

# Are You Eating Right for Your Heart?

Here is what you need to know to have a healthier diet for your heart. This advice is great for everyone - whether you already have high cholesterol or you want to avoid it. This is the latest advice from the American Heart Association. For more information, visit [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org).

The American Heart Association updated its guidelines for a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle. Here is an overview of their recommendations:

## 1. Lower Consumption of Bad Fat

**What:** Saturated fat and trans fat clog arteries so they have to be limited.

**Where:** Saturated fats are typically found in all fatty animal products including meat and dairy, especially cheese. Trans fats are usually found in fried foods and processed foods made with partially hydrogenated fats, like margarine, crackers, cookies, baked goods and frozen entrees and desserts.

**How much:** Limit saturated fat to no more than 7% of calories and trans fats to less than 1% of calories. Here is a guide according to calorie intake:

Calories	Saturated Fat (g)	Trans Fat (g)
1,200	9	1.2
1,500	11.5	1.5
2,000	15	2

All fat in the diet needs to be 30% or less of total calories. Many studies have shown that decreasing the fat in the diet, while increasing fiber from fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains, is the key to long-term weight control.

Cholesterol, also found in animal products like meat, poultry, seafood and egg yolks, should be limited to 300 mg per day. Studies show that less is than 100 mg is optimal.

## 2. Lower Consumption of Sugar

The AHA discourages the consumption of sugar, especially from beverages because it promotes weight gain. Sugar is commonly found in beverages, cookies, desserts, ice cream and sweetened cereals.

## 3. Lower Consumption of Sodium

Most individuals need to cut their sodium

consumption by at least half. The AHA recommends no more than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. But the Institute of Medicine has a more ideal limit of 1,500 mg and this is agreed in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans who are at risk for or who have high blood pressure. If you don't use the salt shaker, you are not off the hook! Most people eat too much sodium from processed foods and meals eaten away from home.

## 4. Make Your Lifestyle Healthier

If you smoke you should quit. Attain and maintain a healthy body weight and be more physically active. You should increase your physical activity so you are getting at least 30 minutes of exercise per day on most days.



### Common Sources of Saturated Fat and Trans Fat in the American Diet

Food	Saturated Fat(g)	Trans Fat(g)
Prime rib steak, 12 oz	36	n/a
Cupcake	15	5
Pot Pie	15	14
Cheeseburger, double	11.5	1.5
Cheese, 1 oz	6	n/a
French fries, large	6	8
Cake donut	5	4
Chicken Nuggets, 10	5	2.5
Cake, 1 slice	5	1
Pizza, 1 slice	4.5	n/a
Whole milk, 1 cup	4.5	n/a
Mac and Cheese	3.5	1
Oatmeal Raisin Cookie	2.5	4.5
Fried chicken, drumstick	2.5	1.5
Biscuit	2	3.5

Sources: [mcdonalds.com](http://mcdonalds.com), [kfc.com](http://kfc.com), [starbucks.com](http://starbucks.com), [dunkindonuts.com](http://dunkindonuts.com), USDA database