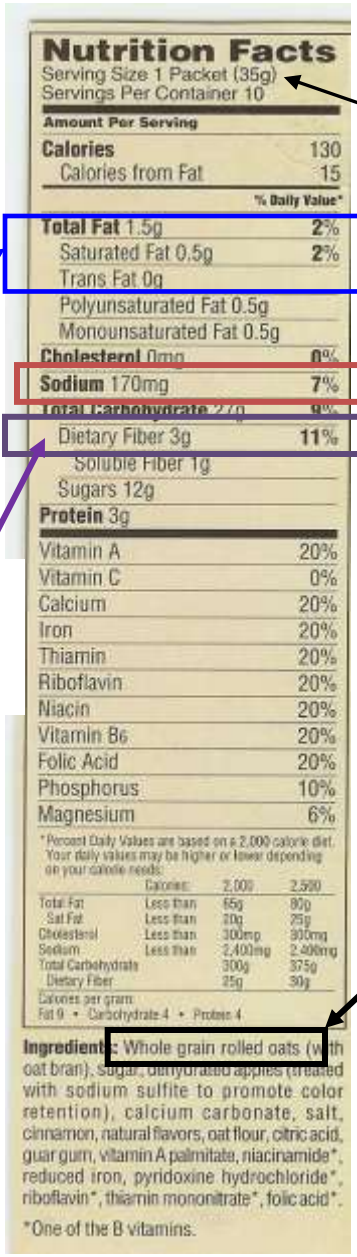
Heart Healthy Diet

What is a heart healthy diet?

This diet includes foods that promote heart health. It also limits foods that can increase risk for heart disease in the future. This diet may include many foods that your child already eats, but some changes may be needed. Making these small changes now can be a big help for your child's future health. A heart healthy diet may also help your child have healthy weight. This can help lower the risk of disease.

Use the **Nutrition Facts** label to help make heart healthy food choices:



Serving size
All of the information on the label is based on one **serving.** The package may contain more than 1 serving. If you eat more (or less) than one serving, you will get more (or less) nutrients than noted on the label.

Limit Saturated and Trans Fat
Look for foods that have:

- **2 grams** of saturated fat or less
- **0 grams** of trans fats

Limit Sodium
Choose foods with **15% of the daily value** or less per serving.

Increase Your Fiber Intake
Compare grains with **3g** or more of fiber per serving.

Choose whole grains.
"Whole" must be the first ingredient (look for "whole wheat" or "whole grain").

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Tips for choosing fats wisely

- **Monounsaturated fat** is found in vegetable sources such as olive and canola oil. This fat lowers LDL (bad) cholesterol without lowering HDL (good) cholesterol.
- **Polyunsaturated fat** is found in vegetable sources such as safflower, sunflower or corn oil. This fat may lower both LDL and HDL.
- **Saturated fat** can be found in animal sources such as butter, lard and meat. Vegetable sources include coconut, palm, and partially hydrogenated oils that are found in many processed foods. Saturated fat can raise the total cholesterol level.
- **Trans fat** is just as unhealthy as saturated fat! If hydrogenated oil is on the ingredient list, it means that there is trans fat in the food. Avoid foods with this type of fat.

Heart Healthy Diet Tips

Plan Healthy Meals

- Offer a variety of foods at each meal. Focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Make more meals at home as a family. Most foods cooked in the home have less unhealthy fat, salt and calories. Limit packaged and processed foods.
- Make eating fun and enjoyable. Turn off the TV and enjoy meals at the table. Pay attention to the tastes and smells of the food while talking or laughing as a family.
- Serve portion sizes that are right for your child's size and age. Beware of large portions at fast food or sit-down restaurants. Ask a dietitian if you're not sure about the right serving sizes for your child.

Increase fiber in the diet

- Choose fiber-rich foods. Fiber is found in plant foods, especially vegetables, whole grains, beans, and lentils. Fiber can help clear "bad" cholesterol from the body.
- Add frozen, fresh or canned vegetables like broccoli, spinach or carrots to casseroles, pastas or slow-cooker meals.

Reduce sodium in the diet

- Too much salt in the diet increases risk of high blood pressure and other health problems. Pay attention to labels and use lower sodium versions of foods when possible.
- Rinse canned beans or vegetables before serving. This helps remove much of the added salt. You can also look for foods labeled "low sodium" or "no salt added."

Choose healthy fats

- Reach for healthy fats to help stay full and promote heart health. Fatty fish like salmon and tuna, avocado, nuts, and olive oil are a few examples of foods with healthy fats.
- Use liquid oils such as canola and olive, instead of solid fats like butter, shortening or margarine.
- Pick lean meats most often and trim any visible fat from roasts or other fattier cuts. Prepare meat by baking, broiling or grilling instead of breading and frying.

Choose healthy beverages

- Drink water or low-fat milk.
- Drink less soda, juice and other sugary beverages to avoid too much sugar.

Use this list to help you shop for food:

Category	Foods to include	Foods to leave behind
Milk and dairy foods ***(3 servings per day)***	Skim or 1% milk; low-fat cottage cheese; low or non-fat yogurt; part-skim mozzarella cheese; light string cheese	2% or whole milk; cream, sour cream or cream cheese; whole milk yogurt; cottage cheese (4% milk fat); high-fat or processed cheese (American, cheddar, Swiss, Colby).
Meat and eggs ***(2 to 3 servings per day)***	Lean meat, fish, or poultry; lean ground turkey; boiled, poached or scrambled eggs, egg substitutes; 97% fat-free deli meats; canned fish packed in water; dry beans and peas; natural peanut butter.	Breaded, fatty or fried meat, fish or poultry; poultry with skin; bacon, sausage, salami, bologna, hot dogs, brats or pepperoni; Lunchables®.
Breads and grains ***(6 to 11 servings per day)***	Whole wheat pasta, bread, and English muffins; Brown rice; Plain oatmeal or whole grain cereal; whole wheat crackers or light microwave popcorn.	Ramen® noodles; waffles, pancakes, pastries, biscuits, muffins, croissants, granola, sugary cereals; fried snack foods (chips, corn snacks).
Vegetables ***(3 to 5 servings per day)***	All vegetables are great! Choose more non-starchy vegetables. Avocados and olives have healthy fats and can be eaten in moderate amounts.	Avoid fried vegetables. Limit starchy vegetables (potatoes, corn and peas) to a ½ cup serving per meal.
Fruits ***(2 to 4 servings per day)***	All fresh and frozen fruits. Look for canned fruits in light syrup or water.	Canned fruit in heavy syrup. Avoid juice, even 100% juice.
Fats ***(Use sparingly)***	Choose oil or margarine with more monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat (olive and canola oil); margarine with no trans fat, light salad dressings.	Butter, hydrogenated oils or fats; lard; white sauce, cheese sauce or gravy; margarine with trans fats.
Desserts and sweets ***(Use sparingly)***	Try fruit or light yogurt for dessert!	All sweets should be limited to one serving 1-2 times per week or less.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.