





Eating to support a **healthy heart**.

You're trying to eat a healthy diet. But you aren't sure how to put the right foods together each day. It can be confusing.

Experts on eating right are called dietitians. Dietitians at the Mayo Clinic have put together a set of daily tips designed to help you get healthier and not get sick.

Use these tips to help plan your healthy diet. Keep in mind that if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or other conditions, you may need different tips. Check with your doctor.



Daily tips for healthy eating.

Carbohydrates.

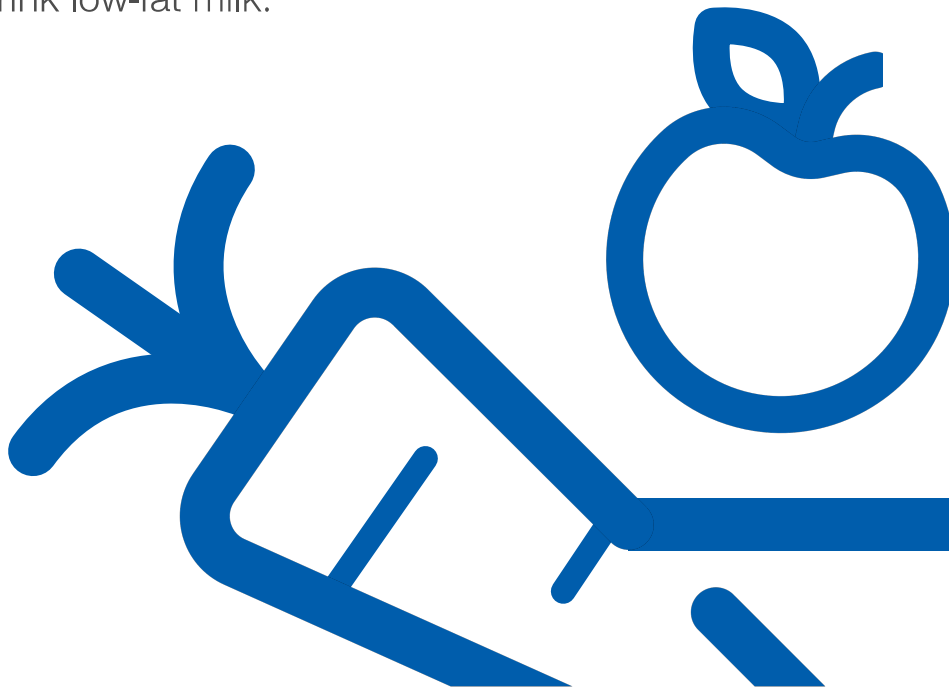
What they are:

Carbohydrates are types of sugar found in food. They give you energy.

- **Complex carbohydrates** are good for your health. They are found in grains and starchy vegetables, like potatoes and corn. They are also found in peas, beans, chickpeas and other seed pods.
- **Simple carbohydrates** are usually found in fruits and milk. They are also in foods made with sugar, like candy and other sweets.

What to do with them:

Get 45% to 65% of your calories from carbohydrates. This would be 225 to 325 grams a day if you eat 2,000 calories a day. Eat a lot of complex carbohydrates. You get them from whole grains, green vegetables and beans. Eat fewer foods that have sugar added to them, like candy and other sweets. Drink low-fat milk.



Protein.

What it is:

Protein is important to life. Your skin, bones, muscles and body tissue all contain protein. You can get protein from both plant and animal foods. Things like nuts, seeds, chicken, turkey, fish, meat and dairy products. Nuts and seeds have the most protein.

What to do with it:

Get 10% to 35% of your calories from protein. That means about 50 to 175 grams if you eat about 2,000 calories a day. Eat plenty of foods with protein, like beans, lentils and soy. Choose lean meats. Try to eat fish two times a week.

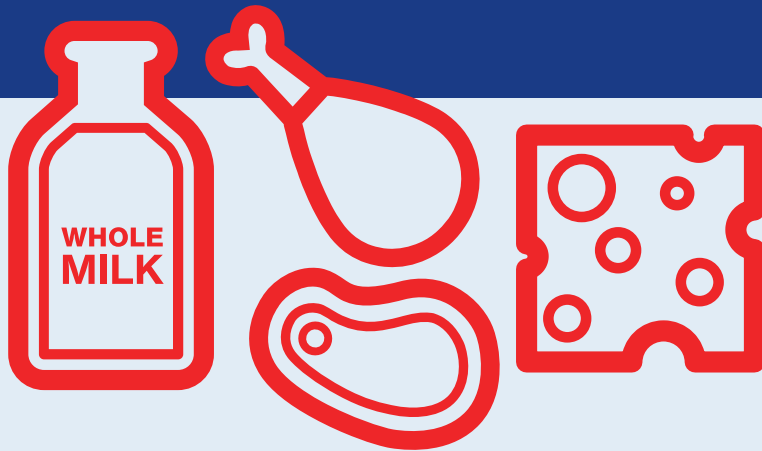
Fat.

What it is:

Fats help your body get vitamins and grow new cells. Fat gives you energy. But fat also has a lot of calories per gram. Too much of certain kinds of fat increase your cholesterol levels and your risk of heart disease. These are called saturated fat and trans fat.

What to do about it:

No more than 35% of your calories should come from fat. Less than 20% is better. That means 44 to 78 grams when you eat about 2,000 calories a day. Eat fats from healthy foods, like nuts, olives and nut oils.



Saturated fat.

What it is:

It's another kind of fat. Red meat, butter and whole milk have this kind of fat. Coconut, palm and other tropical oils have a lot of it. It is a big cause of high cholesterol and increases your risk of heart disease.

