



## Heart-Healthy & Vibrant Living for the Whole Family

A healthy, vibrant life begins with a strong heart and healthy circulation, which helps you maintain a fit body and mind. Nutritious foods and daily activity can go a long way to supporting healthy hearts and blood flow.<sup>1</sup>

It's never too early to help your children develop heart-healthy lifestyle habits. In fact, the American Heart Association (AHA) recognizes that following a heart-healthy lifestyle at a young age can help keep your child's heart strong and healthy well into the future.<sup>2</sup>

### **Tantalize Your Taste Buds with Heart-Healthy Meals**

Putting a healthy meal on the table doesn't have to be a challenging task. Follow a simple recipe to serve up heart-healthy meals that your family will enjoy—and that you can feel good about.

#### **A heart-healthy meal:**

***...can be inspired by the Mediterranean.*** Research suggests that certain styles of eating help keep the heart strong and may promote healthy, vibrant living.<sup>3-5</sup> One way to do this is to follow a Mediterranean style of eating.<sup>6,7</sup> There is no one food or ingredient in this eating pattern that holds the key to good health—instead, it's a combination of simple, wholesome, nutrient-rich foods, flavored with herbs and spices.

***...features a rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables.*** Diets rich in colorful fruits and vegetables provide the broadest range of vitamins, minerals, and plant nutrients. And don't forget about purple/blue fruits and veggies, such as Concord grapes, plums, blackberries, blueberries, and eggplant. Purple/blue fruits and vegetables contain a variety of beneficial nutrients and most of us fall short on getting enough of this color.<sup>8</sup>

***...is rich in nutrients.*** Vitamins C, E, and A (as beta-carotene), and the mineral selenium, as well as certain plant nutrients (such as polyphenols), act as antioxidants and can help support overall health. Foods containing these vitamins, minerals, and plant nutrients include dark-colored fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and nuts.

***...is low in saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, and sodium.*** Choose lean meats, select low-fat dairy products, substitute healthy oils for butter or margarine in cooking, and go easy on salt.

***...limits added sugar.*** Check ingredients on nutrition labels. Foods with sugar listed as one of the first several ingredients may be high in added sugar—and they are often low in other nutrients.

***...tastes great!*** In fact, healthy eating can be simply delicious.

### **Fuel Healthy Hearts and Growing Bodies**

Parents can help power kids' growing bodies by offering plenty of nutrient-rich foods that give the most vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients for the fewest calories. Visit [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) to learn more about what to enjoy from each food group each day, to keep kids' hearts and bodies healthy. Following are some tips to get started—and all the recommended amounts listed are based on an average child's calorie needs.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Fruit Group: 1 ½ cups/day**

Fruit makes a great snack, side dish, or dessert—and can even be part of the main dish. Include a variety of colorful fruits and juices to get the most nutrients from fruit choices. Fresh, frozen, dried, canned, and 100% juice all count towards your daily fruit servings. Fruits are naturally sweet and don't need added sugar. 100% fruit juice contains no added sugar and makes a wise beverage choice. In fact, research suggests that thanks to the Concord grape, Welch's 100% Grape Juice helps support a healthy heart. To add to that, Welch's 100% Grape Juice is certified by the **American Heart Association (AHA)** to carry the AHA's heart-check mark, indicating that it meets AHA standards for a heart-healthy beverage. You can also sneak more fruit into your day by adding chopped fruit to cereal, yogurt, or salads, or by enjoying fruit and 100% fruit juice in a smoothie.

#### **Vegetable Group: 2 ½ cups/day**

Offer different colored veggies throughout the week to provide a variety of nutrients. Try to include dark green veggies like spinach and broccoli, orange veggies like carrots and sweet potatoes, red veggies like tomatoes and peppers, purple/blue veggies like eggplant, and legumes like kidney beans and garbanzo beans. It's easy to steam, grill, roast or bake vegetables. Add veggies to an omelet, eat raw veggies with hummus or salsa, add leafy greens and tomato to any sandwich, or add pureed veggies to soup, sauces or dressings. The goal is to fill half of each plate with fruits and vegetables to build a strong foundation for a healthy lifestyle.

