink alcohol, limit yourself to 1 to 2 drinks per day or less. One drink of alcohol equals:
- 12 ounces (355 mL) of beer
- 5 ounces (125 mL) of wine
- 1½ ounces (45 mL) of liquor such as rye, rum, whiskey, and vodka

Using food labels
You can use food labels to make healthier food choices.

Ingredient list
The ingredient list provides an overview of what is in the food. Ingredients are listed by weight from the largest amount to the smallest amount.

Nutrition Facts table
The information in the Nutrition Facts table is based on the amount of food listed at the top of the table. This is the serving size.

% Daily Value (DV) tells you if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient compared to what is recommended. A quick guide to % Daily Value:
- 5% or less is low
- 15% or more is high

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts per 1 blueberry muffin (71 g)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
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Is the muffin in the table a heart healthy choice?
Answer: No. The muffin is high in saturated and trans fats.

Fibres and trans fats:
Choose foods that are lower in saturated and trans fats.
A product may have no cholesterol but still be high in saturated and trans fat.
Sodium:
Choose foods lower in sodium. Look for foods with a % Daily Value between 5% and 15%.
Fibre:
Promotes a healthy heart and help control blood sugars. Choose foods that are higher in fibre.