

Nutrition

and Heart Disease and Stroke

Poor nutrition is a risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Making healthy food choices can improve your health and help reduce your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

Nutrition in Missouri

In recent years, unhealthy food choices have contributed to a rise in obesity, which increases a person's risk for heart attack and stroke. In Missouri, 63.3 percent of adults are overweight or obese.¹

An important part of a healthy diet is eating plenty of fruits and vegetables. But only 20.2 percent of Missourians eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day.¹

What is a healthy diet?

In addition to fruits and vegetables, a healthy diet includes low-fat dairy products, lean meats and whole grains. Guidelines for good nutrition include:

- Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Choose produce of varying colors to get a variety of nutrients. For example, orange fruits and vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes and cantaloupe, contain large amounts of vitamin A, while green vegetables such as spinach and broccoli are high in vitamin C.
- Limit foods that can raise your cholesterol, such as those that are high in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol.
- Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains. Eat at least three servings of whole-grain bread, cereal and pasta every day.
- Limit processed foods that are high in sodium and avoid adding extra salt to food.

More information can be found at:

- www.dhss.mo.gov/Nutrition_Everyone/
- www.dhss.mo.gov/HeartDisease/
- www.dhss.mo.gov/Stroke/



Tips for healthy eating

- Start the day with a good breakfast.
- Include fruits and vegetables in all meals and snacks.
- Use leaner cuts of meat. Trim away all visible fat from meat and remove the skin from chicken before cooking it. Serve more fish.
- Eat fewer fried foods. Broil, pan-broil or bake meat instead of frying.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk and other dairy products.
- Season food with herbs and spices to reduce the amount of salt you use.
- When eating out at a restaurant, avoid fried foods, sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol. Order a salad instead of French fries. Try water with a lemon wedge instead of soda.
- Avoid overeating. Stop eating when you are comfortable – not full.

Data Source: 1. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program
www.dhss.mo.gov/HeartDisease/ and www.dhss.mo.gov/Stroke/

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