#### **Grains Group: 6 ounces/day**

Look for whole-grain choices that provide more nutrients—including fiber, vitamins, minerals, and plant nutrients—in every serving. You should aim to serve your family at least three whole-grain foods each day. Nutrient-rich grains include whole-grain cereal, oatmeal, whole-wheat pasta, brown rice, whole-wheat bread, and whole-grain crackers.

#### **Dairy Group: 3 cups/day**

To maintain strong, healthy bones, kids and adults should aim to include foods from the milk group every day. Low-fat and fat-free milk and yogurt are packed with bone-building nutrients, like calcium. Adding reduced-fat and low-fat cheese is a tasty and nutritious way to get kids to eat more veggies (like broccoli) and whole grains (like whole-wheat pasta).

#### **Protein Food Group: 5 ounces/day**

Nutrient-rich choices include lean meats, skinless poultry, fish, eggs, beans, nuts, and seeds. Use lower-fat cooking methods, like grilling, broiling or roasting, to keep meat and poultry lean. Fish, nuts, and seeds offer both protein and heart-healthy fats. Kids need protein-rich foods to help support healthy growth and development—and protein helps curb hunger and keep kids going for longer.

### **Get Your Heart Pumping**

Being active helps keep your blood pumping and your heart and body healthy. And it can help give you energy to do the things you want and need to do. To prepare for a life of good health, children need to learn how to make physical activity part of their daily routine. The *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*<sup>10</sup> recommend that people of all ages spend time each day being physically active.

- **Children and teens:** Participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. On at least three days per week, include muscle-strengthening activities, such as push-ups or sit-ups, as part of the 60 minutes.
- **Adults:** Aim for at least 30 minutes each day of moderate-intensity activity each week. Include muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week.

Examples of moderate-intensity activities include walking briskly, dancing, raking leaves, gardening, and jumping rope—or any activity that involves moving the large muscles in your arms and legs.

*Please visit [welchs.com/health-and-nutrition](http://welchs.com/health-and-nutrition) for more heart-healthy recipes and tips.*

### **References:**

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<sup>2</sup> Williams CL, Hayman LL, Daniels SR, Robinson TN, Steinberger J, Paridon S and Bazzarre T. Cardiovascular health in childhood: a statement for health professionals from the Committee on Atherosclerosis, Hypertension, and Obesity in the Young (AHOY) of the Council on Cardiovascular Disease in the Young, American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2002. 106(1):143-160.

<sup>3</sup> USDA and HHS. Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAs2010-DGACReport.htm>. Last Updated: July 13, 2010 (Accessed: Sept. 9, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Your guide to lowering blood pressure with DASH. [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new\\_dash.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf). Last Updated: July 13, 2010. (Accessed: Sept. 9, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Sofi F, Cesari F, Abbate R, Gensini GF, Casini A. Adherence to Mediterranean diet and health status: meta-analysis. *BMJ*. 2008. 337:a1344.

<sup>6</sup> Trichopoulou A, Bamia C, Trichopoulos D. Anatomy of health effects of Mediterranean diet: Greek EPIC prospective cohort study. *BMJ* 2009. 338:b2337.

<sup>7</sup> Estruch R, Martínez-González MA, Corella D, Salas-Salvadó J, Ruiz-Gutiérrez V, Covas MI, Fiol M, Gómez-Gracia E, López-Sabater MC, Vinyoles E, Arós F, Conde M, Lahoz C, Lapetra J, Sáez G, Ros E; PREDIMED Study Investigators. Effects of a Mediterranean-style diet on cardiovascular risk factors: a randomized trial. *Ann Intern Med*. 2006. 145(1):1-11.

<sup>8</sup> Produce For Better Health Foundation. State of the Plate Study on America's Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables. Wilmington, Delaware. 2003.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. ChooseMyPlate.gov Website. Washington, DC. Food Groups. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>. Last Updated: May 31, 2011. (Accessed: June 9, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2008. <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>. Last Updated: Nov. 4, 2009 (Accessed: Sept. 9, 2010).