**Why Follow a Heart-Healthy Eating Pattern?**

A heart-healthy eating pattern will lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. It may lower your cholesterol and triglycerides, and your blood pressure and blood sugar. Try to eat more heart-healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, low-fat or non-fat dairy foods, lean protein foods, fatty fish, beans and legumes, raw or unsalted nuts, and liquid vegetable oils. Limit or avoid foods that are not heart-healthy like sweets, sugary drinks, refined grains, fatty or processed meats, and solids fats.

The good news is that eating healthfully does not have to cost a lot of money!

**Tips for heart-healthy eating on a budget**
- Plan weekly menus and make your grocery list from these menus
- Limit packaged and pre-cooked foods—many are high in salt, fat, and sugar
- Check for store specials and coupons in newspapers and online.
- Shop at discount grocery stores and buy non-perishable items in bulk.
- Buy generic or store brands.
- Eat before going grocery shopping to avoid impulse buying.
- Check out www.choosemyplate.gov/budget for more ideas!

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**Tips for Low Cost Heart-Healthy Eating**

**Grains**
- Limit grains to ¼ of a 9-inch plate
- Choose brown rice and whole-wheat pasta
- Choose whole grain bread and cereals
- Buy smaller amounts to prevent spoilage

**Protein Foods**
- Cook meals with plant proteins (beans, legumes, lentils) more often
- Limit meat portions to ¼ of a 9-inch plate or about 3 ounces
- Use water-packed, low-salt canned fish
- Choose lean meats like chicken or turkey (take off the skin)
- Limit red meat and choose lean cuts when you do buy it (round or sirloin and lean ground beef)
- Buy value packs of lean meats and freeze what you don’t use

**Fruits and Vegetables**
- Fill ½ of a 9-inch plate with non-starchy vegetables
- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables ‘in season’
- Buy canned, no-added-salt beans and vegetables
- Buy plain frozen fruit and vegetables

**Dairy Foods**
- Buy store-brand low-fat dairy foods
- Buy plain yogurt in large containers
- Add fruit and nuts to plain yogurt
- Use non-fat dried milk

**Condiments and Snacks**
- Use 1 – 2 Tbsp. oil and vinegar on salads
- Snack on raw or unsalted nuts
- Make unsalted air-popped popcorn
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks
- Carry a reusable bottle to fill with water

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**Budget Friendly Heart-Healthy Menu Ideas**

- Low-Sugar Cereal or Oatmeal + Fruit or Raisins OR Whole-Grain Toast + 2 Tbsp. Peanut Butter + 1% Milk
- Tuna-Vegetable Wrap with Low-Fat Yogurt OR 2 Tbsp. Peanut Butter on Whole-Wheat Bread
  - OR Red Beans and Brown Rice + Carrot Sticks or Side Salad + Fresh Fruit + Water or 1% Milk
- Meatless Bean Chili OR Lentil Soup OR Pasta and Beans OR Chicken-Fish with Brown Rice + Salad or Green Vegetable + Fresh Fruit + Water or 1% Milk
- Snacks: Homemade Popcorn OR Veggies + Hummus OR Low-Fat Yogurt + Seasonal Fresh Fruit

A registered dietitian nutritionist can help you make a heart-healthy meal plan that works best for your lifestyle, and support you in your journey to a healthful dietary pattern.

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This information is part of the Clinician’s Lifestyle Modification Toolbox courtesy of the National Lipid Association.