

Easy food swaps for a healthy heart

Eating better for your heart doesn't have to be complicated. In fact, making some small substitutions in your diet each day can add up to better health. It doesn't require a big investment of time or money to make these changes:

INSTEAD OF:
CRACKERS
OR CHIPS



TRY: UNSALTED NUTS
AND SEEDS



Crackers and chips are processed foods with few vitamins and minerals. They're often loaded with salt, sugar or excess fat.

Nuts and seeds, on the other hand, contain heart healthy unsaturated fats that can improve blood cholesterol levels. They also contain fiber, which can help lower cholesterol and fight constipation. They're convenient to take on the go and offer a satisfying crunch.

INSTEAD OF: WHITE
DINNER
ROLLS OR PASTA



TRY: WHOLE GRAIN
BREADS AND PASTA



White "refined" breads and pastas have much of the natural nutrients stripped out during processing. They usually have little to no fiber. This means they don't help you feel full and they can cause a drop in blood sugar a short time after they are eaten.

Instead of white pasta and bread, try a whole grain option. Whole wheat pasta, quinoa and brown rice contain fiber, nutrients and even protein that's great for your heart. Eating whole grains instead of refined grains may lower the risk of heart attack, stroke and obesity.

INSTEAD OF:
CHEESY
PASTA OR
SANDWICHES



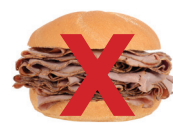
TRY: AVOCADO
SLICED OR SPREAD



Cheese can be eaten in moderation as part of a healthy diet. But many processed cheeses contain saturated fat, salt and artificial ingredients.

Instead of processed cheese, try creamy avocado. Diced avocado pairs well with cherry tomatoes and herbs as a pasta topping. Try ripe avocado on a sandwich in place of sliced cheese. Avocado contains monounsaturated fats, which are heart health superstars. It also has antioxidants to help fight heart disease.

INSTEAD OF:
LUNCH
MEAT SANDWICHES



TRY: HUMMUS AND
VEGETABLE WRAPS



Most deli meats contain a large amount of salt. A diet high in salt can lead to high blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. They may also contain saturated fat, which may raise the risk of heart problems.

Skip the meat and try a plant-based sandwich that still offers protein without the extra salt and unhealthy fat. Almond butter and peanut butter taste great on whole grain bread. Hummus offers protein and fiber, and pairs well with vegetables on whole grain wrap bread.

Source: American Heart Association