



Heart Healthy Handbook

Your nutritional guide to a healthier heart and a healthier life.

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Introduction

Your Nutritional Guide to a Healthier Heart & Healthier Life.

hello

We want to offer encouragement to you as you begin your journey towards a healthier life and a healthier heart! As you take steps towards improving the health of your heart, you will be surprised at the other goals you're able to reach along the way.

Here at Alabama Cardiovascular Group (ACG), our team is ready to help you achieve your health and wellness goals and to help get your heart working to the best of its ability.

Our goal is for you to develop a healthy lifestyle change rather than a temporary, band aid type solution to your diagnosis. In order to change habits and improve your lifestyle, it is going to require effort from you and support from those around you!

This booklet is yours to keep as you start making lifestyle changes throughout your day-to-day life. Our nutritionist is also available for individual appointments to answer any of your questions or concerns regarding your new healthy eating.





Lifestyle Change vs. Diet

When it comes to eating for your heart or eating in order to lose weight, there is no lack of fad diets promising fast results. But such diets limit your nutritional intake, can be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run. The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy heart and a healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating, regular physical activity, and balancing your daily sodium consumption.

So what is the difference between a diet and a lifestyle change?

A **diet** is temporarily changing your eating habits to promote a certain outcome before returning to your previous eating habits.

A **lifestyle change** is fully adopting a new normal by way of replacing former habits with new ones.

5 Tips to Help Develop a Lifestyle Change:



Make a plan that will stick.

Write everything down and ask yourself if you are confident that these activities and goals are realistic for you. If not, start with smaller steps. Post your plan where you'll most often see it as a reminder.



Start small.

After you've identified realistic short-term and long-term goals, break down your goals into small, manageable steps that are specifically defined and can be measured.



Change one behavior at a time.

Unhealthy behaviors develop over the course of time, so replacing unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones requires time. Many people run into problems when they try to change too much too fast. To improve your success, focus on one goal or change at a time. As new healthy behaviors become a habit, try to add another goal that works toward the overall change you're striving for.



Ask for support.

Accepting help from those who care about you and will listen strengthens your resilience and commitment. If you feel overwhelmed or unable to meet your goals on your own, consider scheduling an appointment to meet with ACG's clinical nutritionist.



Involve a buddy.

Whether it be a friend, co-worker or family member, someone else on your journey will keep you motivated and accountable. Having someone with whom to share your struggles and successes makes the work easier and less intimidating.



Heart Healthy Eating: 5 Tips for Success

About half of all Americans (47%) have at least 1 of 3 key risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking. In order for your heart to function at its healthiest state, your cholesterol and blood pressure need to be in a healthy range. These factors can be positively affected simply by making better lifestyle choices day in and day out.

There are a multitude of different changes you could make to improve your heart health, so we decided to narrow it down to what we believe are the 5 most important improvements.



- 01 Decrease sodium to 1,500-2,000mg daily**
- 02 Increase fruit intake to 4-5 servings daily**
- 03 Increase vegetable intake to 4-5 servings daily**
- 04 Eliminate unhealthy fats**
- 05 Eat 3-4 servings of whole grains daily**



Ways to Reduce Sodium

Following these tips & tricks can help reduce your daily sodium intake.

- Pick foods naturally low in sodium. To accomplish this step, try the following tips:
 - Choose fresh foods. Generally, you can eat as much fresh food as you want without counting the sodium content.
 - Other good options include canned fruits and plain frozen vegetables. Dried beans, peas, rice, and lentils are also excellent low-sodium foods, but make sure not to add salt or other ingredients such as salt pork when cooking them.
- Stop adding salt to your food.
- Remove the saltshaker from the table while eating.
- Don't salt your food while cooking.
- If you choose to eat high-sodium condiments like BBQ sauce or ketchup, dip your fork in instead of pouring it on your food.
- DO NOT USE salt substitutes. The common brands are NuSalt or NoSalt. These tend to be high in potassium.
- Season with herbs, garlic, onion, spices, peppers, or fruit juices.
 - Avoid herb or spice mixtures that contain salt or sodium.
 - Use lemon juice or fresh ground pepper to accent natural flavors.
 - Try orange or pineapple juice as a base for meat marinades.
- Refer to page 24 in this booklet for the low sodium grocery lists!



