

Foods for Heart Health

1.Introduction:

- Cardiovascular diseases are among the leading causes of death globally. Maintaining heart health is crucial for longevity and quality of life, and diet plays a major role in promoting cardiovascular health.
- Foods rich in healthy fats, Fibre, and antioxidants help reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol, reducing inflammation, and improving circulation.

2. Key Nutrients to Focus On:

- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Reduce inflammation, lower blood pressure, and decrease the risk of arrhythmias.
- **Fibre:** Helps lower cholesterol levels and reduces the risk of heart disease.
- **Antioxidants:** Prevent oxidative damage that can lead to heart disease.
- **Potassium:** Helps control blood pressure by balancing sodium levels in the body.

3.Top Foods:

Fruits and Veggies:

- **Avocados:** Loaded with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and potassium, which help control cholesterol and blood pressure.
- **Leafy Greens (e.g., spinach, kale):** Packed with antioxidants, Fibre, and potassium that support heart health.

Proteins:

- **Fatty Fish (e.g., salmon, sardines):** Rich in omega-3s, which help reduce inflammation and protect against heart disease.

Grains:

- **Whole Grains (e.g., oats, brown rice, quinoa):** High in Fibre, which helps lower cholesterol and improve heart health

Healthy Fats:

- **Nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts):** Rich in omega-3s and Fibre, which reduce cholesterol and support heart function.
- **Dark Chocolate (70% cocoa or more):** Contains flavonoids that help improve circulation and lower blood pressure.

4. Scientific Backing:

- Studies published by the American Heart Association show that diets rich in omega-3s, such as the Mediterranean diet, can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Harvard Health research found that whole grains can reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels and improving overall cardiovascular function.
- Link: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/aha-diet-and-lifestyle-recommendations>

5. Fun Fact/Tip:

- **Fun Fact:** Did you know that eating a handful of nuts daily can lower your risk of heart disease by up to 30%?
- **Tip:** Incorporate more heart-healthy fats into your meals by swapping out butter for avocado or olive oil when cooking.

6. Related Lifestyle Changes:

- Alongside a heart-healthy diet, regular exercise (like walking or cycling), managing stress, and quitting smoking are vital to reducing the risk of heart disease.

7. External Links & References:

- WebMD: <https://www.webmd.com/heart-disease/ss/slideshow-foods-to-save-your-heart>
- Harvard Health: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/heart-healthy-foods-what-to-eat-and-what-to-avoid>

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