

For Care providers on how to use this handout.

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Diet for your heart failure	2	Use this sheet only, if patient requires basic information only.
Foods to choose, foods to avoid	3-4	These sheets offer specific advice and can be printed individually and tailored to the patient's education needs. Use only the information that is relevant to the patient. You do not have to give them the whole packet.
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Diet for Heart Failure

You can use food to help your heart:

- Aim to make half your meal from vegetables, salads and fruit.
- Try to eat most of your protein from beans, lentils, nuts, soy or fish.
- Eat whole grains.
- Have healthy fats in your diet such as avocado, olive oil and nut oils.

Avoid eating too much salt:

- Salt is also called sodium and is found in many foods.
- Most foods you eat have salt even if you cannot see it or taste it such as bread.
- Salt acts like a sponge and makes your body hold onto water.

Here are some ideas to help you eat less salt.

Choose foods that are low in salt.

- Limit food high in salt (also called Sodium). Aim to eat less than 2000mg (or 2g) each day.
- Just 1 teaspoon of salt has (2,300mg sodium).
- Take the salt shaker off the table.
- Try to select foods with 150mg or less per serving. For entrées, look for 400mg or less.

When you eat out:

- Skip salted butter, cheese or sauces.
- Choose grilled, baked or steamed foods.
- Choose oil and vinegar for salad dressing.
- Skip bacon, sausage or ham.
- Tell your server you want your food to be cooked without salt.
- Ask for salad dressing and sauces to come “on the side.”

When you eat at home:

- Don't add salt to food when you cook or eat Season foods with herbs and spices that do not have salt.
- Make your own or choose low-salt sauces, salad dressings, breads and desserts.
- Skip “instant” foods that come in a bag or box.
- Rinse canned foods (as well as fish) before cooking and eating them.

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A low-salt diet is key for good heart health. Limit to 2000 mg or less a day. Here is a list that can help you choose foods that are lower in salt

	Make these food choices	Avoid these foods
Fruits and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh and frozen vegetables • Low-sodium/sodium free canned vegetables • Dried fruit • Fresh/frozen fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned vegetables • V8 • Pickled vegetables • Pickles • Olives • French fries, onion rings • Frozen vegetables with seasoning and sauces
Breads/ starches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sliced bread, hard rolls • Dinner rolls • Muffins • Most dry cereals • Cooked cereal (without salt) • Unsalted crackers • Low-salt bread crumbs • Unsalted popcorn • Rice • Whole grains (barley, quinoa, etc.) • Spaghetti • Pasta noodles • Homemade stuffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick breads • Flavored instant hot cereal • Pancake/waffle mix • Stuffing • Self-rising flour • Biscuit mix • Croutons • Boxed rice mixes • Boxed pasta mixes • Boxed potato mixes
Proteins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eggs and egg substitutes • Dried peas, lentils and beans • Low-salt peanut butter • Low-salt nuts • Fresh/frozen fish • Rinsed canned tuna • Fresh/frozen/unprocessed meats (poultry, lamb, pork, beef) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot dogs • Spam • Cured meat • Smoked meat • Pickled meat • Ham • Sausage • Bacon • Sardines • Anchovies • Salted pork • Imitation seafood • Cold cuts/deli meat • Crab • Lobster • Pickled eggs

Sauces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vinegar (all but seasoned rice vinegar) • Hot pepper sauce • Oil and vinegar dressing • Low-salt salad dressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soy sauce • Fish sauce • Teriyaki sauce • Barbeque sauce • Worcestershire sauce • Salad dressing • Gravy • Cheese sauce • Alfredo sauce
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk or milk powder • Rice milk and soy milk • Yogurt, including Greek yogurt • Small amounts of natural, block cheese or reduced-salt cheese (Swiss, ricotta, and fresh mozzarella are lower in sodium) • Regular or soft cream cheese, Low-salt cottage cheese. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buttermilk • Hard cheeses • Cottage cheese • Processed cheese • Cheese spreads • Milk shakes
Desserts/ snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit or applesauce • Angel food cake • Granola • Unsalted pretzels, popcorn, or nuts • Pudding, or Jell-O with Cool Whip topping • Homemade rice crispy treats • Vanilla Wafers • Frozen fruit bars 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pepper • Herbs • Spices • Mrs. Dash or McCormick salt free blend • Simple salad dressing of oil and vinegar • Salt free sauces • Lemon or lime juice • Mustard • Fresh ground horseradish • Foods that are less than 140 mg of sodium per serving • Garlic/Onion • Salsa • Low-salt canned soups • Low-salt broth/bouillon • Homemade broth/soups (without added salt) • Frozen dinner with less than 400 mg sodium • Small amounts of hot sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned soup • Broth • Bouillon • Any seasoning made with salt • Seasoned salts • Soy sauce • Barbeque sauce • Teriyaki sauce • Worcestershire sauce • Salad Dressing • Gravy • Cheese sauce • Alfredo sauce • Pretzels • French fries • Frozen meals with more than 400mg sodium • Bacon bits

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Reading food labels

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size ½ cup (120g)	
Servings Per Container 3	
Amount per Serving	
Calories 100 Calories from fat 0g	
% Daily Value	
Total fat 0g	0%
Saturated fat 0g	0%
Trans fats 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 220mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 4g	
Protein 6g	
Vitamin A	0%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	4%
Iron	8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower based on your calorie needs.