Daily Intake of Fruit

The second heart healthy improvement to make is to increase the amount of fruit you eat each day to 4-5 servings. Many fruits need little preparation to become a healthy part of a meal or snack. Like vegetables, they're packed with fiber, potassium and magnesium and are typically low in fat.

Tips for increasing fruit in your daily diet:

- Have a piece of fruit with meals and one as a snack, then round out your day with a dessert of fresh fruits topped with a dollop of low-fat yogurt.
- Leave on edible peels whenever possible. The peels of apples, pears and most fruits add interesting texture to recipes and contain healthy nutrients and fiber.
- Remember that citrus fruits and juices, such as grapefruit, can interact with certain medications, so check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if they're OK for you.
- Limit fruit juice to 1 serving of fruit per day (8 oz cup).
- If you choose canned fruit or juice, make sure no sugar is added



Daily Intake of Whole Grains

All types of grains are good sources of complex carbohydrates and some key vitamins and minerals, but whole grains — the healthiest kinds of grains — are an important part of a healthy diet.

Grains are naturally high in fiber, helping you feel full and satisfied — which makes it easier to maintain a healthy body weight. Whole grains are also linked to a lower risk of heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers and other health problems.

Examples of whole grains include:

- Barley
- Brown rice
- Buckwheat
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)
- Millet
- Oatmeal
- Popcorn
- Whole-wheat bread
- Whole grain pasta or crackers

Combating Sodium

Be encouraged to know that you can drastically combat heart failure by simply eating less sodium!

Thankfully, it will only take about 4 weeks for your taste buds to adjust to a lower sodium diet, but they will adjust!

A low-sodium diet consists of around 1,500-2,000mg of sodium per day (less than $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 teaspoon of salt). Once adjusted to the daily intake, you have the ability to prevent many trips to the doctor or hospital.

You should consume no more than 500-600mg of sodium per meal. Refrain from eating the entire day of sodium allowance in one setting or you will experience shortness of breath and weight gain.



Low Sodium Grocery Lists

This list has helpful reminders around high-sodium products so that nothing on the grocery store shelves will take you by surprise.



Canned Meats

- Chicken of the Sea Less Sodium Chunk Light Tuna
- Strollo's Mild Beef Jerky
- Hormel No Salt Added Breast of Chicken
- Season Brand Sardines in Water No Salt Added
- Great Value Low Sodium Chunk Chicken Breast
- Starkist Selects Very Low Sodium Chunk White Albacore Tuna in Water



Breads

- Dave's Killer Bread Thin-Sliced Good Seed
- Target's 100% Whole Wheat
- Nature's Own Whole Wheat
- Nature's Own Honey Wheat
- Nature's Own Life 40-Calorie Honey Wheat
- Ezekiel Sprouted Whole Grain Bread
- Lewis Bakeries Healthy Life English Muffins
- Thomas's Multigrain English Muffins
- La Banderita Low Sodium Flour Tortillas
- Mission White Corn Tortillas
- Progresso Panko Crispy Bread Crumbs Plain



Soups, Broths, & Flavorings

- Health Valley Organic No Salt Added Chicken Noodle
- Health Valley Organic No Salt Added Minestrone
- Health Valley Lentil Soup No Salt Added
- Herb Ox Sodium-Free Bouillon
- Orrington Farms Low Sodium Broth Base and Seasonin
- Swanson Unsalted Beef Broth
- Pacific Natural Foods Low-Sodium Chicken Broth
- Pacific Natural Low-Sodium Vegetable Broth
- 365 Organic Low-Sodium Chicken Broth
- Swanson Unsalted Beef Stock
- Mrs. DASH Seasoning Packets
- Herb Ox Chicken/Beef Granulated Bouillon in a jar
- Bob's Red Mill Vegi Soup Mix
- Pacific Organic Creamy Butter-nut Squash Soup

Low Sodium Grocery Lists

Continued....



