



## **HEART SMART EATING**

The winter months and holidays can really test your willpower. Thanksgiving, Christmas, & Valentine's Day are festive times loaded with unhealthy foods, sweet desserts, and big portions!

**Did you know that.....**your body makes triglycerides from the fat you eat? Increased triglycerides are made when excess calories are eaten, alcohol is consumed, and when you smoke. High triglyceride levels increases your risk of heart disease.

To keep your heart healthy, consume a diet low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and low-fat dairy products. Limit sweets like candy bars, soda, juice, etc.

Valentine candies can be hard to resist. Try to eat them in moderation. When eating a healthy nutritious diet, you can reward yourself with one or two pieces of candy per week. Dark chocolate has even been shown to lower high blood pressure in some studies. But don't over-do it! High sugar diets with calorie-dense foods can lead to heart disease.

Luckily, there are many ways you can prevent heart disease. These include staying at a healthy weight, regular exercise, moderating sweet foods, avoiding cigarette smoking, and limiting alcohol consumption. For anyone with a history of heart disease in their family, it's important to get regular checkups.



### **Healthy Snacks**

1. fresh fruit
2. low fat cheese
3. yogurt
4. cut up vegetables
5. nuts
6. dried fruit

### **Here are 5 Tips to Avoid a Sugar Snack Attack**

If you're in the mood for sweets or a bag of chips, try these tips:

1. If you are on the go, always bring a healthy snack with you. You'll be less tempted to make poor nutrition choices while away from home.
2. Avoid concentrated sweets and processed foods as they can cause an energy drop after eaten.
3. Don't skip breakfast! You'll be more likely to over-eat later.
4. Exercise. 30 to 60 minutes on most days of the week keeps your heart healthy and prevents weight gain.
5. Read the food labels. Avoid foods high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and trans fat.



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