Healthy Eating After Your Transplant

Healthy eating after your transplant can help control your weight, cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

This means eating a balanced diet by choosing a variety of foods from the four food groups every day. Follow Canada’s Food Guide for serving sizes and the number of servings you need.

Here are some tips for healthy eating.

1. Eat less fat
   - Limit margarine, oil, salad dressings, and other fats to 3-4 teaspoons per day.
   - Do not eat deep fried foods.
   - Choose low fat snacks such as fruit, vegetables, or plain popcorn.
   - Enjoy a variety of fish, poultry, and lean meats. Limit to 2 servings a day. One serving is the size of a deck of cards (3 ounces/90 grams).
   - Limit store-bought baked goods (such as muffins, biscuits, croissants, cookies).
   - Avoid “ready to serve” meals like frozen dinners.
   - Choose low fat milk products.
   - Cut down on or eliminate sources of saturated fat and trans fat.
     - Saturated fat is usually solid at room
temperature and can RAISE unhealthy blood cholesterol levels.

› Fatty cuts of meat, organ meats, poultry skin, lard, butter, full-fat milk products, cocoa butter, palm oil, and coconut oil have saturated fat.

› Shortening, hydrogenated margarine, and store-bought baked goods have trans fats.

• Replace saturated fat in your diet with unsaturated fats like canola oil, olive oil, or non-hydrogenated margarine.

• Eat fish 2-3 times per week instead of meat.

2. Eat less salt (sodium)

Too much sodium can make your body hold onto extra fluid and cause bloating, which can make your heart work harder.

• Read food labels. Any food with 15% Daily Value (DV) or more for sodium is too high.

• Do not eat canned soups, dried soups, canned gravies, or vegetable juices.

• Do not add salt or sea salt at the table or during cooking.

• Do not use salt substitutes such as NoSalt, NuSalt®, HalfSalt™.

• Do not use seasoned salts such as onion salt or garlic salt. Use onion powder or garlic powder instead.
3. Eat less sugar
• Eat fewer sweets such as sugar, regular pop, desserts, jam, and honey.

4. Eat more fibre
• Enjoy whole grain breads and cereals, and fruits and vegetables every day. The fibre in these foods can help keep you feeling full longer. This may help you keep a healthy weight.
• Eat foods like oat bran breads and cereals, dried peas, beans, and lentils. The fibre in these foods may help lower your cholesterol levels and help control your blood sugars.

5. Keep a healthy weight
You can reach and keep a healthy weight by eating less fat and by exercising. By losing some weight, you may improve your blood cholesterol levels and blood pressure. Remember to check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.
Make Healthy Choices from the Four Food Groups

Vegetables and fruits
Buy fresh vegetables and fruit in season to save money.

Best choices
• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables
• Fruit canned in water
• Canned vegetables, vegetable juices, and soups with no added salt
• Homemade vegetable soups with fat removed and low salt ingredients
• Avocado

Go easy on
• Canned vegetables with added salt
• Unsweetened fruit juice
• Fruit canned in syrup or juice

Avoid
• Deep fried foods
• Vegetables in cream or cheese sauces
• Sweetened fruit juices/drinks
Grain products
Choose whole grains more often.
Add oat bran, natural bran, or flax to muffins and casseroles to get more fibre.

Best choices
• 100% whole grain breads, bagels, pita bread, English muffins (2 or more grams fibre per slice)
• 100% whole grain cereals (4 grams or more of fibre and 8 grams or less of sugar per serving)
• Homemade hot cereals (oatmeal, Red River®)
• Whole grain or unsalted crackers, crisp breads, rye crisps, Melba toast with no trans fats and 2 grams or less of saturated fat per serving
• Whole grain pasta, brown or wild rice
• Quinoa, barley, bulgur

Go easy on
• Homemade muffins
• Instant hot cereals
• White pasta and rice
• White bread, rolls and bread sticks
• Low fat granola bars (Look for no trans fats, 2 grams or less of saturated fat, 3 or more grams of fibre)
Avoid

- Garlic, egg, or cheese breads / buns
- Croissants, danishes, sweet rolls, tea biscuits
- Granola type cereals
- Store-bought muffins and doughnuts
- Sugary cereals
- Cookie, muffin and cake mixes
- Frozen pancakes and waffles
- Pre-packaged rice mixes, side pasta dishes, stuffing
- Chow mein noodles
- Snack crackers
- Regular granola bars
- Packaged cookies

Milk products
Read labels: Watch for milk fat (M.F.)

