

Healthy Eating to Reduce the Risk of Stroke

A healthy diet can help to reduce your risk of stroke. Here are some guidelines for healthy eating.

Eat a variety of foods every day:

1. Vegetables & fruit

- Include a variety of vegetables and fruit at every meal.
- Make fruit your dessert most days.
- Eat whole fruit instead of drinking fruit juices and fruit drinks.
- Aim to fill half of your plate with vegetables and fruits.



2. Whole grains

- Include a variety of whole grains such as quinoa, whole grain cereal or oatmeal, whole grain bread, whole grain brown or wild rice and whole grain pasta.
- Aim to fill a quarter of your plate with whole grains.



3. Protein foods

- Choose protein foods that come from plants more often, such as beans (kidney, navy, black, pinto, black-eyed peas), split peas, lentils, chickpeas, soybeans (tofu, tempeh and edamame).
- Choose fish and poultry more often than red meat (beef, lamb, and pork).
- Avoid processed meats such as sausages and deli meat and deep-fried, battered meat, fish and poultry.



- Choose lower fat milk products or unsweetened milk alternatives every day.
- Aim to fill a quarter of your plate with protein foods.

4. Healthy fats

- Use healthy fats in moderation such as olive and canola oil, non-hydrogenated margarine, avocado and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Aim for 2 to 3 servings of fish rich in Omega-3 fats such as salmon, herring, trout, mackerel and sardines per week.
- Limit foods high in saturated fats such as butter, full fat dairy products, fatty cuts of meat and poultry skin.

Other tips

1. Choose foods prepared with little or no salt.

- Use spices, fresh herbs, onion, garlic, lemon and vinegars for added flavor. Limit use of condiments and store bought sauces such as soy sauce, ketchup, stir-fry sauce, fish sauce.
- Eat more foods prepared from scratch. Limit convenience foods such as frozen meals, packaged seasoned-rice or pasta, canned soups.
- Read food labels and nutrition information provided by restaurants to choose foods that have less sodium (salt).

2. Choose healthy snacks.

- Choose healthy snacks, such as fruit (fresh, canned or dried), raw vegetables, hummus dip, whole grain crackers or bread, yogurt, natural nut butter, handful of nuts, high-fibre, whole grain granola bar or cereal.

3. Limit or avoid alcohol.

- Talk to your doctor for more guidance about alcohol.

4. Limit foods high in added sugar.

- Limit or avoid food and drinks high in sugar such as regular pop and sports drinks, specialty coffees and teas with added sugar, and fruit juice with or without added sugar, cakes, cookies, pastries, donuts, candy, jam, honey, and syrup.

5. Read labels.

- Read food labels to help to make healthy food choices.
- Aim for 5% Daily Value (DV) or less per serving of sodium. Limit sodium intake to less than 2000 mg per day. Choose products marked 'Low in sodium', 'No salt added'.
- Choose foods with less than 5% Daily Value (DV) of saturated fat.
- Include high fibre food choices. Aim for 15% or more Daily Value (DV) for fibre.
- Aim for 15% Daily Value (DV) or less per serving of sugar.

For more information

- Canada's Food Guide online: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en>
- UnlockFood.ca: <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/default.aspx>
- Heart & Stroke Foundation: 1 888 473 4636 or www.heartandstroke.ca
- Dietitians of Canada: www.dietitians.ca/eatwell
- Cardiac College: <https://www.healthuniversity.ca/EN/CardiacCollege/Eating/>



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