Cheeses

- Sargento Light String Cheese
- Sargento Sliced Mozzarella Natural Cheese
- Sargento® Sliced Reduced Fat Pepper Jack Natural Cheese
- Sargento® Sliced Colby-Jack Natural Cheese
- Sargento Shredded Reduced Fat Sharp Natural Cheddar Cheese
- Boar's Head Cheese, Swiss
- Publix Cheese Slices, Swiss, Reduced Fat
- Organic Valley: Raw Sharp Cheddar Cheese
- Organic Valley: Sliced Cheese Baby Swis



Meats

- Boar's Head No Salt Added Oven Roasted Beef
- Boar's Head No Salt Added Oven Roasted Turkey Breast
- Butterball Lower Sodium Turkey Bacon
- Great Value Low Sodium Naturally Hickory Smoked Bacon
- Jennie-O All-Natural 93/7 Ground Turkey
- Applegate Organic The Great Organic Frozen Blend Burger with Turkey & Mushrooms
- Publix Bacon, Lower Sodium, Naturally Hickory Smoked
- Publix Pre-Cooked Low Sodium Sliced Bacon
- Oscar Mayer Naturally Hardwood Smoked Bacon, Lower Sodium
- Perdue Ground Chicken Breast
- Laura's Lean Beef 92/8 Ground Beef



Condiments

- Smart Balance Low Sodium Whipped Buttery Spread
- Tony Chacheres No Salt Seasoning Blend
- Heinz Tomato Ketchup No Added Salt
- Heinz Mustard, Organic, Yellow
- French's Honey Mustard
- Annie's Naturals Mustard, Organic, Yellow
- Mrs. Dash Marinade, Lime Garlic
- Annie's BBQ Sauce, Organic, Original Recipe
- Primal Kitchen No Soy Teriyaki Sauce & Marinade
- Kikkoman Teriyaki Marinade & Sauce, Less Sodium
- Westbrae Natural No Salt Added Stoneground Mustard
- Robbie's Worcestershire Sauce
- Field Day Organic Smooth Unsalted Peanut Butter
- Kraft Real Mayo
- Mrs. Dash Original Salt-Free Seasoning Blend
- Walden Farms Calorie Free Dressing - French
- Tabasco Original Red Sauce



Canned Soups & Vegetables

- Muir Glen Organic Diced Tomatoes No Salt
- Eden Foods Organic Pinto Beans
- Farmer's Market Sweet Potato Puree
- Green Valley Organics Corn
- Walnut Acres Organic Whole Black Beans
- Westbrae Natural Organic Garbanzo Beans
- Amy's Organic Low Sodium Refried Beans
- Farmer's Market Butternut Squash
- Grown Right Organic Jellied Cranberry
- Thai Kitchen Organic Coconut Milk Unsweetened
- Eden Foods Organic Cannellini White Kidney Beans No Salt Added
- Natural Value Organic Diced Tomatoes
- Green Giant® 50% Less Sodium Cut Asparagus Spears



Snack Foods

- Black Jewell No Salt No Oil Microwave Popcorn
- Orville Redenbacher's Melt On Caramel Microwave Popcorn
- Healthy Heart Market No Salt Microwave Popcorn
- Kettle Brand Unsalted Potato Chips
- Larabar Granola Bars
- Pringles Lightly Salted
- Triscuit Hint of Salt Crackers
- Mt. Olive Kosher Dill Spears Reduced Sodium Pickles
- Barbara's Bakery Original Low Sodium Cheese Puffs



Daily Vegetable Intake

Increasing your daily vegetable intake to 4-5 servings will not only benefit your heart, but it can also help decrease body fat and contribute to a healthy digestive tract.

