

Nutrition for Heart Health



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(English)

Eat Healthier this Spring



Spring is a time of blossoms, new growth and new beginnings and the perfect time to reflect on old habits and to adopt new heart-healthy routines.

As it starts getting warmer, you begin to think about that extra weight you might have gained during the winter, not having eating as healthy maybe and not moving enough.

Meanwhile you start seeing young, green leaves and shoots around you, a new crop of fruits and veggies start showing up at farmers markets and green grocer's, motivating you to go back to those healthy-eating resolutions you may have made earlier in the year (and might have abandoned by now). To help you improve your diet in an effortless way, this edition shares easy enjoyable tips for eating better right now.



Spring into healthier eating habits with seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Say goodbye to winter warming meals, such as soups and stews and say hello to crisp, cool, colourful meals, such as salads and light, veggie-centric meals. There is no better time of the year to refresh eating habits, and to feel healthy and happy for the new season!

5 Tips to spring clean your eating habits



1

Organize your kitchen

Create a healthy eating environment - clear out unhealthy foods & snacks (refined, high sugar, high salt, high fat), create a comfortable space to sit down and eat, place a bowl of fresh fruit on the table.

Be strategic about the use of ingredients - prioritize fresh products – organize key spaces in your kitchen like your fridge and pantry to keep nutritious foods arranged at the front where you can see them. Use fresh ingredients and those that have a shorter shelf life first. Prioritize the use of fresh whole foods, especially fruits, vegetables and reduced-fat dairy products over non-perishables or processed food products. To avoid food waste, you may consider freezing any leftovers for another meal.

Keep healthy foods like cut veggies, fresh fruit, low-fat cheese, hard-boiled eggs, left-over grilled and sliced chicken breast, chickpea spread, pickled beetroot etc. in clear glass containers for an easy reminder for on-the-to meals and healthy snacking!



2

Eat more whole foods



Grains are made up of three parts: the bran (nutritious outer layer), the germ (the seed's nutrient-rich embryo) and the endosperm (the germ's food supply, which is high in starchy carbs). **Whole grains** have all three parts intact and are typically high in magnesium, iron, phosphorous, manganese, selenium, B-vitamins and dietary fiber.

One of the easiest and best ways to spring clean your diet is to eat more whole, unprocessed, and minimally processed foods. These include seasonal fresh fruits and **vegetables**, lean proteins and **whole grains**, which are loaded with nutrients and lower in sugar, salt and fats than processed foods.



Why not try out different **whole grains** this spring – Enjoy breakfasts that include whole-grain cereals, such as whole-wheat bran flakes (some bran flakes may just have the bran, not the whole grain), shredded wheat or oatmeal. Replace white rice with quinoa, brown rice, wild rice, barley or bulgur.



3

Seek out Spring Veggies

When it comes to vegetables, the more you eat the better. Be sure to eat a variety of vegetables, as different varieties and different colours supply different nutrients.

If spring has a flavour, it's fresh, colourful seasonal vegetables — try some that may not be in your normal rotation, and fill your plate with bright, taste-packed veggies!

Fun fact

Spring vegetables (September, October, November) include, **asparagus*, **artichokes*, baby marrow, **beetroot*, broad beans, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, **courgettes*, cucumber, garlic, green beans, leeks, mushrooms, mielies, parsley, parsnips, peas, rhubarb, *radishes*, spinach, Swiss chard, spring onion, turnips, waterblommetjies.

*Try out a few new recipes from the recipe section!

The word **zucchini** comes from the Italian zucchini, meaning a small squash or immature **marrow**. **Courgette**, on the other hand, is French term for **zucchini**. Zucchini is the fruits of the same plant harvested when they are 15 to 20 cm long. Marrows are the semi-mature fruits which have reached full size.



- **Artichokes** are filling because you eat them slowly, which helps you to be more mindful about what you are eating, savouring the experience, and they are rich in soluble satiating fiber (7 grams), and low in kilojoules (240 kJ/medium artichoke). Replace the butter dipping sauce with one made of plain low-fat yogurt and garlic or mint and chives or a vinaigrette made with olive oil.
- **Asparagus** contains many nutrients, in particular folate, and the antioxidant vitamin E, lutein, beta carotene and fiber.
- **Beetroot** is packed with flavour, aroma and nutrients, with an attractive jewel-like colour adding a splash to any meal, and it can be kept in the fridge for up to three months and preserved in many ways to be enjoyed later.
- **Fresh peas** are sweet, plump and taste like spring, and are rich in iron and the antioxidant beta carotene and lutein.
- **Radishes** are a member of the cruciferous family of vegetables (broccoli, kale etc.) and rich in glucosinolates, compounds that may help protect against certain cancers, as well as minerals such as calcium and potassium, which may help lower high blood pressure and reduce your risks for heart disease.