What to do about it:

No more than 7% of your calories should come from this fat. That's about 15 grams in 2,000 calories a day. This fat counts against all the fat you eat in a day.

WAYS TO REDUCE SATURATED FAT:

- ♥ USE NON-STICK SPRAYS AND OLIVE, SAFFLOWER OR CANOLA OILS WHEN YOU COOK, INSTEAD OF BUTTER.
- ♥ EAT MORE FISH. IT'S USUALLY LOWER IN SATURATED FAT THAN MEAT.
- ♥ BAKE, GRILL OR BROIL FOOD INSTEAD OF FRYING IT. YOUR FOOD HOLDS MORE FAT WHEN YOU FRY.
- ♥ TRY EATING MORE MEALS WITHOUT MEAT, LIKE VEGGIE BURGERS. YOU CAN ADD FLAVOR WITH LOW-FAT BEANS INSTEAD OF BUTTER.



Daily tips for healthy eating.

Trans fat.

What it is:

Foods made in a factory have a lot of it, like crackers, cookies and cakes. Fried foods, like doughnuts and french fries, have it. Shortening and margarine have a lot too.

What to do about it:

No more than 1% of your calories should come from this fat. That is about 2 grams in 2,000 calories a day. This fat counts against all the fat you eat in a day.

Cholesterol.

What it is:

Cholesterol helps keep the cells in your body healthy and working right. It can also leave globs of fat in your arteries. Your body makes as much as it needs. You get extra by eating things like meat, chicken, fish, eggs, whole milk and butter.

What to do about it:

You should not eat more than 300 milligrams a day. Eat more fruits and vegetables and less animal products. Do not eat more than 6 ounces of meat a day.

Fiber.

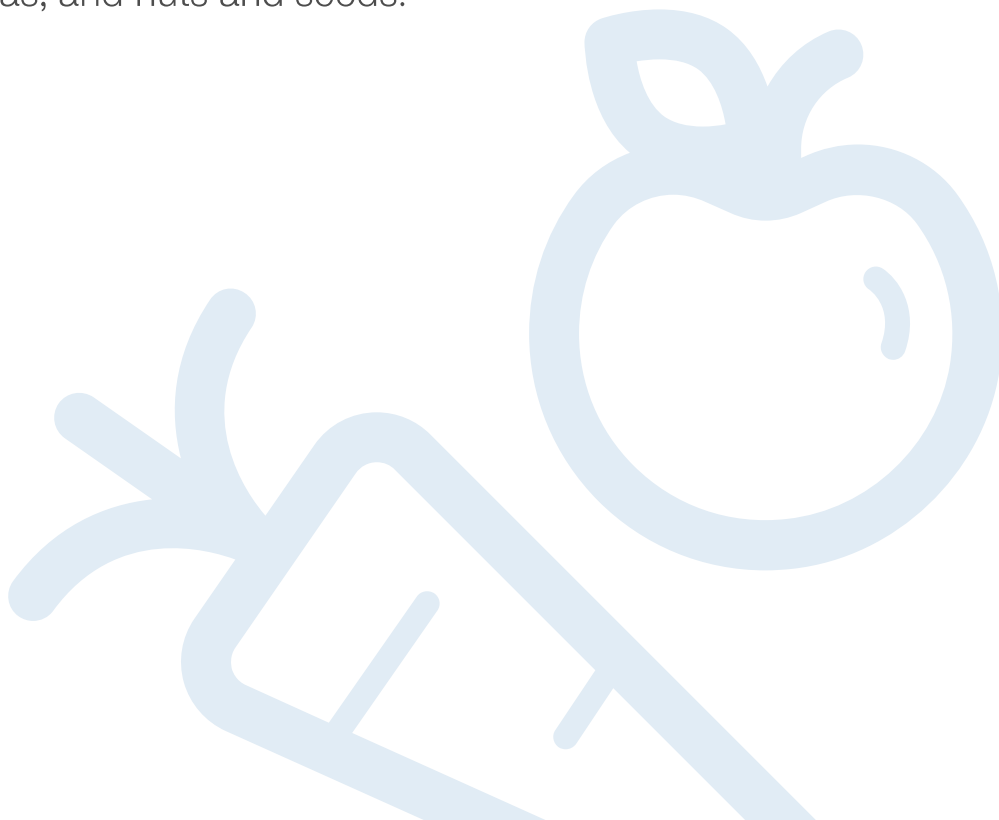
What it is:

Fiber is the part of plants that your body has a hard time using. There are two kinds of fiber:

- **Soluble fiber** can help decrease the cholesterol in your body. It can improve the level of your blood sugar. You get this fiber from foods like oats and dried beans. You also get it from some fruits, like apples and oranges.
- **Insoluble fiber** can help make it easier for you to go to the bathroom. Vegetables and grains have this kind of fiber.

What to do about it:

Women should get about 21 to 25 grams of fiber a day. Men should get about 30 to 38 grams of fiber a day. Eat plenty of whole-grain foods. Eat fruits and vegetables, beans and peas, and nuts and seeds.





Daily tips for healthy eating.

Sodium (salt).

What it is:

Sodium helps keep the right balance of fluids in your body. It helps send messages to nerves. It helps control muscles. Too much sodium can be harmful. Most people get too much sodium in their food. It comes from eating foods made in a factory, like canned vegetables, soups, sliced lunch meat and frozen foods.

What to do about it:

Healthy people shouldn't have more than 1,500 to 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day. This will change if you have a health problem like high blood pressure. Don't add salt when cooking or eating at the table.