

Six Foods that Boost Heart Health

The majorities of baby boomers are looking for a way to loose weight and lower their cholesterol. Both of these are two important factors in heart disease, which still remains the number one killer in the United States. The good news is that you can dodge heart disease through your food choices. Below are six foods that can help boost your heart health.

Many studies have proven the variety of health benefits given by fish, ranging from joint inflammation in arthritis sufferers to brain development in babies. The omega-3 fatty acids found in fish support circulation and improve blood vessel function. Researchers have also determined that omega-3s can prevent heart-attack deaths as they stop the electrical disturbance that causes death and half of all heart attacks are due to these arrhythmias. Each week, you should eat one to two 3-ounce servings of fatty fish such as an Alaskan salmon, anchovies, herring or mackerel. By baking or poaching these fish at low heart you can help to preserve the omega-3s. For vegetarians, omega-3 rich flaxseeds can be added to oatmeal, smoothies, or salads. For those who don't care for fish there are omega-3 oil supplements available as well.

Have you ever wondered why oatmeal is so good for you? In your body, this gluey beta-glucan, which is soluble fiber, binds to bile acids found in the intestines and stomach and excretes them as waste. In order to make more bile acids, the liver needs cholesterol and takes it from the blood. This results in lower blood cholesterol levels. You need 3 grams of soluble fiber each day to reduce your cholesterol by five percent. A cup and a half of cooked oatmeal is a good size serving that can be jazzed up in flavor with frozen berries, non-fat plain yogurt, almonds and much more.

High-glycemic foods like potatoes, white bread, and white rice should be avoided because you get a harmful burst of glucose and insulin that's harmful immediately after eating them. These bursts tire out the pancreas in the long run and increase the risk of diabetes and heart disease. Research also shows that having high-glycemic foods at one meal will make you even hungrier and eat more at the next, which is why these foods are associated with weight gain. People with excess fat are much more likely to develop heart disease and stroke even if there are no other risk factors. Because of this, focusing on true grains such as brown rice, quinoa, and barley and choosing them over refined grains as much as possible.

Nuts are important for their unsaturated fats and their ability to help lower cholesterol. Walnuts actually contain omega-3 fatty acids, while almonds boost calcium, helping the heart muscle to contract, and Brazil nuts have selenium, which is a heart-protective antioxidant. About one ounce each day of nuts is good for you, but they do have a lot of calories so make sure to go easy on them. If you have a nut allergy, topping you salad with olives is a good alternative, as they contain unsaturated fats.

Beans also contain soluble fiber like oatmeal which helps to reduce cholesterol and keep arteries clear. By choosing the protein from beans instead of meat, you can cut back on saturated fats which raise cholesterol. Eating beans four to five times a week is recommended, as they can be added to a lot of meals. If you don't tolerate beans well, try adding kombu, a sea vegetable, to them to help break down the components that cause gas. Your body also does adapt to beans over time, so try building up your bean servings slowly. Food enzymes can help reduce gas as well so don't forget to take your enzymes.

Blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, and other berries all have strong antioxidant properties that can help fight heart disease and are also low in calories and high in fiber. Eating two cups of fruit each day for general health is recommended, but you should eat as many berries as you can tolerate. Free radicals can break down cholesterol that is flowing in your blood and make them sticky so to deposit on the arterial walls of your blood vessels. Fight this with antioxidant rich foods to reduce cholesterol build up.

Eating healthy is one step in boosting heart health and overall cardiovascular health. Exercise is also important in keeping your body strong and vibrant so one can live a healthier longer life.

About the Author

More information on [Heart Health](#) Supplements is available at VitaNet ®, LLC Health Food Store.

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