Most vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and have no cholesterol, so they are a great addition to any meal. Examples of one serving of vegetables include 1 cup raw leafy green vegetables or 1/2 cup cut-up raw or cooked vegetables.

Tips to increase vegetable intake:

- Don't think of vegetables only as side dishes — a hearty blend of vegetables served over brown rice or whole-wheat noodles can serve as the main dish for a meal.
- Fresh and frozen vegetables are both good choices. When buying frozen and canned vegetables, choose those labeled as low sodium or without added salt.
- Buy fresh vegetables in season. They cost less and are likely to be at their peak flavor.
- Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
- Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare. Pick up pre-washed bags of salad greens and add baby carrots or grape tomatoes for a salad in minutes.
- Vary your veggie choices to keep meals interesting.
- Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-sodium salad dressing with raw broccoli, red and green peppers, celery sticks or cauliflower.
- Add color to salads by adding baby carrots, shredded red cabbage, or spinach leaves.
- Include in-season vegetables for variety throughout the year. Include beans or peas in flavorful mixed dishes, such as chili or minestrone soup.
- Keep a bowl of cut-up vegetables in a see-through container in the refrigerator. Carrot and celery sticks are traditional, but consider red or green pepper strips, broccoli florets, or cucumber slices.



Fast Food Tips

Tips and tricks that will keep you keep your sodium intake in check.

1

Steer clear of sides, dressings, spreads and fatty toppings.

These items are usually loaded with salt and/or sugar, in addition to unhealthy calories. If you're ordering a salad, minimize the amount of sodium by saying 'no' to bacon and croutons on top. If you want dressing, choose a simple vinaigrette and ask for it on the side.

3

Avoid super-sized items.

The words "jumbo," "supersize," or "double" are clear red flags that indicate high levels of salt, calories, and unhealthy fat.

2

Stick with water.

While most drinks don't contain high amounts of sodium, getting in the habit of drinking water with your meals is a good idea — especially when you're eating out and have less control over what's in your food and how it's prepared.

4

Choose grilled, broiled, or baked meats.

While deli, fried, and breaded meat options can be tempting and look delicious, they're guaranteed to have far more added salt than, for example, grilled options.



SALT
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Eliminating Unhealthy Fat

Limiting how much you eat of saturated and trans fats is an important step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease.

A high cholesterol level can lead to a buildup of plaques in your arteries which can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Fats to limit:

- Butter
- Lard
- Bacon fat
- Gravy/Cream sauces
- Nondairy creamers
- Hydrogenated margarine and shortening
- Fatty and marbled meats
- Cocoa butter, found in chocolate
- Coconut, palm, cottonseed and palm-kernel oils

Fats to choose:

- Olive oil
- Canola oil
- Vegetable and nut oils
- Margarine, trans fat free
- Cholesterol-lowering margarine, such as Benecol
- Nuts, seeds
- Avocados





Examples of Low-Sodium Spices, Herbs, & Seasonings

- Allspice
- Basil
- Bay Leaves
- Black Pepper
- Cayenne Pepper
- Celery Powder
- Chili Powder
- Chives
- Low Sodium Ketchup
- Nutmeg
- Oregano
- Sage
- Thyme
- Cloves
- Cocoa
- Cumin
- Curry
- Dill
- Dry Mustard
- Fresh Garlic
- Garlic Powder
- Mrs. DASH Seasonings
- Onion Powder
- Paprika
- Tabasco Pepper Sauce
- Vinegar





Examples of High-Sodium Spices, Herbs, & Seasonings

- Barbecue sauce
- Cocktail sauce
- Dry salad dressing mixes
- Garlic salt
- Horseradish
- Lite salt
- MSG
- Pickle relish
- Poultry seasoning
- Seasoned salt
- Steak sauces
- Stir-fry sauce
- Taco seasoning
- Worcestershire sauce
- Celery salt
- Dry meat marinades
- Fish sauce
- Generic sauce mixes
- Kosher salt
- Lite soy sauce
- Onion salt
- Plum sauce
- Regular ketchup
- Soy sauce
- Stir-fry mixes
- Taco sauce
- Teriyaki sauce





**NUGTRITION
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More than 70% of the sodium Americans eat comes from restaurant, prepackaged, and processed foods.



