

## Welcome to HeartSmart Kitchen!

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most Americans eat too much sodium, and, as a result, more people are being diagnosed with high blood pressure. The average intake of sodium is 3,400 milligrams per day, more than double the 1,500 milligrams that the American Heart Association recommends. By following a heart-healthy, low sodium diet you can decrease your chance of developing high blood pressure and other harmful effects. The objective of this newsletter is to provide you with easy-to-read articles about how to reduce your sodium intake and help you understand why it's important to follow a heart-healthy lifestyle.

## What Does “Clean Eating” Really Mean?

The phrase “clean eating” has been thrown around quite frequently in the media lately. It's such a vague phrase, so what does it really mean? Clean eating isn't a defined diet. There are many ways to interpret “clean eating”. It isn't necessarily a diet for weight loss, although eating clean can help one lose weight! It's not about your food being dirty. It's about avoiding processed foods with a million ingredients.

**Clean Eating:** *Choosing the healthiest options in all five food groups, like fresh vegetables, fruit, dairy, whole grains and lean proteins, and avoiding processed junk food and fast food.*

When it all comes down to it, it's basically eating healthy, fresh, well-rounded meals. You don't have to be a vegetarian to eat clean, and you don't have to cook fancy meals or go on a cleanse. The easiest way to eat clean is to shop the perimeter of your grocery store. Below are some tips for shopping each section.

**Fresh Fruit & Veggies:** Anything in this section is basically a free-for-all. Load up on anything and everything that you like. Kale, spinach, sweet potatoes, oranges and berries are delicious, nutrition-packed options.

**Deli:** Here's where label reading will come into play. Look for meats that are nitrate-free, and lower in sodium.

Buy cheeses with less than 150mg of sodium per serving.

**Meat/Poultry/Seafood:** Aim for grass-fed and pasture raised meats. It's more expensive, but cutting down on your meat consumption can help the environment and your waistline.

**Dairy/Eggs:** Choose cage-free eggs and low-fat dairy products like milk, low-sodium cottage cheese, and light sour cream.

**Frozen Fruit & Veggies:** Make sure you're choosing those without added sodium or sauces.

**Fresh Breads:** Check the labels and try to find those with less than 150mg of sodium per serving. Look for whole wheat bread.

**Center Aisles:** Go into the aisles for items such as low-sodium canned beans, canned tomatoes, plain pasta and rice, nuts and seeds, nut butters, high fiber/protein cereal, and of course any cleaning or household products you may need.

Check out the ingredient lists for everything with a label. Look at sodium, sugar, and how many ingredients the product has. Does the item have a long list of ingredients with unrecognizable names? If foods have more than five items on their ingredient list, they're probably not clean.



### Featured Recipe:

## Spicy Polenta

*From The Heart Hospital Baylor Plano Kitchen  
Makes 4 servings*

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups fat free, no sodium added chicken broth
- 1 cup fat-free skim milk
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground red pepper (cayenne)
- 1 cup uncooked corn grits or coarse-ground cornmeal
- ¼ cup shredded parmesan cheese

### Directions:

1. In a 3-quart saucepan, heat broth, milk, cumin, salt and red pepper to boiling. Slowly pour grits into the boiling mixture, stirring vigorously with wire whisk to prevent lumps from forming.
2. Reduce heat to low; simmer uncovered 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until thickened, stir in cheese.

*Per serving: 120 calories, 1.5g Total Fat (0.5g Saturated Fat), 20g Carbohydrates, 6g Protein, 400mg Sodium.*



### Meet your RD

## Emily Hein, RD, LD

Clinical and Outpatient Dietitian

Hi, my name is Emily Hein, and I am your Registered Dietitian. I have been working with the patients at the *Center for Advanced Cardiovascular Care* since May 2013. I graduated from Texas Woman's University with a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition and completed

my dietetic internship at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. I am registered and licensed in the state of Texas to practice as a dietitian.

My mission is to help you and your family understand why it's important to follow a heart-healthy lifestyle, and to make the transition for you as easy as possible.

You're welcome to request a nutrition consultation with me at any time during your clinic visit.

### Science Corner:

## What are Triglycerides?

Triglycerides, which are produced in the liver, are another type of fat found in the blood and in food. Causes of raised triglycerides are being overweight/obesity, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking, excess alcohol intake, and a diet very high in carbohydrates (60 percent of calories or higher). Recent research indicates that triglyceride levels that are borderline high (150-199 mg/dL) or high (200-499 mg/dL) may increase your risk for heart disease. Levels of 500mg/dL or higher is one of the risk factors of metabolic syndrome.

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of symptoms — a large waist measurement (greater than 35 inches for women; 40 inches or more for men), triglycerides 150mg/dL or higher; an HDL cholesterol of less than 50 mg/dL for women and less than 40 mg/dL for men; a blood pressure of 130/85 mmHg or higher; and a fasting blood sugar of 100 mg/dL or higher. Having metabolic syndrome increases your risk for heart disease.

The syndrome isn't a disease itself but a cluster of risk factors for heart disease and other disorders, such as diabetes. One risk factor alone increases your chance of developing heart disease — having a group of them boosts your risk more. This is true even though some of the factors in the metabolic syndrome may be at levels below those for full-fledged heart disease risk factors. In fact, research indicates that having the metabolic syndrome can raise your chance of developing heart disease and diabetes even if your LDL cholesterol isn't elevated.

To reduce blood triglyceride levels: control your weight, be physically active, don't smoke, limit alcohol intake, and limit simple sugars such as candy, cookies, cake, and sugar-sweetened beverages. Sometimes, medication is also needed.

*Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



### Food of the Month:

## Pumpkin Seeds

**What:** The edible seed of a pumpkin, referred to as either the kernel or the whole seed.

**When:** Available year round in bulk section of health food stores, fresh pumpkin seeds are available in the Fall.

**Where:** Sprinkle on top of salads or oatmeal. Bake into muffins and breads.

**Why:** The seeds are good sources of protein, as well as iron, zinc, manganese, magnesium, phosphorus, copper, and potassium.

**How:** To roast whole pumpkin seeds from a raw pumpkin, combine the seeds (rinsed and dried) with 2 teaspoons of olive oil, garlic powder, cayenne pepper and a little salt. Roast on a baking sheet at 300 degrees F for about 45 minutes.

### Kitchen Tip of the Month:

Peeling a garlic clove can be a hassle. Buy pre-peeled and minced garlic. The pre-peeled stuff, so long as you buy it fresh, will last for weeks in the refrigerator and despite what some chefs may tell you, it tastes just fine.

## Did You Know?

Free range, cage-free eggs have 1/3 less cholesterol, 1/4 less saturated fat, 2x more omega-3's, 3x more vitamin E and 7x more beta-carotene than the commercially produced variety.

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