

# Preventing Heart attacks, Angina and Strokes

## Diet

*Low fat diet, Low GI diet, 5 fruit and vegetable portions a day, 2-3 oily fish portions per week, avoid adding salt (or use lo-salt if your doctor recommends it), drink sugar free drinks (including*

*Don't eat too much water)*

The total amount of fat should be low. This will also help you to reduce weight. Also, the type of fat is important. You should avoid saturated fats such as butter, lard, dripping, and margarines that are not high in polyunsaturated fats. Unsaturated fats (polyunsaturated and monounsaturated) are better;

There are various types of fat and they are not all bad. The three most important types are

- saturated fat. These are bad fats. They increase your LDL and total cholesterol.
- polyunsaturated fat. These are good fats that increase your good (HDL) cholesterol, eg canola, oilseed rape, flax seed oil, corn oil and sunflower oil.
- monounsaturated fat. These are neutral or quite good and may increase your HDL cholesterol, eg olive oil.

### **Some tips to help reduce the fat in your diet**

- use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk instead of whole milk
- switch to a polyunsaturated (low-fat) spread instead of butter or margarine
- eat more chicken (skinned) and fish and less red or fatty meats
- choose lean cuts of meat and trim off all the excess fat
- grill, bake, steam barbeque or microwave food rather than frying it. If you do fry, choose polyunsaturated cooking oil (canola, oilseed rape, flaxseed oils, corn oil, sunflower oil) or monounsaturated olive oil. Drain off the oil before eating.
- try low-fat varieties of dairy products such as cheese and yoghurt
- avoid high-fat snacks such as chocolate, crisps, biscuits, cakes and pastries
- avoid cream. Use low fat salad cream, or low-fat yoghurt as a cream substitute.

**Fish.** Oily fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids helps to protect against heart disease. Oily fish include: herring, sardines, mackerel, salmon, fresh tuna (not tinned), pilchards, trout, whitebait and anchovies. Aim to eat at least two portions of fish per week, one of which should be oily.

## Sugars

- Try not to add sugar to tea, coffee, and breakfast cereals. Your taste for sweetness often changes with time. Use artificial sweeteners only if necessary (saccharine causes obesity in rats).
- Reduce sugar in any kind of recipe. Use fruit as an alternative to add sweetness to recipes.
- Try sugar-free drinks. Give children water as their main drink.
- If you eat chocolate or sweets, try and keep the quantity down. Eating them as part of a meal is better than between meals as snacks.

## Salt

Too much salt increases the risk of developing high blood pressure. If you are used to a lot of salt, try to gradually

- reduce the amount that you have. Your taste for salt will
- eventually change. Tips on how to reduce salt include:   
o food at the table.
- Choose foods labelled 'no added salt'.
- As much as possible, avoid processed foods, salt-rich sauces, take-aways, and packet soups which are often high in salt.
- Your doctor may recommend Lo salt which is good for you unless you have a high potassium level or unless you take medications that raise your potassium level (eg lisinopril or candesartan).

## Food labels

Foods that contain fat often contain a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fats, hidden sugars and salt. Aim to keep the amount of each of these deadly sins to a minimum. So, it may be a good idea to get into the habit of reading food labels when you shop.

<b>Guide to food labelling<sup>15</sup></b>	
<b>This is a lot (per 100g of food)</b>	<b>This is a little (per 100g of food)</b>
10g of <b>sugars</b> or more	2g of <b>sugars</b> or less
20g of <b>fat</b> or more	3g of <b>fat</b> or less
5g of <b>saturates</b> or more	1g of <b>saturates</b> or less
1.25g of <b>salt</b> or more 0.5g of <b>sodium</b> or more	0.25g of <b>salt</b> or less 0.1 g of <b>sodium</b> or less

Keep alcohol within the recommended limits

- Drink no more than 3-4 units per day (men) or 2-3 units (women). Alcohol contains a lot of calories and too much can cause weight gain.
- E** Individuals need to accumulate 30 minutes of moderate, comfortable activity five times per week (10-15 minute bouts) incorporate this into your normal activities. Moderate means
- S**

Get smoking support: If you already have heart disease or a significant health problem your practice nurse will support you to stop. Otherwise get support from:

NHS stop smoking number Sunderland 0800 587 4865