

Eating for a healthy heart



healthyheart

Heart diseases are very common among the population. But you can lower your chances of getting heart diseases. The best way to prevent heart diseases is non-drug approach i.e. by changing diet habit

STAR HEALTH DESK

Heart diseases are very common in our population. Most of our community are vulnerable to heart diseases. But you can lower your chances of getting heart diseases. One way is to choose foods carefully. For a healthy heart, eat:

Eat less fat: Some fats are more likely to cause heart diseases. These fats are usually found in foods from animals, such as meat, milk, cheese and butter. They also are found in foods with palm and coconut oils.

Take less sodium: Eating less sodium can help lower some people's blood pressure. This can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Sodium is something we need in our diets, but most of us eat too much of it. Much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food at the table or that food companies add to their foods. So, avoid adding salt to foods at the table.

Take fewer calories: When we eat more calories than we need, we gain weight. Being overweight can cause heart diseases.

Eat more fiber: Eating fiber from fruits, vegetables and grains may help lower your chances of

getting heart diseases.

Diet tips for a healthy heart

- Eat a diet low in saturated fats, especially animal fats and palm and coconut oils.
- Add foods to your diet that are high in mono unsaturated fats, such as olive oil, canola oil, and sea food.
- Eat foods containing polyunsaturated fats found in plants and sea food. Safflower oil and corn oil are high in polyunsaturated fats.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- Maintain or improve your weight.
- Eat plenty of grain products, fruit and vegetables.

Eating this way does not mean you have to spend more money on food. You can still eat many foods that cost the same or less than what you are eating now.

Here is how

- Instead of taking whole or 2 percent milk and cream, use 1 percent or skim milk.
- Instead of eating fried foods eat baked, steamed, boiled, broiled or microwaved foods.
- Instead of cooking with lard, butter, palm and coconut oils and shortenings made with these oils,

- corn, sunflower, soybean, cottonseeds, olive, canola, peanut. Sesame or shortenings made from these oils.
- Instead of eating smoked, cured, salted and canned meat, poultry and fish eat unsalted fresh or frozen meat, poultry and fish.
- Instead of eating fatty cuts of meat, such as prime rib eat lean cuts of meat or cut off the fatty parts of meat.
- Instead of using one whole egg in recipes use two egg whites.
- Instead of using sour cream and mayonnaise use plain low-fat yogurt. Low-fat cottage cheese, or low-fat or "light" sour cream and mayonnaise.
- Instead of eating sauces, butter and salt eat season vegetables including potatoes with herbs and spices.
- Instead of eating hard and processed cheeses eat low-fat, low-sodium whole wheat crackers.
- Instead of eating white bread, white rice and cereals made with white flour eat whole-wheat bread, brown rice and whole grain cereals.
- Instead of eating salted potato chips and other snacks choose low-fat, unsalted tortilla and potato chips and unsalted pretzels and popcorn.

Tips for losing weight

- Eat smaller portions
- Avoid second helpings
- Eat less fat by staying away from fried foods, rich desserts and chocolate candy. Foods with a lot of fat have a lot of calories
- Eat more fruits and vegetables

Read the food label

The food label can help you eat less fat and sodium, fewer calories and more fiber.

Some other things you can do to keep your heart healthy

Ask your doctor to check your cholesterol level. This is done with a blood test. The test will show the amount of cholesterol in your blood with a number. Below 200 is good. The test will also show the amount of "good" and "bad" cholesterol. Your doctor can tell you more about what these numbers mean.

If your cholesterol is high, your doctor may suggest diet changes, exercise, or drug to bring it down. Regular exercise like walking, swimming or gardening can help you keep your weight and cholesterol down.

Early diagnosis of cancer

MOHAMMAD SHAHBAZ

Cancer is surprisingly common developing in lives of more than one third of the population. Many people do not know even before their death that they are dying from cancer. However, although not abrupt in nature, different types of malignancy show some features which can be readily useful to give hints to consult a physician for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. They are

- Weight loss and loss of appetite
- Under fatigue
- Alteration of urinary and bowel habit
- Non-healing wound and ulcer
- Abnormal bleeding from any site
- Lump in breast or any other site
- Painful swallowing or abnormality in digestion
- Clear and marked change in a mole or in the skin
- Persistent cough and hoarseness of voice
- Fractures

The above symptoms do not readily indicate cancer. But if these symptoms persist for a month or two even after general or symptomatic treatment, then one should definitely consult an expert to explore whether there is an underlying cancer or not.



Facts about nutrition

For every physical activity the body requires energy and the amount depends on the duration and type of activity. Energy is measured in kcal and is obtained from the body stores or the food we eat. Glycogen is the main source of fuel used by the muscles to enable you to undertake both aerobic and anaerobic exercise. If you train with low glycogen stores you will feel constantly tired, training performance will be lower and you will be more prone to injury and illness.

