Cardiac Diet

This diet can help prevent heart disease and stroke. Many factors influence your heart health, including eating and exercise habits. Coronary risk rises a lot with abnormal blood fat (*lipid*) levels. Cardiac meal planning includes limiting unhealthy fats, increasing healthy fats, and making other small dietary changes. General guidelines are as follows:

- Adjust calorie intake to reach and maintain desirable body weight.
- Limit total fat intake to less than 30% of total calories.
- Choose tub margarines and oils that have 2 grams of fat or less. Good cooking oils are canola and olive oils.
- Avoid foods with trans fat (or hydrogenated oils), such as commercially fried foods and commercially baked goods. Commercial shortening and deep-frying fats will contain trans fat.
- Saturated fats are found in animal products and in some vegetable products. Saturated vegetable fats are found in coconut oil, cocoa butter, palm oil, and palm kernel oil. Read labels carefully to avoid these products as much as possible. Use butter in moderation.
- Practice low-fat cooking techniques. **Do not** fry food. Instead, broil, bake, boil, steam, grill, roast on a rack, stir-fry, or microwave it. Other fat reducing suggestions include:
  - Remove the skin from poultry.
  - Remove all visible fat from meats.
  - Skim the fat off stews, soups, and gravies before serving them.
  - Steam vegetables in water or broth instead of sautéing them in fat.
- Increase intake of complex carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes to replace foods high in fat.
- Increase your intake of soluble fiber to 10 to 25 grams per day. Soluble fiber binds cholesterol to be removed from the blood. Foods high in soluble fiber are dried beans, citrus fruits, oats, apples, bananas, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and eggplant.
- Try to include foods fortified with plant sterols or stanols, such as yogurt, breads, juices, or margarines. Choose several fortified foods to achieve a daily intake of 2 to 3 grams of plant sterols or stanols.
- Foods with omega-3 fats can help reduce your risk of heart disease. Aim to have a 4 ounce (oz) portion of fatty fish twice per week, such as salmon, mackerel, albacore tuna, sardines, lake trout, or herring. If you wish to take a fish oil supplement, choose one that contains 1 gram of both DHA and EPA.
- Limit the sodium in your diet to 2400 milligrams (mg) per day. If you have high blood pressure, talk to a registered dietitian about a DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan.

FOOD GROUP	ALLOWED/RECOMMENDED	AVOID/USE SPARINGLY
STARCHES *6 servings or more**	Breads: All kinds (wheat, rye, raisin, white, oatmeal, Italian, French, and English muffin bread). Low-fat rolls: English muffins, frankfurter and hamburger buns, bagels, pita bread, tortillas (not fried). Pancakes, waffles, biscuits, and muffins made with recommended oil. Make at least half of your grains whole-grain.	Products made with saturated or trans fats, oils, or whole milk products. Butter rolls, cheese breads, croissants. Commercial doughnuts, muffins, sweet rolls, biscuits, waffles, pancakes, store-bought mixes.
Crackers	Low-fat crackers and snacks: Animal, graham, rye, saltine (with recommended oil, no lard), oyster, and matzo crackers. Bread sticks, melba toast, rusks, and flatbread, pretzels, lite popcorn.	High-fat crackers: cheese crackers, butter crackers, and those made with coconut, palm oil, or trans fat (hydrogenated oils). Buttered popcorn.

Cereals	Hot or cold whole-grain cereals.	Cereals containing coconut, hydrogenated vegetable fat, or animal fat.
Potatoes / Pasta / Rice	All kinds of potatoes, rice, and pasta (such as macaroni, spaghetti, and noodles).	Pasta or rice prepared with cream sauce or high-fat cheese. Chow mein noodles, French fries.
VEGETABLES *3 servings or more*	All vegetables and vegetable juices.	Fried vegetables. Vegetables in cream, butter, or high-fat cheese sauces.
FRUIT *2 servings or more*	All fruits and fruit juices.	Limit coconut. Fruit in cream or custard.
MEAT & SUBSTITUTES *2 servings or more* *(6 oz per day maximum)*	Limit your intake of meat, seafood, and poultry to no more than 6 oz (cooked weight) per day. All lean, well-trimmed beef, veal, pork, and lamb. All chicken and turkey without skin. All fish and shellfish. Wild game: wild duck, rabbit, pheasant, and venison. Meatless dishes: recipes with dried beans, peas, lentils, and tofu (soybean curd). Seeds and nuts: all seeds and most nuts.	Prime grade and other heavily marbled and fatty meats, such as short ribs, spare ribs, rib eye roast or steak, frankfurters, sausage, bacon and high-fat luncheon meats, mutton. Caviar. Commercially fried fish. Domestic duck, goose, venison sausage. Organ meats: liver, gizzard, heart, chitterlings, brains, kidney, sweetbreads.
DAIRY	Egg whites or low-cholesterol egg substitutes may be used as desired. Low-fat cheeses: nonfat or low-fat cottage cheese (1% or 2% fat), cheeses made with part skim milk, such as mozzarella, farmers, string, or ricotta. (Cheeses should be labeled no more than 2 to 6 grams fat per oz.)	Whole milk cheeses, including colby, cheddar, muenster, Monterey Jack, Havarti, Brie, Camembert, American, Swiss, and blue. Creamed cottage cheese, cream cheese.
MILK *2 cups or equivalent*	Skim (or 1%) milk: liquid, powdered, or evaporated. Buttermilk made with low-fat milk. Drinks made with skim or low-fat milk or cocoa. Chocolate milk or cocoa made with skim or low-fat (1%) milk. Nonfat or low-fat yogurt.	Whole milk and whole milk products, including buttermilk or yogurt made from whole milk, drinks made from whole milk. Condensed milk, evaporated whole milk, and 2% milk.
SOUPS & COMBINATION FOODS	Low-fat low-sodium soups: broth, dehydrated soups, homemade broth, soups with the fat removed, homemade cream soups made with skim or low-fat milk. Low-fat spaghetti, lasagna, chili, and Spanish rice if low-fat ingredients and low-fat cooking techniques are used.	Cream soups made with whole milk, cream, or high-fat cheese. All other soups.

