



Choosing Foods for Heart Health

Simple substitutions for better heart health + best choices for common foods.

Instead of this...	Try this...
Beer & Liquor	Red Wine Red wine (limit 2 glasses/day for men or 1/day for women) offers antioxidants; but if you don't drink, don't start!
Bread & Bagels	Sprouted Wheat Bread, Cracked Wheat Bread and Pita Bread Skip breads made with flour—even "whole wheat" breads—which can spike blood sugar.
Butter (on bread)	Nut Butters, Hummus, Mashed Avocado (or bread that tastes great plain!) Even "healthy" margarines are highly processed; if you crave butter, use one pat of the real thing.
Chips & Pretzels	Red Bell Pepper, Celery, Jicama, Carrots These fresh, raw vegetables offer crunch without the calories, fat or glycemic load.
Coffee	Tea (Especially White, Green and Oolong)—Or limit coffee to 1 cup/day Teas provide healthy antioxidants. Coffee appears to reduce the risk for diabetes, probably due to polyphenol content, but limit to 1 cup/day to avoid caffeine overload.
Cookies & Candy	Unsweetened Dried Fruit, Dark Chocolate, Fresh Fruit All of these offer healthy compounds, but eat chocolate sparingly.
Eggs	No Substitution Needed! (But limit to 2/week) Even yolks are OK—just choose omega-3 enriched or eggs from free-range chickens.
Mayonnaise	Dijon Mustard or Horseradish Both avoid unhealthy fats; if you crave mayonnaise, choose one made with canola oil.
Ice Cream & Other Desserts	Dark Chocolate, Fruit Sorbets, Fresh Fruit, Fruit Yogurt and Tofu "Ice Cream" All offer healthy compounds or ingredients without unhealthy butterfat, flour or oils.
Milk	Skim Milk or Soymilk Skim milk contains fewer unhealthy hormones and soymilk provides protective isoflavones.
Pasta	Whole Grain Pasta, Bean Thread, Soba, Udon or Rice Noodles The glycemic index of pasta increases as it cooks, so eat it al dente (still a bit firm, with some "tooth" to it).
Potatoes	Sweet Potatoes and Yams Both are actually sweet potatoes and both are healthier and carry lower glycemic loads.



Instead of this...	Try this...
Salt	Turmeric, Curry, Ginger, Garlic, Chiles, Basil, Cinnamon, Rosemary, Thyme All of these spices provide flavor plus protective compounds in place of excess sodium.
Soda & Diet Soda	Seltzer Water If you crave a carbonated drink, try cold seltzer with fresh fruit and a touch of natural sweetener.
Sugar	Agave Syrup, Stevia or Sucralose Agave syrup has a lower glycemic index but is still a sugar—use in moderation. Stevia has no sugar (and no calories). Among artificial sweeteners, sucralose (Splenda®) is a better choice but still a processed food.

Best Fruits

Choose colorful fruits like berries, peaches, nectarines, oranges, pink grapefruit, red grapes, plums, pomegranates, cherries, apples and pears for antioxidant and anti-inflammatory flavonoids and carotenoids.

Best Vegetables

Select dark leafy greens, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, carrots, beets, onions, peas, squashes and sea vegetables: all are rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory components.

Best Fish & Meat

Choose fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as wild Alaskan salmon (especially sockeye), herring, sardines and black cod—all strongly anti-inflammatory—or skinless turkey or chicken.

Best Oils

Use expeller-pressed extra virgin olive oil, nut oils and flax seed oil or, for flavorless oils, expeller-pressed canola oil or grapeseed oil—healthy fats that don't harm (and can even help!) cholesterol levels.

Choose organic whenever possible, especially for fish and poultry, milk, fruits and vegetables.

Find the above information and other healthy food choices at Dr. Weil's website: www.drweil.com.