TIP

A savoury breakfast gives you an opportunity to include a serving of vegetables, which helps you to meet the South African Food Based Dietary Guidelines (SAFBDG) recommendation of 2-3 portions per day, try these easy, healthy and tasty options,

- Whole-wheat toast topped with tomato and cucumber; mashed avocado drizzled with olive oil.
- A veggie omelette.
- Add spinach or peppers to your cheese or egg sandwich.
- Add beetroot or dark leafy greens to a smoothie.
- Quinoa with roasted butternut squash.

4

Make one healthy change a day

Enjoy a variety of seasonal fruit daily (at least 2-3 medium fruits/1-2 cups)!

Even small daily changes can significantly improve your health,

- ✓ Have an extra serving of fruit or vegetables, keep a bowl of fruit on your counter or desk so that it is the first thing you reach for when you want a snack.
- ✓ Choose nuts for a snack or make your own oven-baked vegetables chips (see more in the recipe section).
- ✓ Swap soda for water or sparkling water.
- ✓ Swap white rice or pasta for a whole grain, such a brown or wild rice, bulgar or buckwheat.
- ✓ Use olive oil instead of butter.
- ✓ Cutting down on added sugar from food like pastries and sugary drinks can give you more energy during the day.
- ✓ If you are tempted to grab a cookie or a chocolate, tell yourself you can have it in 5 minutes, then distract yourself by doing something else. Often the craving will go away on its own.

Seasonal fruits (September, October, November): avocados, apricots, guava, kiwi, lemons, limes, melons, peaches, nectarines, plums, spanspek, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelon.



Satisfy your craving for something sweet with a crisp, sweet, juicy apple or perfectly ripe strawberries or watermelon.



5

Practice mindful eating

Come to the table with an appetite—but not when ravenously hungry. If you skip meals, you may be so eager to get anything in your stomach that your first priority is filling the void instead of enjoying your food.

Start with a small portion. It may be helpful to limit the size of your plate to 23 cm or less.

Appreciate your food. Pause for a minute or two before you begin eating to contemplate everything and everyone it took to bring the meal to your table. Silently express your gratitude for the opportunity to enjoy delicious food and the companions you're enjoying it with.

Bring all your senses to the meal. When you're cooking, serving, and eating your food, be attentive to colour, texture, aroma, and even the sounds different foods make as you prepare them. As you chew your food, try identifying all the ingredients, especially seasonings.

Take small bites. It's easier to taste food completely when your mouth isn't full. Put down your utensil between bites.

Chew thoroughly. Chew well until you can taste the essence of the food. (You may have to chew each mouthful 20 to 40 times, depending on the food.) You may be surprised at all the flavours that are released.

Eat slowly. If you follow the advice above, you won't bolt your food down. Devote at least five minutes to mindful eating before you chat with your tablemates.



Heart-healthy Seasonal Recipes



Easy, healthy, and refreshing Spring recipes to welcome the warmer weather with bright flavours and seasonal ingredients.

(English)



Roasted Artichokes

Easy to make and bursting with lemony, herby, (Servings: 6) garlicky flavours.

Method:

1. Heat oven to 200°C.
2. Use a knife to slice off the bottom 1½ cm (or more if you'd like) of the artichoke stems, and the top 2 cm of the artichoke globes (the leaves on top). Remove and discard any small leaves toward the bottoms of the stems. Rinse the artichokes with water.
3. Slice the artichokes in half vertically. Use a spoon to scoop out the fuzzy “choke” in the middle of the artichoke. Then use kitchen shears to trim about ½ cm of the pointy tips of each of the artichoke leaves (so that they don’t poke you when you eat them). Rub a lemon wedge all over the entire surface of each artichoke half, to prevent browning.
4. Place the artichoke halves in a baking dish or on a baking sheet cut-side-up. Brush the cut sides of the artichokes evenly with the olive oil. Then fill the cavities evenly with the garlic, followed by a few small sprigs of the fresh herbs. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Flip the artichokes over, using the herbs to help hold in the garlic, so that they are cut-side-down. Brush the tops of the artichokes with oil, and season with salt and pepper.
6. Bake uncovered for 15 minutes. Then remove and cover the pan with aluminum foil, and bake for an additional 25-35 minutes, or until the artichokes are tender and the leaves pull off easily.
7. Place the tray on a cooling rack. Carefully remove, discard the herbs (or stir them into your dipping sauce for extra flavour), and drizzle the artichokes with extra lemon juice.
8. Serve the roasted artichokes warm with olive oil & balsamic vinegar or low-fat mayonnaise or pesto.

Ingredients:

- 3 fresh artichokes
- 2 large fresh lemons, juiced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled and roughly chopped
- fresh rosemary (plus additional fresh thyme, oregano, or sage if you'd like)
- coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper



Nutritional information (per serving):

Energy: 480 kJ, Protein: 1g,

Total fat: 7g,

Carbs: 4g, Fiber: 2g, Sodium: 648 mg

Asparagus and chive frittata

This delicious frittata is perfect for a light spring lunch enjoyed outside, with a fresh crispy green garden salad. If you don't like asparagus, you can substitute with zucchini or broccoli.

Serves: 6



Ingredients:

- 150 g baby asparagus
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 4 egg whites
- 15 g fresh garlic chives, finely chopped
- ½ cup low-fat cheese, grated
- Fresh herbs for garnish such as chopped cilantro
- Salt & pepper to taste

Nutritional information:

(Per serving)

Energy: 420 kJ

Protein: 9 g

Saturated fat: 1 g

Carbs: 3 g

Fibre: 1 g

Sodium: 119 mg

Potassium: 226 mg

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. On the stove top, heat the oil in a non-stick pan, add the asparagus and sauté until golden.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs and egg whites, season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the garlic chives to the mixture and pour over the asparagus.
4. Sprinkle grated cheese on top and season with salt and pepper.
5. Place the pan on a low heat and allow to cook until almost set.
6. Bake the frittata for 15 minutes or until center is set.
7. Slice and serve hot with a green salad.



Asparagus is a nutrient-dense vegetable and a good source of fiber, folate and vitamins A, C, E and K, as well as chromium. Along with avocado, kale and Brussels sprouts, asparagus is packed with antioxidants and a good diuretic, as it contains high levels of the amino acid asparagine, which serves as a natural diuretic.



Spicy Beetroot Salad with Yoghurt Dressing

The leaves and roots of beets are packed with nutrients and contain betalains, a powerful antioxidant that gives beets their vibrant colour and helps protect against heart disease and cancer. Beets have gained popularity over the years, especially served in salads.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup plain low-fat yoghurt
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds, coarsely ground
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup malt vinegar
- 750 g cooked beetroot, cooled and peeled
- 250 g baby spinach
- 1 large bunch fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped, divided
- 1 large bunch fresh cilantro leaves and stems, coarsely chopped, divided

Nutritional information

(per serving):

Energy: 878 kJ, Protein: 10 g

Total fat: 2 g, Carbs: 41 g

Method:

1. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, mix together the yoghurt, cumin and garlic. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate the dressing for an hour or so.
2. Put the vinegar in a medium bowl. Cut the beetroot into even-sized wedges, transferring the wedges to the bowl with the vinegar as they are cut. Toss and let sit for 10 minutes. Drain the beets, discarding the vinegar.
3. Mix together the beetroot wedges, the spinach and most of the chopped mint and coriander in a large serving bowl (reserve some of the chopped herbs as a garnish).
4. Before serving, drizzle the dressing over the salad, then as you are ready to serve finish by sprinkling with the remaining chopped herbs.

♥ Serve on its own with crusty bread or as a side dish with meat or fish or as part of a spread of other salads.



Creamy Curried Spinach

Serves 4 – serving size: about ½ cup

Curry powder adds warmth and earthiness to this quick and easy version of creamed spinach. Yoghurt gives this a healthy twist with a luscious mouth feel and plenty of body.