04 Panera

Panera Bread has a wide range of menu options, which means a higher chance of finding something low sodium that you'll enjoy.

Breakfast:

- Oatmeal (any kind), the fruit cup, or the parfait, which are all under 300 mg
- Sprouted Grain Bagel Flat at 340 mg with the Reduced-Fat Wild Blueberry Cream Cheese at 200 mg

Lunch/Dinner:

- Strawberry Poppyseed and Chicken Salad (full) at 300 mg (use half of the Reduced Fat Balsamic Vinaigrette serving on the side for an additional 55 mg)
- One cup Vegetarian Creamy Tomato Soup at 510 mg
- Low-Fat Vegetarian Garden Vegetable Soup with Pesto at 560 mg
- One cup New England Clam Chowder at 680 mg

Dessert:

- Cookies are less than 350 mg, but stick to one



What to Order?

05

McDonald's

If you play your cards right, there are plenty of options on the McDonald's menu that remain under 500 mg of sodium, including:

Breakfast:

- Scrambled Eggs (2) at 180 mg
- Fruit & Yogurt Parfait at 80 mg
- Cinnamon Melts at 370 mg
- Fruit & Maple Oatmeal at 160 mg
- Hash Browns at 310 mg

Lunch/Dinner:

- Hamburger at 480 mg
- Side Salad without dressing at 10 mg
- Bacon Ranch Salad without chicken or dressing at 320 mg
- Small French Fry at 130 mg

Dessert:

- Hot Apple Pie at 170 mg



Examples of High Sodium Foods

Eat **LESS** of these.

Meats

- Anchovies
- Bacon
- Beef jerky
- Bologna
- Breaded meat (frozen)
- Breakfast sausage
- Chipped ham
- Corned beef
- Dried beef (jarred)
- Hot dogs
- Hot sausage
- Pastrami
- Pepperoni
- Pickled meats and eggs
- Pot pies (frozen)
- Processed lunch meats
- Salami
- Tofu lunch meats
- Tuna, salmon, and chicken (canned regular)
- Vienna sausage

Vegitables

- Pickles (sweet and dill)
- Pizza sauce
- Regular canned vegetables
- Regular jarred and canned tomatoes
- Sauerkraut
- Spaghetti sauce
- Stewed tomatoes
- Tomato and vegetable juice
- Tomato sauce

Milk Products

- Buttermilk
- Canned Milk

Starches

- Baked beans (canned)
- Batter mixes
- Biscuit and pancake mixes
- Corn and potato chips
- Hot cereals (instant)
- Macaroni and cheese (boxed)
- Popcorn (regular microwave)
- Stuffing mixes
- Waffles (frozen)

Other

- Bouillon cubes and broth
- Soups (canned regular)





Examples of Low Sodium Foods

*Eat **MORE** of these.*

- Beans, peas, rice, lentils, or pasta (dried and fresh, cooked without salt)
- Cereals (hot, regular cooking)
- Club soda
- Coffee (regular and decaffeinated)
- Fruits (fresh, frozen, and canned)
- Fruit drinks
- Herbs and spices (non-salt)
- Lemonade
- Meats, fish, and poultry (fresh)
- Milk (evaporated skim)
- Milk (nonfat dry)
- Milk (skim, low-fat, and regular)
- Seltzer water (flavored)
- Soy milk
- Tea (iced)
- Vegetables (fresh and plain frozen)
- Yogurt (plain and fruit flavored)
- Milk (chocolate skim)
- Unsalted nuts
- Unsalted pretzels
- Low sodium chips
- Don't forget to refer to Pg. 24 for the low sodium grocery lists





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