DESSERTS & SWEETS *In moderation*	Sherbet, fruit ices, gelatins, meringues, angel food cake. Homemade desserts with recommended fats, oils, and milk products. Jam, jelly, honey, marmalade, sugars, and syrups. Pure sugar candy, such as gum drops, hard candy, jelly beans, marshmallows, mints, and small amounts of dark chocolate.	Commercially prepared cakes, pies, cookies, frosting, pudding, or mixes for these products. Desserts containing whole milk products, chocolate, coconut, lard, palm oil, or palm kernel oil. Ice cream or ice cream drinks. Candy that contains chocolate, coconut, butter, hydrogenated fat, or unknown ingredients. Buttered syrups.
FATS & OILS *Up to 8 teaspoons (tsp) per day maximum* *(use recommended oils)*	Vegetable oils: safflower, sunflower, corn, soybean, cottonseed, sesame, canola, olive, or peanut. Non-hydrogenated margarines. Salad dressing or mayonnaise: homemade or commercial, made with a recommended oil. Low or nonfat salad dressing or mayonnaise. Limit added fats and oils to 6 to 8 tsp. per day (includes fats used in cooking, baking, salads, and spreads on bread). Remember to count the "hidden fats" in foods.	Solid fats and shortenings: butter, lard, salt pork, bacon drippings. Gravy containing meat fat, shortening, or suet. Cocoa butter, coconut. Coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, or hydrogenated oils: these ingredients are often used in bakery products, nondairy creamers, whipped toppings, candy, and commercially fried foods. Read labels carefully. Salad dressings made of unknown oils, sour cream, or cheese, such as blue cheese and Roquefort. Cream, all kinds: half-and-half, light, heavy, or whipping. Sour or cream cheese (even if "light" or low-fat). Nondairy cream substitutes: coffee creamers and sour cream substitutes made with palm, palm kernel, hydrogenated oils, or coconut oil.
BEVERAGES	Coffee (regular or decaffeinated), tea. Diet carbonated beverages, mineral water. Alcohol: Check with your caregiver. Moderation is recommended.	Whole milk, regular sodas, and juice drinks with added sugar.
CONDIMENTS / MISCELLANEOUS	All seasonings and condiments. Cocoa powder. "Cream" sauces made with recommended ingredients.	Carob powder made with hydrogenated fats.

* These amounts indicate the minimum number of servings needed each day from the Food Guide Pyramid to provide a variety of nutrients essential to good health. The word “maximum” is used if amounts of certain foods eaten must be controlled. Combination foods may count as full or partial servings from the food groups. Dark green, leafy, or orange vegetables are recommended 3 to 4 times weekly to provide vitamin A. A good source of vitamin C is recommended daily. Potatoes may be included as a serving of vegetables. The menu below is provided as a sample. Your daily menus will vary.

SAMPLE MENU

Breakfast	**Noon Meal**	**Evening Meal**
1/2 cup orange juice	Turkey sandwich with 2 oz turkey, 2 slices bread	3 oz lean ground beef

1/2 cup oatmeal	Lettuce and tomato slices	1 baked potato
1 slice toast	Fresh fruit	1 tsp. margarine
1 tsp. margarine	Carrot sticks	1/2 cup asparagus
1 cup skim milk	Coffee/tea	Lettuce salad
	Snack	1 tbsp. non-creamy dressing
	Fresh fruit or low-fat crackers	1/2 cup peach slices
		1 cup skim milk

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