



HEART-HEALTHY EATING GUIDE

A practical Mediterranean-style pattern for everyday life

CORE APPROACH

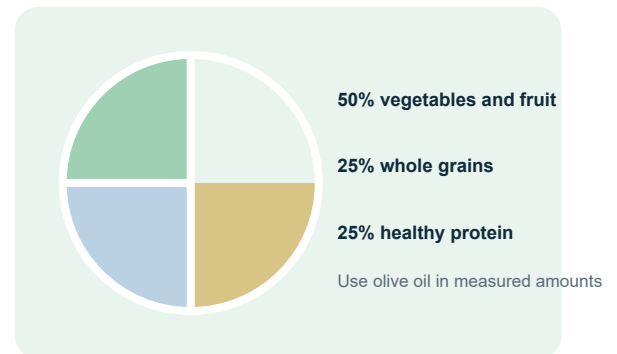
Build a sustainable pattern, not a short-term diet

A heart-healthy pattern is predominantly plant-based, minimally processed and adapted to total cardiovascular risk. Nutrition works together with movement, sleep, tobacco avoidance and prescribed treatment.

- 1** Balance energy and portions
Aim for a sustainable body weight; adjust portions to activity and clinical goals.
- 2** Vary vegetables and fruit
Use different colours daily and favour minimally processed options.
- 3** Choose whole grains
Replace refined grains with high-fibre choices when clinically suitable.
- 4** Prioritise healthy proteins
Use legumes, fish, unsalted nuts, fermented dairy and suitable portions of lean meat.
- 5** Improve fat quality
Prefer extra-virgin olive oil and other unsaturated oils over solid fats.
- 6** Reduce ultra-processed foods
Limit added sugar, sugary drinks, processed meat and packaged snacks.
- 7** Watch sodium
Use herbs and spices; a general target is less than 5 g salt/day unless your plan differs.
- 8** Make water the main drink
Individual fluid limits may apply in heart failure or kidney disease.

PLATE MODEL

A simple guide for main meals



EVERYDAY TARGETS

Small choices with cumulative benefit

- Choose water instead of sugary drinks.
- Use a small handful of unsalted nuts rather than packaged snacks.
- Eat fish regularly when appropriate; vary species and preparation.
- Increase fibre gradually and maintain suitable fluid intake.
- Work towards at least 150 minutes/week of moderate aerobic activity when clinically safe.
- If you do not drink alcohol, do not start for heart health.

Individual planning matters

Diabetes, kidney disease, heart failure, pregnancy, food allergy and medicines such as warfarin may change the recommended portions, fluid, sodium or vitamin K plan.





DAILY CHOICES AND MEAL IDEAS

Use these examples as a framework and personalise them with your clinical team

MEAL RHYTHM

Do not diet by starving

A regular pattern can reduce impulsive food choices. Meal timing should fit medicines, glucose control, sleep, activity and personal preference.

BREAKFAST

Vegetables, olives, unsweetened yoghurt or kefir, a suitable portion of cheese, egg when appropriate, and a small amount of unsalted nuts. Keep honey and dried fruit portions small.

LUNCH AND DINNER

Start with salad or cooked vegetables. Add legumes, fish, poultry or lean meat. Choose whole grains according to energy and glucose needs.

SNACK - IF NEEDED

Unsweetened yoghurt, a small handful of unsalted nuts or a fibre-rich fruit. Snacks are optional, not compulsory.

GUT HEALTH

Favour fibre and fermented foods

Vegetables, fruit, legumes, whole grains, nuts and suitable fermented foods support microbial diversity. Probiotic or nutraceutical products are not substitutes for a balanced diet and should not be used as treatment without advice.

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Heart-friendly staples

- Extra-virgin olive oil and measured unsaturated plant oils
- Leafy vegetables and vegetables of different colours
- Whole fruit rather than juice
- Lentils, chickpeas, beans and other legumes
- Fish, seafood and suitable portions of lean poultry or meat
- Unsweetened yoghurt, kefir and other fermented foods
- Whole grains and other high-fibre foods

LIMIT

Foods to choose less often

- White bread, refined flour products, pastries and sweets
- Sugary drinks and ultra-processed snacks
- Butter, margarine, animal fat and deep-fried foods
- Processed meat and high-sodium packaged foods
- Large portions of potatoes, white rice and refined grains
- Alcohol and all tobacco products

MEDICINES AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Keep vitamin K intake consistent when using warfarin. Fluid, potassium, phosphorus, protein and sodium targets may differ in heart failure, kidney disease or diabetes. Do not change medicines or start supplements without professional advice.

Read the online guide

www.drkocaman.com/en/heart-health/nutrition-for-heart-health

