

heart health



1 | know what cholesterol is

Cholesterol occurs naturally in your body and is produced mainly by your liver.

Our bodies need cholesterol to function properly, but problems occur if the blood cholesterol level is too high and plaque deposits begin building up on the artery walls. This can increase the risk of a blockage leading to a heart attack or stroke.

2 | know your numbers

Your cholesterol (lipid) targets are based on your risk of developing heart disease. Your doctor will discuss your individual targets with you.

Your waist circumference is also used to predict your risk of developing heart disease, as well as stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type 2 diabetes.

waist circumference targets	men	women
European/Caucasian, Sub-Saharan Africans, Eastern Mediterranean, Middle Eastern	102 cm (40 in) or less	88 cm (35 in) or less
South Asian, Malaysian, Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Ethnic South and Central Americans	90 cm (35 in) or less	80 cm (32 in) or less

3 | know your risk

There are many things that put us at higher risk of heart disease that cannot be changed. It is important to maintain a healthy weight and accept help from medications to protect the heart.

inherited risk factors

- men over the age of 45
- women over the age 50
- having a family history of heart disease, high blood pressure and/or diabetes
- living with diabetes

revise your recipes

- 1 | use a non-stick canola/olive oil cooking spray instead of butter or oil
- 2 | use oils with a high smoke point (canola oil) for sautéing or frying
- 3 | use applesauce instead of oil, margarine or butter in baked products
- 4 | use pureed cooked vegetables to thicken soups and sauces instead of cream
- 5 | reduce omelettes to 1 egg yolk + ½ cup liquid egg whites

1 | choose your fats wisely

limit	avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ meat and poultry skin ▪ milk/yogurt with more than 3.5% milk fat (M.F.) ▪ cheese with more than 20% M.F. ▪ butter, lard, hard margarine, tropical oils (coconut, palm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fried foods ▪ frozen prepared foods ▪ snack foods or pastries made with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils

try these smart swaps!

- have a ¼ cup of nuts instead of a higher carb snack
- use avocados on sandwiches or wraps instead of mayonnaise
- use non-fat plain Greek yogurt instead of sour cream



2 | go lean on protein

- choose lean cuts of meat such as pork tenderloin or beef sirloin
- try having salmon or trout once or twice per week
- replace ½ of the ground meat in a sauce or casserole with kidney beans

3 | avoid sweetened beverages and foods

- fruit drinks, fruit punch, cocktails, lemonade, or soda/pop
- sweetened powdered drinks, sports and energy drinks, or flavored/specialty coffees
- white, brown or icing sugar, candies and syrups

4 | boost your fibre

- choose plain oatmeal instead of cereals for breakfast
- choose whole grain bread and pasta, brown rice instead of white versions
- enjoy higher fibre fruit choices like berries, apples & pears instead of dried fruits or juice

5 | move your body

- always check with your doctor before you start doing any type of exercise, if you are currently not active
- aim for 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week
 - ✓ try 30 minutes 5 times per week; or 10 minutes, 3 times a day!
- aim for resistance exercise 2-3 times per week
 - ✓ try using resistance bands at home or consider joining a gym or community centre