

Heart Healthy Eating with DASH

DASH, or Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, is an eating plan that lowers blood pressure and LDL (bad) cholesterol to reduce your risk of getting heart disease. Your healthcare provider may also recommend DASH to prevent or control other diseases and conditions, such as stroke, type 2 diabetes, and kidney stones.

Along with DASH, other lifestyle changes can help improve your health. They include staying at a healthy weight, exercising, and not smoking.

Talk to your provider for support, as you make changes to your diet and lifestyle.

Follow the DASH eating plan

The food groups listed show examples of daily or weekly servings for a 2,000-calorie a day diet. You may need more or less servings each day based on your calorie (energy) needs. Talk to your provider for support.

Sodium – limit to 2,300 mg or less per day or the amount recommended by your provider

- 1 teaspoon of salt has about 2,300 mg of sodium.
- Most of the sodium in our diets comes from processed foods, like lunch meat, canned soups, canned vegetables, and boxed or packaged mixes.
- Read food labels to learn how much sodium is in a food.
- Use sodium-free spices or flavorings with your food instead of salt.
- Rinse canned foods to remove some of the added sodium.
- Buy foods labeled “no salt added,” “sodium-free,” “low sodium” or “very low sodium”.



Grains – eat 6 to 8 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 slice of bread
 - 1 ounce of dry cereal (about ½ to 1¼ cups, depending on cereal type)
 - ½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, grains, or cereal
- Choose whole grains (100% whole wheat or whole grain bread, brown rice, quinoa, or oatmeal) over refined grains (white flour, degermed cornmeal, white bread, or white rice).



Vegetables – eat 4 to 5 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 cup raw, leafy vegetables
 - ½ cup chopped raw or cooked vegetables
 - ½ cup low sodium vegetable juice



Fruits – eat 4 to 5 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 medium fruit
 - ¼ cup dried fruit
 - ½ cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit
 - ½ cup fruit juice
- Choose whole fruits (fresh, frozen, or dried) over juice.



Fat free or low fat dairy – eat 2 to 3 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 cup fat free or 1% low fat milk
 - 1½ ounces low fat cheese
 - 6 ounces fat free or low fat yogurt



Lean meats, poultry, and fish – eat 6 to 8 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 ounce cooked meat, fish, or poultry
 - 1 egg
- Trim away visible fat.
- Remove skin from poultry.
- Use low fat cooking methods, like broil, roast, poach, bake, and grill.
- Limit meat to 3 ounces at meals (about the size of the palm of your hand).
- Limit egg yolks to 4 per week.



Fats and oils – eat 2 to 3 servings per day

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 teaspoon butter, margarine, or oil
 - 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
 - 2 tablespoons salad dressing
- Use small amounts of butter or margarine.
- Use olive oil as your first choice for oils.



Seeds, nuts, and legumes (beans, lentils, and peas) – eat 4 to 5 servings per week

- 1 serving equals:
 - ⅓ cup or 1 ½ ounces of nuts
 - 2 tablespoons nut butter



- 2 tablespoons or ½ ounce seeds
- ½ cup cooked beans, lentils, or peas
- Eat more vegetarian or meatless meals.

Sweets and added sugars – eat **5 or less servings per week**

- 1 serving equals:
 - 1 tablespoon of sugar, honey, maple syrup, or chocolate sauce
 - 1 tablespoon jelly or jam
 - ½ cup sorbet, sherbert, or ice cream
 - 2 small cookies
- Keep sugar on the food label to less than 10 grams per serving.
- People with male anatomy: limit sugar to no more than 150 calories or about 3 tablespoons (38 grams) per day.
- People with female anatomy: limit sugar to no more than 100 calories or about 2 tablespoons (25 grams) per day.
- A 12-ounce can of regular soda has about 40 grams of sugar!



For more information about DASH, visit:

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan
- MedlinePlus at medlineplus.gov/dashdiet.html

Tips for success

- Read food labels to learn what is in a food. This will help you to make healthier choices. Look at calories, saturated fat, sodium, and sugars.
- Use the DASH 2-day sample menu on the next page to help you get started.

Adopt healthy lifestyle habits

To boost the health benefits of eating well with DASH, practice these healthy lifestyle habits.

- **Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.**
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Talk to your provider or dietitian about what is a healthy weight for your height.
- **Exercise regularly.** Get at least 150 minutes a week of moderate exercise, such as walking, biking, or swimming. This breaks down to just 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Start slowly, such as walking briskly for 15 minutes, twice a day.
- **Manage stress.**
- **Limit alcohol.** If you drink, do so in moderation. This means no more than 2 drinks per day for people with male anatomy, and 1 drink per day for people with female anatomy.
- **Do not smoke or use tobacco products.** Visit smokefree.gov or go.osu.edu/pted3430 for tools and tips to quit.

DASH 2-day sample menu	
Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast	Breakfast
1 cup bran flakes cereal	½ cup oatmeal
1 medium banana	1 mini 100% whole wheat bagel
1 cup 1% low fat milk	1 tablespoon peanut butter
1 slice 100% whole wheat bread	1 medium apple or 1 cup other whole fruit
1 teaspoon butter or soft margarine	1 cup 1% low fat milk
½ cup orange juice or orange segments	
Lunch	Lunch
¾ cup chicken salad on 2 slices 100% whole wheat bread	Chicken breast sandwich with 3 ounces skinless chicken breast, 2 slices 100% whole wheat bread, 1 slice low fat cheddar cheese, 1 large romaine leaf, 2 slices tomato, 1 tablespoon low fat mayonnaise
Salad with ½ cup fresh cucumber slices, ½ cup tomato wedges, 1 tablespoon sunflower seeds, 1 teaspoon Italian dressing	1 cup canteloupe chunks
½ cup fruit cocktail	
Dinner	Dinner
3 ounces lean beef with 2 tablespoons fat free beef gravy	1 cup whole grain spaghetti with ¾ cup spaghetti sauce (with no meat and less than 10 grams of sugar per serving), and 3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
1 cup green beans sauteed in ½ teaspoon olive oil	Spinach salad with 1 cup spinach leaves, ¼ cup fresh grated carrots, ¼ cup sliced mushrooms, 1 tablespoon vinaigrette dressing
1 small baked potato topped with 1 tablespoon fat free sour cream, 1 tablespoon low fat shredded cheddar cheese, 1 tablespoon chopped scallions	½ cup corn, cooked from frozen
1 small whole wheat roll with 1 teaspoon tub margarine	½ cup fresh or canned pears
1 small apple	
1 cup 1% low fat milk	
Snack	Snack
⅓ cup almonds, unsalted	⅓ cup walnuts, unsalted
¼ cup raisins	½ cup applesauce
½ cup low fat, low sugar Greek yogurt	1 low fat mozzarella string cheese