Check the serving size and how many servings you are planning to eat. Often there is more than one serving in packaged food.

Watch out for labels on the front of food packages. These foods may be higher in sodium despite their advertisement.

- Lower sodium
- Reduced sodium
- Unsalted
- No added salt

Try to pick foods with 150mg or less per serving. For main dishes, look for 400mg or less.

Choose items labeled:

- Salt-free
- Very low sodium
- Low sodium

Reading the ingredients

Salt is often hidden in other ingredients. Watch out for these names if reading the ingredients label. These are all types of salt and high in sodium.

- Salt
- Himalayan salt
- Sea salt
- Kosher salt
- Sodium benzoate
- Disodium or monosodium glutamate
- Sodium nitrite

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Healthy snack options

A small healthy snack helps take the edge off hunger and provides nutrients for your heart and body.

Healthy snack options;

- Whole grain, low sodium crackers
- Nuts and seeds
- Hardboiled egg white with pepper
- Apple or pear slices with 1-ounce cheese
- 1 tablespoon natural peanut butter on 6 whole-wheat low sodium crackers
- 1/3 cup hummus with baby carrots, and cucumber sticks
- 6 oz Greek style yogurt with ½ cup fresh berries
- 1 oz slice swiss cheese on 1 slice whole-wheat toast
- 3 tablespoons tuna on thin low sodium rye crackers
- 1 tablespoon almond or peanut butter on apple slices or celery sticks
- 3 cups air or oil popped popcorn
- ¼ cup dry roasted or raw nuts with a medium size piece of fresh fruit
- ½ cup trail mix with toasted pumpkin seeds, dried fruit and dark chocolate chips
- Plain edamame with low sodium flavoring
- Whole-wheat toast with sliced avocado and tomato

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Flavoring your food with lemon juice, lime juice, vinegar, herbs, garlic, onion, spices, can make it taste great without adding salt.

Try this for a salt free spice blend recipe to add to food (makes about half a cup)

5 teaspoons onion powder

2 ½ teaspoons garlic powder

2 ½ teaspoons paprika

2 ½ teaspoons dry mustard

1 ½ teaspoon crushed thyme leaves

½ teaspoon white pepper

¼ teaspoon celery seeds

Ideas for your flavoring food (From AND Nutrition Care Manual 2018)

Vegetables

basil
dill
garlic
garlic powder
ginger
lemon juice
mace
marjoram
nutmeg
onion
onion powder
tarragon
tomato
sugar or sugar substitute
salt free salad dressing
vinegar

Buying herbs and spices from bulk bins can save money.

Fish

basil
bay leaf
chervil
curry
dill
dry mustard
green
pepper
lemon juice
marjoram
paprika
pepper
tarragon
tomato
turmeric

Egg

chervil
curry
dill
dry
mustard
garlic
garlic powder
paprika
parsley
rosemary
tarragon
tomato

Chicken

basil
cloves
cranberry
lemon
mace
mushroom
nutmeg
oregano
paprika
parsley
pineapple
saffron
sage
savory
tarragon
thyme
tomato
turmeric

Pork

applesauce
basil
caraway
chives
cloves
garlic
garlic powder
onion
onion powder
rosemary
thyme

Veal

apricots
basil
bay leaf
currant
jelly
curry
ginger
marjoram
mushroom
oregano
paprika

Beef

basil
bay leaf
caraway
curry
dill
dry
mustard
garlic
grape jelly
green
pepper
mace
marjoram
mushroom
nutmeg
onion
onion powder

Desserts

allspice
anise
cardamom
cinnamon
cloves
ginger
mace
nutmeg
vanilla extract
coconut extract
other extracts

Lamb

cloves
curry
dill
garlic
garlic powder
mace
mint jelly
onion
oregano
parsley
pineapple
rosemary
tarragon
thyme

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Sample menus for three days

Day 1 Menu (1968kcal, 1648mg sodium)

