



Omega-3's For Heart Health

February is not only the month for sending valentines; it's also American Heart Month! Heart disease is a major problem—it's the number one leading cause of death in the United States. This is alarming, but the good news is heart disease is preventable and controllable. Along with watching your sodium and saturated fat intake, it's a good idea to eat foods that contain omega-3 fatty acids.

There are many studied health benefits of omega-3 fatty acids, including lowering triglycerides and blood pressure, and decreasing the risk of heart disease. Omega-3 fatty acids are essential fatty acids which reduce inflammation in the blood vessels and joints. Diets rich in omega-3 fats produce healthy, flexible cell membranes that can do their jobs correctly, such as holding water and vital nutrients and communicate with other cells accurately.

The highest food sources of omega-3 fatty acids are fish, like salmon, sardines, and tuna; nuts and seeds

such as almonds and walnuts; and dark leafy green vegetables. Canola and olive oil are also good sources of omega-3 fatty acids. Keep in mind that although these foods are high in healthy omega-3 fatty acids, they are still high in calories so eat them in moderation. If you decide to use an omega-3 supplement, talk to your doctor first. Omega-3 supplements can increase bleeding in people taking blood thinning medications.

Two servings of fatty fish (like salmon or tuna) per week are enough to raise your blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids. Try broiling salmon with a drizzle of olive oil and freshly cracked black pepper, or include tuna in sandwiches with low-sodium mayonnaise and sweet relish. Make a smoothie with yogurt, banana, strawberries and a tablespoon of lemon-flavored flax seed oil, or include ground flax seeds in your home baked goods. This Valentine's day, treat your heart to some omega-3 fatty acids!

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. Join us monthly for feature articles and recipes, tips, nutrition "Myth Busters" and more!

Featured Recipe:

Baked Maple Salmon

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of Atlantic salmon
- ¼ cup natural maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons of low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- Ground black pepper

Directions:

1. Cut the salmon into four equal sized pieces.
2. Mix maple syrup, low sodium soy sauce, minced garlic and ground black pepper (to taste) in a bowl.
3. Using a glass baking dish, coat the salmon with the marinade and set in the refrigerator for no more than 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F and bake for 4-6 minutes for each ½ inch thickness, until easily flaked with a fork.

Science Corner

Avoid Added Salt

The average sodium intake is almost double what it was fifty years ago. A faster paced society, working parents, busy schedules and a need for convenience are some of the reasons for this increase. Not only are pre-made grocery store items full of sodium, but restaurants have packed their items full too! Families today eat out several times a week, and in the past it was saved for special occasions. Restaurant meals commonly have two to three times the amount of sodium needed in one day.

Fifty years ago, the mother was the main family member who would prepare fresh meals for the family. But because of today's fast paced society and increased incidence of two working parents, many people rely on convenience and ready to eat meals. This is helpful for families with busy schedules, but can add quite a bit of sodium to your daily intake. If you rely on pre-made sauce mixes, canned items, frozen foods and pre-made deli meats to prepare your dinners, you may be adding too much sodium to your meals. A typical frozen pizza or entrée can contain between 600-1000 milligrams of sodium per serving. Read the nutrition labels on the back of packages to avoid buying products with added sodium, sugar and fats. Shop the perimeter of the grocery store, and buy fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh meats, and dairy. Plan your meals at the beginning of the week and prep as much as you can before the busy week starts. Chop and slice fruits and vegetables, cook grains, and roast potatoes or chicken so you'll have fresh items ready to go. Invest in a couple easy cookbooks and go have fun in the kitchen!

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/dssodium>



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 recently 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.

In my spare time, I enjoy cooking for my family and friends, hot yoga and working on my healthy living blog. I believe that moderation and enjoyable physical activity are the keys to a healthy life.

Feel welcome to request a nutrition consultation with me at any time during your visit at the clinic. I'm looking forward to working with you and your family!

Cardiac Fun Fact:

The first successful heart transplant was performed in Cape Town, South Africa in 1967.

Tina L. Mooney, RN, MSN, FNP, APN
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Did You Know?

Many over-the-counter medications contain sodium, in the form of sodium bicarbonate or sodium biphosphate. Two of the popular antacid tablets contain over 1,000 milligrams of sodium. Other medications that contain sodium are laxatives, antibiotics and pain medications such as aspirin, ibuprofen and naproxen. Sodium is required to be listed on drug labels. Ask your pharmacist for help choosing a lower-sodium over-the-counter medication.

Kitchen Tip of the Month:

Pre-made salad dressings can contain anywhere from 200-500 milligrams of sodium per serving. Make your own salt-free balsamic vinaigrette with just three ingredients: a drizzle of olive oil, a splash of balsamic vinegar, and fresh cracked pepper.

Food of the Month:

Brussel Sprouts

What: A small, miniature cabbage; belongs to the cruciferous family which includes collards and broccoli.

When: Available year round, but peak season is September to February.

Where: Roasting caramelizes their edges and keeps the inside tender. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle on some pepper, and roast at 400 degrees F for 30 to 45 minutes.

Why: Brussels sprouts are very high in potassium, vitamin C, and calcium. These vitamins and minerals have been shown to reduce the risk of cancer and lower cholesterol.

How: Look for small and firm sprouts with bright green heads—the smaller the sprout, the sweeter the taste.



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