Ingredients:

- 1 ½ tablespoons vegetable oil
- ¼ teaspoon crushed chilli
- 3 thinly sliced garlic cloves
- ½ cup diced onion
- ¾ teaspoon curry powder
- 500 g fresh spinach, washed and chopped
- ½ cup plain Greek-style yoghurt or Maas
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste

Nutritional information

(per serving):

Energy: 450 kJ, Total fat: 7 g,
Protein: 6 g, Carbs: 10 g, Fiber:
4 g, Sodium: 221 mg

Method:

1. Cook vegetable oil, chilli, and garlic in a large pan over medium-high until garlic begins to sizzle, about 2 minutes.
2. Add chopped spinach to the pan in batches, stirring until wilted before adding more.
3. Stir in the yoghurt or maas and salt & pepper.



Healthier snacking ideas to make at home – and a fun way to eat more vegetables!

Crunchy kale chips

These chips are easy to make, light, crunchy – eaten on their own, topping a tomato onion or avocado open- sandwich, or even more delicious topped with a dollop of chickpea spread!

Ingredients:

- Kale
- Olive oil, for drizzling
- Sea salt

Nutritional information (per serving): Energy: 336 kJ, Protein: 2g, Total fat: 10 g, Carbs: 7 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sodium: 380 mg

Kale is a nutrition superstar – high in vitamins A, K, B6 and C, as well calcium, potassium, copper and manganese.



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 160°C.
2. Wash and dry the kale.
3. Cut the kale into smaller bite size pieces or choose to use big leaves.
4. Spread kale over two baking trays, making sure not to overlap the leaves as they won't dry out properly otherwise.
5. Sprinkle lightly with olive oil and season with salt.
6. Put into the oven and cook for 15-20 minutes or until completely dried out and crisp (watch that they don't burn).
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly before eating.



Baked Beetroot & Sweet potato chips

Serve these with a healthy dip made with low-fat plain yoghurt, a squeeze of lemon/lime juice, fresh mint or cilantro, chopped, salt & pepper to taste.

Ingredients:

- 2 beetroots, trimmed
- 2 sweet potatoes, large, ends trimmed
- Olive oil, for drizzling
- 1 teaspoon cumin, ground
- Sea salt to taste

Nutritional information (per serving): Energy: 567 kJ, Total fat: 9 g, Carbs: 14 g, Potassium: 309 mg, Sodium: 134 mg

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 120°C.
2. Finely slice the beetroot and sweet potatoes.
3. Toss with olive oil.
4. Spread over lined baking trays.
5. Mix the salt and cumin together.
6. Sprinkle the cumin salt over the slices to taste.
7. Bake for about 40 minutes or until crispy.
8. Makes about 4-6 cups.

Strawberry Yoghurt Parfaits

This for me, is the perfect spring dessert! Fresh strawberries symbolise the arrival of spring and long warm summer days to come. Strawberries belong to the rose family and have a distinct aroma and taste, and are packed with vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C and K, folate and potassium, manganese and magnesium. They are low-kilojoule, fiber-rich and high in antioxidants and polyphenols and might help lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.



Ingredients:

- 600 g strawberries, plus 3 halved strawberries for garnish
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar or sweetener equal to taste
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest, divided
- ½ cup non-dairy cream
- 3 tablespoons powdered sugar or sweetener equal to taste
- 1 ½ cups plain low-fat Greek-style yoghurt

Nutritional information (per serving):

Energy: 907 kJ, Protein: 5.2 g, Total fat: 6 g, Carbs: 23 g Fiber: 4 g, Sodium: 30 mg (low salt)

Method:

1. Slice the tops off the 600 g strawberries and cut lengthwise into wedges. Toss with brown sugar or sweetener and ½ teaspoon of lemon zest in a medium bowl. Let it sit at room temperature until juicy, about 20 minutes, or chill for 2 hours.
2. Meanwhile, whisk the cream and powdered sugar or sweetener in a bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold in the remaining ½ teaspoon of zest and the yoghurt. Cover and chill until used, up to 2 hours.
3. Divide half of the strawberry mixture among 6 parfait glasses or dessert bowls. Top with half of the cream mixture, dividing equally. Repeat layering and garnish with strawberry halves.

This Spring eat a variety of fresh vegetables and fruit every day - at least 3 portions of fresh vegetables and another 2 portions of fresh fruit.

(One serving/portion of vegetables or fruit = approximately 1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked, or 80 g fresh or 30 g dried)