Nutrient balance

Carefully planned nutrition must provide an energy balance and a nutrient balance. The nutrients are:

- **Proteins** - essential to growth and repair of muscle and other body tissues
- **Fats** - one source of energy and important in relation to fat soluble vitamins
- **Carbohydrates** - our main source of energy
- **Minerals** - those inorganic elements occurring in the body and which are critical to its normal functions
- **Vitamins** - water and fat soluble vitamins play important roles in many chemical processes in the body
- **Water** - essential to normal body function - as a vehicle for carrying other nutrients and because 60% of the human body is water
- **Roughage** - the fibrous indigestible portion of our diet essential to health of the digestive system

What are the daily energy requirements?

Personal energy requirement = basic energy requirements + extra energy requirements

Basic energy requirements

- For every Kg of body weight 1.3 kcal is required every hour. (An athlete weighing 50Kg would require 1.3 * 24hrs * 50Kg = 1560 kcal/day)

Extra energy requirements

- For each hour training you require 8.5 kcal for each Kg of body weight. (For a two hour training session our 50Kg athlete would require 8.5 * 2hrs * 50Kg =

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850 kcal)

An athlete weighing 50Kg who trains for two hours would require an intake of approx. 2410 kcal (1560 + 850)

Energy fuel

Like fuel for a car the energy we need has to be blended. The blend that we require is as follows:

- 57 percent Carbohydrates (sugar, sweets, bread, cakes)
 - 30 percent Fats (dairy products, oil)
 - 13 percent Protein (eggs, milk, meat, poultry, fish)
- The energy yield per gram is as follows: Carbohydrate - 4 kcal, Fats - 9 kcal and Protein - 4 kcal. (Note: 1 calorie = 1 Kcal)

What does a 50 kg athlete require in terms of carbohydrates, fats and protein?

- Carbohydrates - 57 percent of 2410 = 1374 kcal - at 4 kcal per gram = 1374 / 4 = 343 grams

- Fats - 30 percent of 2410 = 723 kcal - at 9 kcal per gram = 723 / 9 = 80 grams
- Protein - 13 percent of 2410 = 313 kcal - at 4 kcal per gram = 313 / 4 = 78 grams

Our 50kg athlete requires: 343 grams of Carbohydrates, 80 grams of Fat and 78 grams of Protein.

What types of fat are there?

The nature of the fat depends on the type of fatty acids which make up the triglycerides. All fats contain both saturated and unsaturated fatty acids but are usually described as 'saturated' (like beef, bacon, cheese, butter, biscuits, cereals, puddings, soft drinks and juices and jam and honey but these food stuffs also contain fat. Starchy carbohydrates are found in potatoes, rice, bread, wholegrain cereals, semi skimmed milk, yoghurt, fruit, vegetables, beans and pulses. Both types effectively replace muscle glycogen. The starchy carbohydrates are the ones that

What types of carbohydrates are there?

There are two types of carbohydrates - starchy (complex) carbohydrates and simple sugars. The simple sugars are found in biscuits, cereals, puddings, soft drinks and juices and jam and honey but these food stuffs also contain fat. Starchy carbohydrates are found in potatoes, rice, bread, wholegrain cereals, semi skimmed milk, yoghurt, fruit, vegetables, beans and pulses. Both types effectively replace muscle glycogen. The starchy carbohydrates are the ones that

have all the vitamins and minerals in them as well as protein. They are also low in fat as long as you do not slap on loads of butter and fatty sauces. The starchy foods are much more bulky so there can be a problem in actually eating that amount of food so supplementing with simple sugar alternatives is necessary.

Your digestive system converts the carbohydrates in food into glucose, a form of sugar carried in the blood and transported to cells for energy. The glucose, in turn, is broken down into carbon dioxide and water. Any glucose not used by the cells is converted into glycogen - another form of carbohydrate that is stored in the muscles and liver. However, the body's glycogen capacity is limited to about 350 grams; once this maximum has been reached, any excess glucose is quickly converted into fat. Base your main meal with the bulk on the your plate filled with carbohydrates and small amounts of protein such as meat, poultry and fish. The extra protein & vitamins you need will be in the starchy carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates for performance

Following training & competition an athlete's glycogen stores are depleted. In order to replenish them the athlete needs to consider the speed at which carbohydrate is converted into blood glucose and transported to the muscles. The rapid replenishment of glycogen stores is important for the track athlete who has a number of races in a meeting. The rise in blood glucose levels is indicated by a foods Glycaemic Index (GI) and the faster and higher the blood glucose rises the higher the GI. Studies have shown that consuming high GI carbohydrates (approximately 1g per kg body) within 2 hours after exercise speeds up the replenishment of glycogen stores and therefore speeds up recovery time. There are times when it is beneficial to consume lower GI carbohydrates which are absorbed slowly over a longer period of time (2-4 hours before exercise). Eating 5-6 meals or

snacks a day will help maximise glycogen stores and energy levels, minimise fat storage and stabilise blood glucose and insulin levels.

Eating and competition

What you eat on a day-to-day basis is extremely important for training. Your diet will affect how fast and how well you progress, and how soon you reach competitive standard. The page on Nutritional Tips provides some general nutritional advice to help you manage your weight and body fat.

Once you are ready to compete, you will have a new concern: your competition diet. Is it important? What should you eat before your competition? When is the best time to eat? How much should you eat? Should you be eating during the event? And what can you eat between heats or matches? A lot of research has been done in this area, and it is clear that certain dietary approaches can enhance competition performance.

