

Check your health habits and make sure you are doing all you can to be fit and ready to enjoy the great weather ahead. Enjoy! Jan Temple

LIFE'S SIMPLE 7

The American Heart Association is encouraging us to adopt measures leading to "Ideal Heart Health."

1. **Stop Smoking:** Quit smoking.
2. **Lose Weight:** Body Mass Index (BMI) less than 25.
3. **Get Active:** Physical activity of at least 150 minutes (moderate intensity) or 75 minutes (vigorous intensity) each week.
4. **Eat Better:** Four to five of the key components of a healthy diet. (See following article.)
5. **Control Cholesterol:** Total less than 200 mg/dL.
6. **Manage Blood Pressure:** Below 120/80 mmHg.
7. **Reduce Blood Sugar:** Less than 100 mg/dL.

Currently, only about 5% of Americans meet all seven of these criteria. But the key is prevention. You can start now to PREVENT heart disease. The president of the American Heart Association indicates that if you can reach age 50 with ideal heart health, you will probably live another 40 years free of such afflictions as heart disease and stroke. While genetics do play a factor in heart health, it is prudent to practice as much prevention as possible. The Heart Association has released a new online resource to help individuals called My Life Check: www.heart.org/MyLifeCheck/. At the site you will complete a confidential assessment telling you how you rate on each of the seven goals plus find tools and action steps to assist you in improving your health and tracking your progress.

Adapted from Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, April 2010

HEART ASSOCIATION'S 5 EATING BEHAVIORS

The American Heart Association's new definition of a heart healthy diet identifies 5 measurable behaviors.

1. **Fruits and Vegetables:** Eat 4.5 or more cups daily.
2. **Fish** – 2 or more 3.5 ounce servings a week (preferably oily fish such as salmon and mackerel, which are high in omega-3 fatty acids).
3. **Sugar Sweetened beverages** – less than or equal to 450 calories (36 ounces) per week.
4. **Fiber-rich whole grains** – 3 or more 1 ounce servings a day.
5. **Sodium** – less than 1500 mg per day. CDC data indicate that the lower sodium recommendation is applicable to nearly 70% of US adults.

Adapted from Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, April 2010

EASY FRUIT SALAD - SERVES 14

Enjoy this low calorie, easy to prepare salad.



- 1 can (16 oz.) drained and rinsed fruit cocktail
 - 2 sliced bananas
 - 2 oranges cut into bite-size pieces
 - 2 apples cut into bite-size pieces
 - 6 ounces yogurt, low fat pina colada or lemon
- Mix fruit in a large bowl. Add yogurt and mix well. Chill in refrigerator before serving.

Each 1/2 cup serving: 67 calories, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0.7 mg cholesterol, 10 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 1 g protein.

Cost: \$.25/serving.

Source: Snap-Ed Connection, USDA

ASPARAGUS WITH GREMOLATA SAUCE -

SERVES 4

- 1 pound asparagus, washed and trimmed
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic (1/2 clove)
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon fresh parsley, optional

In a large fry pan over medium heat, stir fry asparagus in about 2 Tablespoons water (add more if needed to prevent burning) for 4 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add olive oil, lemon peel, and garlic. Stir for 30 seconds with the asparagus. Sprinkle with lemon juice and heat thoroughly. Transfer to platter. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Note: 1 medium lemon yields 3 Tbsp. juice; 2-3 Tbsp. rind or zest.

Each 1/2 cup serving: 34 calories, 1.3 g fat, 0.2 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 2.4 mg sodium, 4.9 g carbohydrate, 2.5 g fiber, 2.2 g protein.

Cost: \$.60/serving.

Source: Snap-Ed Connection, USDA



MAKE YOUR MEALS, RECIPES HEALTHIER

Caution: Canned Foods add a lot of sodium

Wherever possible, you should try to find canned foods without added salt. This includes soups, broths, canned tomatoes, canned beans, and canned vegetables. At the very least these products should be rinsed before use. Note the difference in freshly boiled beans versus canned beans. It is 941 mg sodium versus 176 mg for one recipe!

Caution: Cheese adds saturated fat and sodium.

To keep a recipe within guidelines by the American Heart Association and the World Health Organization you should never use more than a half tablespoon of cheese per person. If you are looking to add flavor, consider ground black pepper or dried oregano. Cut way back on the amount of cheese that you use.

Caution: Bread adds a lot of sodium.

To keep most sandwiches from going way over the recommendation for sodium intake, consider limiting all sandwiches to one slice of bread per person. You need a variety of whole grains such as cooked brown rice and oatmeal in your diet to obtain enough fiber without getting too much sodium.

Caution: Deli meats add a lot of sodium.

Everyone knows they should try to eat lean when it comes to meat and poultry. But many of us don't realize how much sodium is in the deli turkey we are eating. When this ingredient is put on bread with a tiny amount of light mayonnaise, the sodium goes to more than half a day's supply. Try using rotisserie chicken for recipes as the sodium is lower.

Healthier: Beans add a lot of fiber.

Try adding beans to recipes. It will boost the fiber content of your diet. Puree cooked white beans and stir into soups or sauces to make them thicker and creamier. Mash cooked garbanzo beans and add to mashed potatoes. They impart a golden color and rich flavor plus add fiber to everyone's favorite dish.

Healthier: Vegetables make the serving size a lot larger for the calories they contain.

Salads, soups and stir-fry dishes that have a lot of vegetables always seem to have huge portions for the calories they contain as compared to other recipes.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, April 2004

CHICKEN VEGGIE STIR FRY – SERVES 4

This is an easy recipe. The brown rice and chicken can be made ahead of time so the dish goes together quickly.

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup sliced carrots
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup sliced asparagus tips
- 1/4 cup sliced mild hot pepper
- 1/2 cup sliced red pepper
- 1 cup fresh snow peas
- 1 cup cooked chicken breast

Seasonings:

- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 2 Tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon ginger paste or ground ginger
- 3 cups cooked brown rice - regular or instant

Pour the oil into the pan and heat over medium high. Sauté the carrots then add the garlic, mushrooms, asparagus, and peppers. Sauté the vegetables briefly until golden. Cover and stir frequently for a few minutes until crisp tender. Add the snow peas, chicken and seasonings and heat through. Serve hot with cooked brown rice.

NOTE: If time is an issue, you may choose to use a frozen stir-fry vegetable mix instead of all the fresh vegetables. You will need about one to 1.5 pounds of frozen vegetables to substitute for the carrots, mushrooms, red pepper and snow peas. You may wish to use fresh asparagus as it is reasonably priced this time of year. Also use fresh garlic and hot pepper for optimal flavor.

Each 2 cup serving: 303 calories, 7.4 g fat, 1.3 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 300 mg sodium, 42 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber, 18 g protein.

Cost: \$ 1.51/serving.

Source: Adapted from Communicating Food for Health



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