

# Top 10 foods your heart will love



Give your heart a rest and give it some love in return. The ten foods listed below are recommended to give the vitamins and minerals your heart and body needs to keep pumping at optimal performance and to keep you living longer and healthier.

1. **Fiber**—Fiber is known to bind to cholesterol to prevent it from accumulating in your arteries. It also helps lower blood pressure and reduce inflammation. You can find fiber in fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and whole grain products (whole wheat bread, whole wheat flour, brown rice, nuts, oatmeal, bran flakes). Recommended daily amount is 25g for women and 38g for men.

2. **Go nuts for Nuts!**—Nuts such as almonds, walnuts, pecans, peanuts, etc...have the healthy fats known as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Go a step further and have some nut butters...peanut butter is pretty much a staple in the common pantry. Just make sure you buy the peanut butter that has no more than 3 ingredients: peanuts, oil, salt (optional).



3. **Fat-Free Dairy**—This includes milk, cheese and yogurt. Yes, there are a variety of low fat cheeses, just ask the deli counter. Remember: 1% to skim milk is your best option. There really is not much difference between the whole milk and the 2% milk.

4. **Fresh Fruit**—Did you know that the skin of the fruit has just as much beneficial fiber as the inside of the fruit? Apples, peaches, pears, plums...any of your favorites can be a great addition to your meals!



5. **Fresh Vegetables**—For the same reason as fruit, the skin of the vegetable are also loaded with fiber. Eggplant, zucchini, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, etc...

6. **Beans**—they really are good for your heart! The reason is two-fold. First, beans are loaded with fiber. Secondly, they are considered a protein food, minus the fat! They can't get any better than that.

7. **Low sodium food**—A diet high in sodium is known to be a main contributor to high blood pressure. You can find low sodium options for just about any food product! Soups, deli meats, cheeses, frozen foods etc...At the deli counter, ask your clerk to list the types of deli meats and cheeses that are offered low sodium. Your blood pressure will be rising...out of excitement!

8. **Omega-3 Fatty Acids**—Omega-3s help prevent arteries from hardening, lower levels of triglycerides and modestly reduce blood pressure levels. You can find them in high fat, cold water seafood such as salmon, sardines, albacore tuna and mackerel. Flax seed oil, walnuts and canola oil have the properties to turn into Omega-3s when consumed...so if you don't like fish, you can go nuts for NUTS!



9. **Monounsaturated fats**—these are fats that do the work. They help lower your unhealthy cholesterol and at the same time raise your healthy cholesterol. You can find monounsaturated fatty acids in canola oil, olive oil and peanut oil. Canola oil is a great addition when sautéing meats or vegetables. Olive oil tastes great on salads and on thick, crusty (hopefully whole grain) breads. Use peanut oil to make stir fry for some real authentic flavor and health benefits.



10. **Lean meats**—chicken, turkey and pork are the most common lean meats. The whiter the meat, the leaner it is. These meats are known to have less amounts of saturated fat than red meats and cured meats such as steak, ground beef, salami, pepperoni. If you are a true carnivore at heart and insist on eating your red meat, make sure you alternate and do not consume red meats more than 2-3x per week.