



Heart Healthy Catering - Quick Reference Guide

Providing heart healthy menu choices helps raise awareness of The Heart Foundation's Heart Healthy Eating Patterns and creates the opportunity to showcase heart healthy foods and nutrition messages.

The following provides a quick reference guide to assist you in choosing heart healthy menu selections at your next event.

Heart Healthy Eating Patterns

The Heart Foundation summarises healthy eating recommendations into the following five elements, reflecting the current evidence on the variety of dietary patterns which help build a sustainable eating pattern and promote heart health.

This style of eating is naturally low in saturated and trans fats, salt and added sugar and rich in wholegrains, fibre, antioxidants and unsaturated fats (omega-3 and omega-6). Eating this way can help improve the heart health of all Australians by reducing CVD risk factors such as high blood pressure and raised blood lipids and decreasing the risk of developing and dying from heart disease.

HEALTHY EATING PATTERNS

1


Plenty of fruit, vegetables and wholegrain cereals.

2


Healthy proteins especially fish, seafood, legumes, nuts and seeds with smaller amounts of eggs and lean poultry. Limit lean red meat to 1-3 times a week.

3


Unflavoured milk, yoghurt and cheese. Those with high blood cholesterol should choose reduced fat varieties.

4


Healthy fat choices with nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and their oils for cooking.

5


Herbs and spices to flavour foods, instead of adding salt

Heart Healthy Catering: Menu swap ideas

Breakfast

Choose	Replace
Cold Breakfast	
Rolled or steel cut oats	Pastries, croissants, regular muffins
Wholegrain bread	White bread
Wholegrain cereals eg Untoasted muesli, chia and other seed and grain based breakfast items	Toasted muesli or granola, refined high sugar, low fibre cereals
Unflavoured, unsweetened milk, yoghurt, and cheese. <i>Note: consider event attendees - choose low fat varieties for people with high blood cholesterol</i>	Flavoured or sweetened milk, yoghurts. Cream, butter, ice-cream
Seasonal fruit	Tinned fruit in syrups
Toppings: Nuts and seeds	Syrups
Spreads - avocado, nut butters (unsalted), ricotta, hummus, tahini, margarine spreads made from olive, canola or sunflower oils	Spreads – butter, cream cheese, processed cheese spread.
Hot breakfast	
Eggs – boiled, poached, omelette, scrambled with milk, Frittata, or other egg and vegetable bakes. If pastry used, choose filo brushed with olive oil. Baked beans and other legumes (no added salt)	Eggs – scrambled with butter and cream Bacon, sausage, ham and other processed meats eg chorizo, salami Egg and vegetable bakes with butter, cream, or puff or shortcrust pastry
Vegetables - variety of different coloured vegetables, used as a side or part of meal eg mushrooms, spinach, tomato, kale. Vegetables preferably cooked and flavoured with olive oil or other healthy oils, herbs and spices	Butter, cream, coconut oil, salt used in cooking and as a side extra
Toppings and sauces – avocado, tomato based salsa, yoghurt or healthy oils and vinegars	Hollandaise, sour cream, cream, butter

Other:

- Request recipe modifications and healthy cooking methods
- Consider portion sizes – cut items in half or as appropriate
- Request food be flavoured with herbs and spices rather than salt

Lunch/dinner

Choose	Replace
Cold Selections	
Sandwiches	
Wholegrain breads, wraps, rolls cut into small portions	White breads, wraps, rolls
Spreads- avocado, nut butters (unsalted), ricotta, cottage cheese, pesto, tzatziki, hummus, tahini, margarine spreads made from olive, canola or sunflower oils	Spreads – butter, cream cheese, processed cheese spread.
Colourful fresh vegetable sandwich fillers eg carrot, lettuce, tomato, sprouts, cucumber, beetroot, capsicum	Fried food, pies and sausage rolls Deep -fried hot chips, commercial pizza
Lean protein: tuna (fresh or tined in spring water or olive oil, salmon, legumes (eg chick peas, beans), tofu, skinless chicken, turkey, egg, cheese, beef Cheese – thin slices	Processed meats eg salami, bacon
Salads	
Wholegrains eg polenta, couscous, quinoa, wholemeal pasta, brown rice or wholegrain rice blends	White pasta, white rice, white bread
Vegetables and legumes – variety of colours, fresh, frozen or canned (no added salt), chic peas, kidney beans, 3/4 bean mix.	Vegetables and legumes – regular canned in salt. Check labels.
Dressings - olive oil, vinegar, mustard, pesto, lemon juice, lime juice, buttermilk yoghurt, herbs and spices	Dressings – cream or butter based sauces, salt
Toppings: nuts, seeds, dried fruit, natural parmesan cheese	Toppings: sour cream, coconut cream, cream or butter based, bacon, croutons.
Hot Selections	
Soups- made from predominantly vegetables, wholegrains, beans and legumes. Choose lowest salt versions.	Commercially prepared soups high in salt or made with cream, butter, coconut cream.
Vegetables – variety and plentiful Flavoured with herbs , spices and healthy oils eg olive oil without butter or salt	Potato wedges, chips and other deep fried varieties. Vegetables prepared with butter, cream, coconut oil or salt

Lunch/dinner cont.