Breakfast	<p>1 store-bought (commercial) whole-wheat bagel with 2 tablespoons peanut butter (no salt added)</p> <p>1 medium orange</p> <p>1 cup fat-free milk</p> <p>Decaffeinated coffee</p>
Lunch	<p>Spinach salad made with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 cups of fresh spinach leaves - 1 sliced pear - 1/2 cup canned mandarin orange sections - 1/3 cup slivered almonds - 2 tablespoons red wine vinaigrette <p>12 reduced-salt wheat crackers</p> <p>1 oz goat cheese</p> <p>Flavored unsweetened carbonated water</p>
Dinner	<p>Herb-crusted baked cod, 3 ounces cooked (about 4 ounces raw)</p> <p>1/2 cup brown rice pilaf with veggies</p> <p>1/2 cup fresh green beans, steamed</p> <p>1 small sourdough roll</p> <p>2 teaspoons olive oil</p> <p>1 cup fresh berries with chopped mint</p> <p>Herbal iced tea</p>
Snack (anytime)	<p>1 cup fat-free, low-calorie yogurt</p> <p>4 vanilla wafers</p>

Day 2 (2127 kcal, 1925mg sodium)

Breakfast	<p>1 cup fresh mixed fruits, such as melons, banana, apple and berries, topped with 1 cup fat-free, low-calorie vanilla-flavored yogurt and 1/3 cup walnuts</p> <p>1 bran muffin with 1 teaspoon trans-free margarine</p> <p>1 cup fat-free milk</p> <p>Herbal tea</p>
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Lunch	<p>Curried chicken wrap made with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 medium whole-wheat tortilla - 2/3 cup cooked, chopped chicken (about 3 ounces) - 1/2 cup chopped apple - 2 tablespoons light mayonnaise - 1/2 teaspoon curry powder <p>1/2 cup, or about 8, raw baby carrots Green tea or water</p>
Dinner	<p>1 cup cooked whole-wheat spaghetti with 1 cup marinara sauce, no added salt, 1/4 cup mozzarella 2 cups mixed salad greens 1 tablespoon low-fat Caesar dressing 1 whole-wheat roll 1 teaspoon olive oil for dipping 1 nectarine Sparkling water</p>
Snack (anytime)	<p>Trail mix made with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1/4 cup raisins (1 ounce or about 22) - unsalted mini twist pretzels - 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds

Day 3 (1890calories,1538mg sodium)

Breakfast	<p>1 cup regular oatmeal made with water or milk 1 cup reduced-fat (2%) milk 1 medium banana 1 slice whole-wheat bread 1 tablespoon salt-free peanut butter 1/2 cup dried cranberries</p>
Lunch	<p>3 ounces grilled chicken breast 1 cup salad greens Olive oil and vinegar dressing (for greens) 5 unsalted or low-sodium crackers Fruit plate with 1/4 cup strawberries 1/2 sliced orange (for fruit plate) 1 peach half (for fruit plate)</p>

Dinner	3 ounces herb-baked fish 1 baked potato 2 teaspoons soft low sodium butter (for potato) Sliced tomatoes 1/2 cup steamed spinach drizzled with lemon juice 3-inch square of angel food cake Fresh strawberries (2) (for cake)
Snacks (anytime)	2 tablespoons salt-free peanut butter with 5 low-sodium crackers 1 ounce low-sodium turkey and 1-piece whole wheat bread

(From AND Nutrition Care Manual and Mayo Clinic)

For more recipe ideas check out <https://recipes.heart.org/>

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What to do if you do not have an appetite

- If you become full quickly after you start eating, try eating six small meals in a day instead of 3 large ones.
- Keep high-calorie and high-protein snacks close by (in your bag, car or bedside) to eat when you get hungry.

Drink high-calorie drinks

- Choose a liquid nutrition supplement that has less than 300mg of sodium per serving, drink them in-between meals as snacks.
- Make your own supplement with milk, cream and ice cream. Ask your dietitian if protein powder would help too.

Add calories and protein to your fruits and veggies

- Fruits and veggies are low in calories and protein.
- Add unsalted peanut butter, yogurt or low-salt cottage cheese to add calories or protein.
- Try fruits canned in syrup.
- Add oil, butter, sour cream or margarine to veggies.
- Potatoes, corn, peas and avocado are higher-calorie veggies.

Limit foods that have less calories or protein

- Skip calorie-free and low-calorie foods such as applesauce, Jell-O and diet soft drinks. These foods will take up space in your stomach and may leave little room for higher-calorie foods and drinks.
- When shopping, skip products that say “low-calorie” or “low-fat.”

Add extra calories and protein when cooking meals

- Cook with unsalted butter or margarine or oils
- Use whole milk instead of fat-free or 2 percent.
- Add unsalted nuts and seeds in your cereal, stir-fry or salad.
- Add 1 tablespoon mayonnaise, sugar, or honey to food.

(Adapted from AND Nutrition Care Manual 2018)