Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

What you eat makes a difference to your heart. A heart-healthy eating plan emphasizes vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, includes fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and limits foods high in saturated fat and sugar-sweetened beverages and sweets. Use the guide below to determine how much you should eat from each food group.*

Food Group	Heart-Healthy Options
 **Whole Grains** Bread, cereal, starchy vegetables, rice, and pasta (6 ounces for women and 8 ounces for men)	♥ Whole grain versions of sliced bread, sandwich buns, dinner rolls, pita, English muffins, bagels ♥ Unsalted, low-fat crackers (such as graham crackers), pretzels, and popcorn ♥ Cooked hot cereals (not instant) and whole grain cold cereals ♥ Rice and pasta (such as whole grain noodles, spaghetti, and macaroni)
 **Vegetables** (without added fat) (2½ cups)	♥ Fresh, frozen, or no-salt-added canned vegetables (such as green beans, string beans, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, squash, broccoli, and okra)
 **Fruits** (2 cups)	♥ Fresh, frozen, canned (in fruit juice rather than syrup), or dried fruits
 **Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products** Milk, yogurt, and cheese (3 cups)	♥ Fat-free or low-fat (1 percent) milk ♥ Fat-free or low-fat yogurt ♥ Cheeses lower in fat and sodium
 **Protein** Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, and legumes (5½ ounces)	♥ Chicken or turkey without the skin ♥ Fish ♥ Lean cuts of beef, such as round, sirloin, chuck, loin, and extra-lean ground beef ♥ Lean cuts of pork, such as the leg, shoulder, tenderloin, and lean ham ♥ Eggs ♥ Cooked dry beans and peas (such as field peas, crowder peas, black-eyed peas) ♥ Frozen butter beans and lima beans ♥ Nuts and seeds
 **Fats and oils** (less than 22 grams of saturated fat)	♥ Soft tub margarine ♥ Oils (canola, corn, safflower, olive, peanut, or sesame)
 **Sweets and added sugars** Limit sugar and other sweeteners. Ask your healthcare provider about how much sugar or other sweetener is okay for you.	♥ Frozen desserts (such as frozen juice pops, low-fat frozen yogurt, or low-fat ice cream) ♥ Low-fat cake and cookies (such as angel food cake, fig bar cookies, ginger snaps, animal crackers, vanilla wafers, and graham crackers)

***Serving sizes** depend on how many calories you need, which is based on your age, gender, and physical activity.