Choose	Replace
Hot selections cont.	
Wholegrains – wholemeal pasta, couscous, quinoa, brown rice	White pasta, white rice
<p>Healthy protein selection: Fish, legumes eg. Chickpeas, beans, lentils , nuts and seeds, tofu, eggs, poultry, lean red meat</p> <p>Healthy cooking methods: roast, steam, poach, Stir-fry/sauté, casserole/stew</p> <p><i>Note: Consider healthy protein scale rank for ordering preference.</i></p> <p><i>First choose to highlight legumes, fish and vegetarian options. Secondly consider eggs and poultry options followed by lean red meat (beef, veal, lamb, pork) options</i></p>	<p>Untrimmed meats, poultry with skin, processed meats, sausages, high salt meat alternative products (i.e. plant based 'meat').</p> <p>Cooking method: deep fried</p>
Pasta and other sauces: tomato base, olive oil, pesto or other vegetable/legume based sauces	
Dessert	
<p>Seasonal fresh fruit</p> <p>Special/gala events choose fruit based items</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mini fruit tarts • Fig and apple filo tartlet with almond dusting and ricotta cream • Wholemeal crepes with berries, passionfruit and mint yoghurt • Hazelnut cherry ricotta parfait cups with cocoa 	No cream, coconut cream, coconut oil, butter, puff pastry, short crust pastry made with butter.

Other:

- Plated meals: Consider Heart Healthy eating plate model (½ plate colourful vegetables/fruit, ¼ plate carbohydrate preferably wholegrains, ¼ plate lean protein)
- Consider portion size. Cut large portions in half/quarters or as appropriate
- Request food be flavoured with herbs and spices rather than salt
- Request recipe modifications and healthy cooking methods

Morning tea/Afternoon tea

Choose	Replace
Fresh fruit/chopped fruit platter (seasonal selection with colour and variety)	Chips, biscuits, lollies, cupcakes, commercial banana bread
Chopped vegetables, olives, hummus, avocado, tzatziki or other yoghurt based dips, unsalted nut butters	Pies, sausage rolls
Cheese, nuts and wholegrain crackers	High salt, low fibre savoury biscuits and premade snack foods, protein balls
Unflavoured yoghurts (portioned or ability to be portioned)	Cream, Ice cream, custard, cream-based desserts and sweets
Wholemeal/pumpkin scones (halved/small portioned) with whipped ricotta and vanilla	Pastries, cream
Unsalted nuts, trail mix (no chocolate), unsalted popcorn	Lollies, chocolates
Spreads: avocado, tahini, hummus or unsalted nut butters	Spreads – butter, cream cheese, processed cheese spread

Other:

- Offer small portion sizes
- Choose items with the lowest sodium
- Replace butter used in baked recipes with healthy fat spreads or oils made from olive, canola, sunflower

Beverages

Choose	Replace
Water (still or sparkling)	Sugar sweetened beverages eg. soft drinks, sweetened iced teas, sports and energy drinks
100% fruit or vegetable juice in small portions (1 serve =125mL)	Juices with added sugar or in large individual portions eg 600mL individual bottles
Unflavoured milk and milk alternatives (offer full fat and reduced fat alternatives)	Sweetened milk based drinks, cream
Tea, coffee, herbal teas and decaffeinated options	



Heart Heathy Catering Checklist

- Fresh fruit and vegetables are the basis of every meal and snack
- Healthy fat choices with nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and their oils for cooking have been used and replace unhealthy fat sources eg butter, coconut oil
- Wholegrains used instead of refined, white alternatives
- A variety of lean healthy proteins (especially fish, seafood, legumes, nuts and seeds, lean meats, poultry without skin) including plant based vegetarian options (beans, lentils, tofu) included.
 - No processed meats eg ham, bacon, salami, sausages
- Herbs and spices are used to flavour foods instead of salt
- Unflavoured milk, yoghurt and cheese used.
- Portion size considered
- Healthy cooking methods used. No deep-fried foods.
- Water is the main drink of choice.
- Confirm no “junk” food including lollies/mints/chocolate in bowls in reception or meeting area
- Confirm no butter on serving tables or food servery area. Offer olive oil instead.
- Use any opportunities to lower salt intake eg use of low salt/no added salt ingredients/products used, no salt on table
- Confirm special dietary requirements are met, and foods clearly labelled.



For heart health information and support, call our Helpline on 13 11 12 or visit heartfoundation.org.au

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