What do I need to do?

Calculate your daily basic and extra requirements, monitor your daily intake (especially your carbohydrates) and then adjust your diet to meet your daily requirements. A good balanced diet should provide you with the required nutrients but does not need to be monitored. The simplest way to monitor the 'energy balance' is to keep a regular check of your weight.

Food composition tables

Food composition tables are widely used to assess nutrient and energy intakes, and to plan meals. The composition of food can vary widely, depending, among other factors, on the variety of plant or animal, on growing and feeding conditions and, for some foods, on freshness. Tables are based on average values from a number of samples analysed in the laboratory and therefore only provide a rough guide.

Source: <http://www.brianmacdemon.co.uk>

Exclusive for women

Pacemakers most benefit to women, young patients

After insertion of a pacemaker to correct irregular heart rates, women and younger patients do better over the long term than men and folks over 70 years of age, German researchers have found.

Several studies have looked at what predicts survival after pacemaker placement, but in most cases the follow-up period was no longer than 6 years. Because many patients are still alive 10 years after being given such devices, there is a need to identify factors associated with long-term survival.

As described in the European Heart Journal, Dr. Michael Brunner and colleagues, from Universitätsklinik Freiburg, studied 6505 patients who received a pacemaker.

The average survival following implantation was about 8.5 years, the researchers noted. Nearly 45 percent

of patients were alive after 10 years and more than 20 percent survived at least 20 years.

As expected, age at the time of the procedure was an important factor. People younger than 70 years survived an average of over 14 years, more than double the period seen for older patients.

Although women were typically older than men when they were given a pacemaker, women survived longer. The average survival period for women was nearly 10 years, while for men it was less than 8 years.

With an observation period of 30 years, "the present study is--to the best of our knowledge--by far the largest analysis of very long-term survival in pacemaker patients," the authors state.

Source: European Heart Journal, December 2003

Angioplasty for heart attack particularly helpful for women

People suffering a heart attack may be treated with clot-busting drugs or taken directly to the OR to have the blockage in their coronary arteries cleared by angioplasty. The latter strategy, it seems, helps women more than men.

Direct angioplasty is becoming a preferred way to treat a heart attack, because both men and women do well with this approach. However, women may gain a larger absolute benefit, researchers report in the American Heart Journal.

This, according to Dr. Jacqueline E. Tamis-Holland of St. Luke's Hospital, New York, and associates, is because women are at greater risk of having an adverse event after a heart attack.

The researchers came to these conclusions after examining data from a study of 260 women and 877 men with heart attacks who were randomly assigned to treatment with direct angioplasty

or with a standard clot-busting drug, t-PA.

The women were older than the men and were more likely to have diabetes and hypertension. However, after taking this and other factors into account, women were no more likely than men to die or have another heart attack or stroke within the next 30 days.

The same outcomes were also less likely to occur in women treated with direct angioplasty than women treated with t-PA. This between-group difference was similar to that seen in men.

However, because the number of major events in women that were prevented by angioplasty (56 per 1000) was higher than that in men (42 per 1000), the researchers conclude that "women may derive a larger absolute benefit from direct (angioplasty)."

Source: American Heart Journal, January 2004

Hair dye may raise cancer risk

Women who have been coloring their hair for 24 years or more have a higher risk of developing a cancer called non-Hodgkin lymphoma, U.S. researchers reported.

They said their study of 1,300 women could help explain a mysterious rise in the number of cases of the cancer that affects the lymphatic system.

Writing in the American Journal of Epidemiology, they said women who dyed their hair starting before 1980 were one-third more likely to develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma, or NHL, and those who used the darkest dyes for more than 25 years were twice as likely to develop the cancer.

"Women who used darker permanent hair coloring products for more than 25 years showed the highest increased risk," Tongzhang Zheng, associate professor of epidemiology and environmental health at Yale School of Medicine, said in a statement.

Cancer experts note that a person's absolute risk of developing lymphoma is very low, so doubling that risk still means a woman who dyes her hair is very unlikely to develop lymphoma.

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma will affect an estimated 54,000 Americans this year and will kill 19,000, according to the American Cancer Society. It affects slightly

more men than women. The incidence of NHL has doubled since the mid-1970s and no one knows why. Experts suspect exposure to chemicals can be a factor. The lymphatic system is part of the immune system, so people with immune weaknesses are at special risk -- notably AIDS and organ transplant patients.

Zheng and colleagues studied 600 Connecticut women who had NHL. They were asked to specify what hair coloring products they might have used and when.

They were compared to 700 healthy women. The Yale University researchers did not find any larger risk of cancer in women who started using hair dye in 1980 or later.

"This could reflect the change in hair dye formula contents over the past two decades, or indicate that recent users are still in their induction and latent period," said Yawei Zhang, who also worked on the study.

"Hair coloring products have undergone tremendous change over the last 20 years," added Zheng. "Since 1980, many carcinogens have been removed from some formulas, which vary depending on whether the dye is permanent, darker or lighter."

Source: <http://www.reuters.com>