

Nutrition for Heart Health



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Winter Edition
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Taking care of your heart this winter

As the weather gets colder, staying healthy is important. Cold, harsh weather not only takes a toll on your immune system, but also on your heart.

The cold winter weather makes it easier to get sick than at other times of the year. Cold and flu viruses linger, and most people experience a change to their lifestyle as they spend more time indoors.

During the colder months, the temptation to consume more comfort foods can increase. However, to ward off winter illness and keep in shape, it is important to keep making healthy food and lifestyle choices. By choosing satisfying and nutrient-dense food, you can stay warm, well-nourished and protected all winter long!



Comfort food does not need to mean unhealthy food.

In this edition, we focus on easy ways to help you stay healthy and happy during the winter. From buying seasonal vegetables and whole foods, to preparing, hearty, healthy meals and keeping your immune system strong, while enjoying tasty nutritious and heart healthy meals. As well as trying something new during the longer colder days!

Eating the right foods during colder months



This winter let's focus on:



Embracing healthy comfort food

Not only are hot and hearty meals comforting and keep us warm, but it is also a way to help keep our **immune systems strong** against winter illnesses. It is important to eat healthy during all seasons, but during colder months it becomes even more important to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, as these provide nutrients, such as beta-carotene, vitamin C and vitamin E that can help maintain healthy **immune function**, as well as lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. Because many **vegetables**, fruits and other plant-based foods are also rich in antioxidants, they help reduce oxidative stress.

**Eat fruits & vegetables
in season!**



There are lots of different colourful **vegetables** in season in winter that are easy to cook, such as artichokes, brussel sprouts, broccoli, beetroot, bok choy, cabbage, bell peppers, carrots, cauliflower, kale, leeks, parsnips, pumpkin, potato, turnip.

Soups and stews are excellent ways to incorporate all these lovely winter vegetables into heart-healthy meals. Use our **soup recipes** to inspire you to use different vegetables, legumes and pulses.



The idea of **eating salads** during winters may seem a bit unusual. Indulging in a bowl of fruit and vegetable salad can give your body the right boost of nutrition to sustain the winter chills!



**Winter citrus salad
with avocado**

Find the recipe for this perfect winter salad in the recipe section.

2

Eating the right balance of fat



Eating healthy fats provides your body with the energy and essential fatty acids it needs to optimise its immune function. Foods that are rich in essential fatty acids such as Omega-3 DHA & EPA help to promote eye, brain and heart health ♡ Not only are healthy fats essential for the function of the immune system, but they are also needed to absorb fat soluble vitamins A, D, E & K – to maintain a healthy immune system.

HOW TO

1. Include a handful of nuts (30g) every day.

- You can add them to salads, yoghurt, cereal, salads, and stir-fries. Choose unsalted, dry roasted or raw varieties. Nuts are a good source of monounsaturated fats, and omega-3 and omega-6 polyunsaturated fats.

2. Eat more fish

- Include fish or seafood in your family meals 2-3 times a week for a dose of omega-3.

3. Use healthier oils

- Some oils are more suited to cooking and others help add flavour to foods:
- For salad dressings and low-moderate temperature cooking (e.g. stir frying or warming food in a pan) choose olive, extra virgin olive, peanut, canola, sunflower, safflower, avocado or sesame oil.
- For high-temperature cooking, especially frying, choose extra virgin olive oil, high oleic canola oil, or high oleic peanut oil. These types of oils are more stable at high temperatures.
- Make sure to store oils away from direct sunlight and don't re-use oils that have already been heated.

4. Use healthier fat spreads

- Up to 50 per cent of the fat content in butter is saturated fat and 4 per cent is trans fat. Swap to nut butters, avocado, tahini or margarine made from olive, canola, sunflower oils.

5. Limit junk food and unhealthy takeaways

- Foods like biscuits, cakes, pastries, pizza, deep-fried and takeaway add the most saturated and trans fat to our diets.

6. Remove any visible fat

- Cut off any fat and skin from meat and poultry. This helps limit saturated and trans fat.

7. Avoid processed meat

- Swap processed meat such as salami and bacon with healthy protein sources, such as chickpeas, roasted or grilled meats, eggs, or canned tuna or salmon.

8. Eat more legumes (such as like beans, lentils and chickpeas)

- Try to include legumes in at least two meals a week. Eating these in place of meat and poultry helps to limit saturated and trans fat.

9. Read food labels

- Check the ingredient list on food products for 'hydrogenated oils' or 'partially hydrogenated vegetable oils'. You should avoid these foods as they contain unhealthy trans fats.

10. Prepare from scratch - use heart-healthy recipes

- Create your favourite dishes using healthy-fat ingredients, such as nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and their oils.



3

Include more functional foods or superfoods into your diet this winter

Functional foods are foods that go beyond providing basic nutrition because of what they contain.

For example, oatmeal is considered a functional food because its soluble fiber can help to lower cholesterol—a benefit that goes beyond the sheer nutritional value of this food. Fresh vegetables, **microgreens** and herbs—these are all delicious functional foods. Healthy eating can, indeed, be a treat for the palate and on the plate.

Try something new!



Microgreens

Are steadily gaining in popularity, are a dense source of many nutrients such as minerals (potassium, iron, magnesium, zinc), vitamins and antioxidants which have the potential to prevent many diseases and deficiencies when consumed in small quantities.

These aromatic greens, also known as micro herbs or vegetable confetti, are rich in flavour and add a welcome splash of colour to a variety of dishes.



Grow your own!



Microgreens are easy and convenient to grow, as they don't require much equipment or time. They can be grown year-round, both in-door or outdoors.

You will need: good-quality seeds, a good growing medium, such as a container filled with potting soil or homemade compost. Alternatively, you can use a single-use growing mat specifically designed for growing microgreens, proper lighting — either sunlight or ultraviolet lighting, ideally for 12–16 hours per day.

Instructions:

- Fill your container with soil, making sure you don't over-compress it, and water lightly.
- Sprinkle the seed of your choice on top of the soil as evenly as possible.
- Lightly mist your seeds with water and cover your container with a plastic lid.
- Check on your tray daily and mist water as needed to keep the seeds moist.
- A couple of days after the seeds have germinated, you may remove the plastic lid to expose them to light.
- Water once a day while your microgreens grow and gain colour.
- After 7–10 days, your microgreens should be ready to harvest.

