

Having a medical condition can make it difficult to eat healthy. But choosing foods carefully can aid in the management of medical conditions. This insert describes common medical conditions and dietary selections that may improve these conditions.

Disclaimer: You should always seek the advice of your healthcare professional or registered dietitian for proper medical care and before seeking any treatment. This insert is for informational purposes only and should not replace or cause delay in proper medical care.

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease



Gastroesophageal reflux disease, otherwise known as GERD, causes uncomfortable feelings such as heartburn, regurgitation of stomach acid, chest pain, nausea, and difficulty swallowing. Lifestyle and diet modifications may assist with managing this condition. Some foods may contribute to GERD. Try to identify these foods, find substitutions, and reduce or eliminate these foods in your diet. The list below includes foods that may be triggers for GERD:

- Citrus fruits, such as oranges, grapefruit, and lemons
- High-fat foods, such as fried foods, butter, and desserts
- Spicy foods
- Raw garlic and onions
- Chocolate
- Mint flavorings
- Caffeine
- Tomato-based foods, such as pizza and chili

Lifestyle changes may also help manage GERD. Talk with your healthcare professional to develop the best plan for you:

- Do not lie down for at least 3 hours after a meal
- Drink liquids between meals, instead of with meals
- Avoid lying down, bending over, or straining after eating
- Chew gum after meals to help neutralize stomach acid
- Avoid alcohol
- Raise the head of your bed
- Quit smoking
- Eat slowly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a low-fat diet
- Eat smaller meals more frequently
- Wear loose-fitting clothing



High Blood Pressure



High blood pressure, otherwise known as hypertension, can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke. Over time, high blood pressure can cause damage to the blood vessels, eyes, and other organs. Diet and lifestyle are important to managing this condition. Read below for tips on managing high blood pressure.

Eat a balanced diet with a variety of foods.

- Eat more fresh, frozen, dried, and/or canned fruits and vegetables.
- Choose whole grains, which will have the word “whole” as the first ingredient on the nutrition label ingredient list.
- Choose low-fat meat and dairy products. Be cautious of meats high in sodium, like canned meat and luncheon meat.



Focus on lowering the sodium in your diet.

- Look for these words on labels and packages: “reduced sodium,” “salt or sodium free,” “very low sodium,” and “low sodium.”
- Choose snacks low in sodium.
- Reduce the amount of added salt in cooking.
- Drain and rinse canned vegetables to reduce sodium.
- Try other seasonings to flavor food, such as garlic, onion, basil, cumin, and other herbs and spices.



Make these lifestyle changes to help manage blood pressure:

- Exercise
- Limit alcohol
- Quit smoking
- Manage stress
- Maintain a healthy weight

High Cholesterol



High cholesterol can increase your risk for heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. There are two types of cholesterol: “good,” or HDL, and “bad,” or LDL. You want to increase your HDL and reduce your LDL. Diet and lifestyle are important factors to managing this condition. Read below for tips on managing high cholesterol.

Eat a balanced diet with a variety of foods.

- Eat foods high in fiber that can help lower LDL: oatmeal, beans and peas, barley, and fruits and vegetables.
- Increase consumption of whole grains, which will have the word “whole” as the first ingredient on the nutrition label ingredient list.



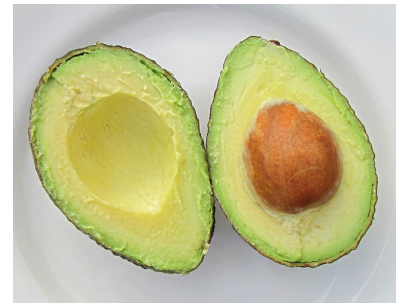
Decrease saturated and *trans* fat in your diet.



- Choose lean meats and low-fat dairy products.
- Avoid products with *trans* fat or “partially hydrogenated oils” in the ingredient list. *Trans* fat can be found in stick margarines and shortenings, some convenience foods, including packaged desserts, frozen dinners, and snack foods, “fast-food,” fried foods, and others.

Choose healthy fats.

- Consume omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat, found in fish, flaxseed, canola, and soybean oils, flaxseeds, and walnuts.
- Replace saturated fats with monounsaturated fats, found in olive oil, avocados, peanut butter, and many nuts and seeds.



Make lifestyle changes to help manage high cholesterol:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Limit alcohol
- Exercise

Diabetes



Diabetes requires close management of diet and lifestyle. Uncontrolled diabetes increases risk of heart disease and stroke and damage to organs, such as the kidneys, eyes, and nerves. Carbohydrates will affect blood sugar. Here is a list of foods with carbohydrates and tips for selecting healthier options:

Fruits

- Choose fresh, frozen, or canned fruit, instead of juice.
- Choose canned fruit packed in natural juices (no sugar added) or sugar substitutes; rinse and drain if they are packed in syrup.



Starchy Vegetables

- Examples include potatoes, corn, peas, beans, and winter squash.
- Choose fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables; rinse and drain canned vegetables.



Milk/Dairy

- Choose low-fat dairy products.

Grains/Cereals/Pasta

- Choose whole grains, which include whole wheat bread, pasta, oatmeal, and brown rice.
- A whole grain will have the word “whole” as the first ingredient on the nutrition label ingredient list.



Desserts and Added Sugars

- Reduce or eliminate these products. Examples are candy, cookies, pie, cake and sugar-sweetened beverages. Sugar-sweetened beverages include sports drinks, energy drinks, regular soda, and sweetened tea and juice.
- Choose diet beverages and 100% juice with no added sugar.

Alcohol

- Limit alcohol use. If alcohol is consumed, limit 1 drink or less for women and 2 or fewer drinks for men per day.
- Do not consume alcohol on an empty stomach.

In addition to understanding what foods will affect blood sugar, it is important to maintain a consistent intake of these foods throughout the day. Do not skip meals and include snacks if needed, for example, if blood sugar is low. To identify the amount of carbohydrate in a food on the nutrition label, look for the amount of “Total Carbohydrate,” rather than only the amount of “Sugars.”

These lifestyle changes may help manage diabetes:

- Follow MyPlate for a balanced diet and controlled portion sizes. For more information about MyPlate, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.
- Exercise, but consult your healthcare professional before beginning an exercise program.
- Maintain a healthy weight.