Best choices

- Skim, 0.5%, or 1% milk
- Low fat block cheese (7% M.F. or less)
- Low fat cottage cheese (1% M.F. or less)
- Soy or veggie cheese
(Note: cheese is high in sodium. You may need to limit the amount.)
• Plain low fat yogurt (1% M.F. or less)
• Greek yogurt (1% M.F. or less)
• Evaporated skim milk
• Fortified low fat soy and almond beverages

Go easy on
• 2% milk
• Chocolate milk
• Cheese with 8 - 20% M.F.
• 2% evaporated milk and condensed milk
• 2% cottage cheese, sour cream, or yogurt
• Buttermilk
• Low fat cream cheese
• Ice cream, ice milk, frozen yogurt (4% M.F. or less)

Avoid
• Whole milk (3.3% M.F.)
• Regular block cheese or cheese slices (more than 20% M.F.)
• Regular evaporated milk
• Regular cream cheese
• Regular or creamed cottage cheese
• Yogurt (4% M.F. or more)
• Ice cream, ice milk, frozen yogurt (more than 4% M.F.)
Meat and alternatives
To get more fibre and cut down on fat in your diet, try adding chickpeas to salads, beans to casseroles, or lentils to soups or stews.

Eat at least two fish servings each week.

Best choices
• Dried legumes (chickpeas, kidney beans, soybeans, navy beans, lentils etc.)
• Fresh or frozen fish (2 or more times/week)
• Shellfish
• Fish or seafood canned in water (tuna, salmon, clams, etc.) Look for lower sodium ones
• Skinless chicken/turkey
• Natural nut butters (peanut, almond)
• Lean or extra lean ground chicken/turkey
• Wild game (venison, rabbit, moose)
• Egg whites, egg substitutes
• Tofu
• Unsalted nuts and seeds

Go easy on
• Regular peanut butter
• Egg yolks (limit to 3 per week)
• Canned beans and lentils
• Lean beef, pork, ham (limit to 3 times per week)
Avoid

- Duck and goose
- Fatty meats (prime rib, T-bone, spare ribs)
- Organ meats (liver, kidney, heart etc.)
- Packaged, breaded meat, fish or poultry
- Regular and medium ground beef
- Processed/Deli meats (pepperoni, salami, wieners, sausages, bologna, bacon, cold cuts, canned meats)
- Fish canned in oil
- Smoked fish
- Chicken wings/thighs
- Poultry skin
- Deep fried foods
- Salted nuts and seeds

Other foods to avoid:

- Potato chips
- Buttered popcorn or microwave popcorn
- Coffee cream and blend
- Whipping cream
- Full fat sour cream
- Cake, pies, cookies
- Donuts
- Cheesecake
Reading Food Labels

Check the ingredient list. The ingredient with the greatest amount is listed first. The ingredient with the smallest amount is listed last.

Avoid products that list saturated fat or salt in the first three ingredients, and those that list many fat and salt ingredients.

Example: Onion crackers

Ingredients: Enriched flour, vegetable oil, shortening, beef tallow, palm oil (may contain coconut oil), onion powder, salt, sugar...

There are five fats listed, four of them saturated fats. **This cracker is not a good choice.**

• Don’t be fooled by foods labeled “Cholesterol free” or “No trans fats”. This does not mean fat-free or low in fat. For example, cholesterol-free French fries with no trans fats may still have lots of fat.

• Some foods are marked ‘Light’. This does not always mean the food is low in fat or calories. It might mean that the food is light in color, flavour, or texture. Read the label closely to see why it is marked ‘light’.

• Read the “Nutrition Facts” table. This tells the amount of fat, sodium, fibre, and calories in a specific serving size.
• Remember if you eat a double serving size, you have eaten double the amount of nutrients too!

The table also gives the % daily values of many ingredients.

**Compare these packages of cookies**

A serving of food that has 5% Daily Value or less of a nutrient is low in this nutrient.

A food that has 15% Daily Value or more of a nutrient is high in this nutrient.

Try to choose foods low in fat and sodium, and high in fibre as much as possible.
Make Your Recipes Healthy

Replace high fat ingredients with lower fat ones, and unhealthy fats with healthier fats.

