



American Heart Association®

Life's Essential 8™

→ for kids

# HOW TO EAT BETTER



## CREATE A HEALTHY EATING PATTERN

Make smart choices and swaps to build an overall healthy eating style. **Listen to your body – if you are hungry, make a healthy choice. When you are full, stop eating.**

## ENJOY

vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins, skinless chicken or turkey, fish and seafood.<sup>1</sup>

## LIMIT

sweetened drinks (soda, juice, sweet tea, flavored milk), sodium, red and processed meats, refined carbohydrates like added sugars (white rice and most white breads, pastries, cakes, and crackers) and processed grain foods (chips, sweets, packaged soups, chicken nuggets, hotdogs, and fries), full-fat dairy products, highly processed foods, tropical oils like coconut and palm, and alcohol.<sup>2</sup>

## AVOID

trans fat and partially hydrogenated oils (found in some commercial baked goods and fried foods).<sup>3</sup>

## READ NUTRITION LABELS

Learning how to read and understand food labels can help you make healthier choices.

When you have more than one choice, compare nutrition facts. Choose products with lower amounts of sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS



### DON'T EAT WHILE DISTRACTED

Avoid eating or drinking while you are on a screen or busy doing other things. Distracted eating makes it harder to realize you are full and to stop eating.



### COOK AT HOME

Take control over the nutritional content of your food by learning healthy preparation methods. Getting kids involved is a great way for everyone to learn.



### GET INSPIRED

The American Heart Association has hundreds of heart-healthy recipes to choose from.



### LOOK FOR THE HEART-CHECK

The Heart-Check mark helps you find foods that can be part of a healthy eating plan.

Learn more at [heart.org/lifes8](https://heart.org/lifes8)

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Lichtenstein AH, Appel LJ, Vadiveloo M, Hu FB, Kris-Etherton PM, Rebholz CM, Sacks FM, Thorndike AN, Van Horn L, Wylie-Rosett J; on behalf of the American Heart Association Council on Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health; Council on Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology; Council on Cardiovascular Radiology and Intervention; Council on Clinical Cardiology; and Stroke Council. 2021 Dietary guidance to improve cardiovascular health: a scientific statement from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2021;144:e472–e487. doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000001031