• Use low fat yogurt or light sour cream instead of full fat sour cream.

• Use low fat mayonnaise or low fat salad dressings instead of regular mayonnaise or salad dressings.

Choose unsaturated fats.

• Use non-hydrogenated margarine or oil instead of butter, lard, or shortening.

Use less of the high fat ingredients.

• Use only part of the fat that the recipe calls for (if it calls for 3/4 of a cup, use 1/2 or 1/3 cup of fat).

• Substitute fruit juice, applesauce, or yogurt for half of the oil in muffins calling for more than 1/2 cup of oil.

• Use less meat, eggs, or cheese than the recipe calls for.

Remove the fat.

• Trim visible fat and remove the skin.

• Refrigerate gravy, soups, or stews until the fat rises to the top of the bowl and skim it off.
Change the cooking method.

• Steam, broil, boil, roast, BBQ, or microwave without adding fat.
• Sauté with water, juice, or broth.
• Use vegetable cooking sprays.

Resources:
Try low fat high fibre recipes in books such as *Dietitians of Canada Cook Great Food*, *Dietitians of Canada Cook Great Food Fast*, and *Dietitians of Canada COOK*. Two other excellent cookbooks are *Hold the Salt* and *Hold That Hidden Salt* by Maureen Tilley, a local dietitian.

Want more information?
www.heartandstroke.com
www.dietitians.ca

Note: when looking for information online, non-profit agencies such as The Heart and Stroke Foundation, and Dietitians of Canada, are the most trustworthy.
Eating Out-Making Healthy Choices

• Choose a restaurant that cooks food in many ways, not just by frying.

• Ask how a menu item is prepared. Ask what kind of fats they use for sautéing.

• Know the terms that restaurants use. For example, sauces such as béchamel, béarnaise, and hollandaise are high in fat.

• Ask for sauces on the side and use just a little, or leave them off altogether.

• Go easy on added fat. Try not to use margarine on your bread. Ask for toast and sandwiches without margarine. Try lemon on your vegetables instead of margarine.

• Trim the fat off meat and remove the skin off chicken.

• Watch out for salads. Some salad items are great choices, but Caesar salad and salad items such as chicken salad, potato salad, pasta salad, etc. may be high in fat and salt. If adding chicken or seafood to a salad, make sure it is grilled instead of deep fried.

• Ask for light salad dressing on the side and use only a little because it can be high in salt. Try olive oil with vinegar if available.
• Eating fast foods now and then is okay if you choose a small hamburger, a grilled chicken burger that is not breaded, a small sandwich, or a 6-inch sub.

• For subs and sandwiches, choose plain sliced chicken, turkey, or beef and add lots of vegetables. Skip the cheese and mayonnaise and ask for light dressing. Have a tossed salad instead of French fries.

• Some foods like pizza, garlic bread, and lasagna are better made at home because you can use low fat, low sodium ingredients.
Bone Health

Some of the medications needed after transplant may put you at greater risk of developing osteoporosis. This makes bones brittle and easier to break.

You need to get enough calcium and vitamin D in your diet for your bones to stay healthy.

To keep your bones strong, you will need **1000 to 1200 mg calcium and 800 to 2000 IU vitamin D each day.**

One serving from the list of ‘Milk and alternatives’ has about 300 mg of calcium. Examples:

- 1 cup (250 mL) cow’s milk, 1 cup calcium fortified or enriched soy, 1 cup rice or almond beverage
- 1.5 oz (50 grams) swiss, cheddar or mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup low fat yogurt
- 1 cup orange juice enriched with calcium

You **may need** calcium supplements if you do not get enough calcium from your food to provide 1000 to 1200 mg a day.
You will need to take a vitamin D supplement.
The best source of vitamin D comes from fish, especially salmon, mackerel, trout and herring (150 to 350 IU per 2 and 1/2 ounce serving).
Fortified drinks such as milk, soy beverages, rice milk, and almond milk have about 100 IU of vitamin D in each cup (250 mL). Do not have more than 4000 IU from food and supplements combined.

Your dietitian recommends for you:

__________ IU vitamin D, __________ daily

__________ mg calcium tablet, __________ time(s) daily with a meal.

If you have any questions, please ask.
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