

Heart Healthy Cooking

Cooking For Your Heart

Heart healthy eating is more than just choosing good foods. The method of food preparation is also important. Some cooking methods are better than others for reducing fat, cholesterol, and calories while enhancing the nutritional value of food.

Avoid cooking methods that add unhealthy fats (saturated and trans fats) like deep-fat frying and pan frying with generous amounts of oil or fat.

Some Heart Healthy Cooking Methods include:

Baking, Broiling or Roasting: Baking or broiling is when food is cooked slowly using dry heat or a little water. Herbs can be added for seasoning. Roasting is baking food uncovered at a high temperature to give a crisp surface followed by a lower temperature to cook the inside. Try baking vegetables and meats.

Grilling or Barbecue: Done indoor or outdoor on a grill for meats or vegetables. Try to use a hot grill to prevent food from sticking.

No-Cook: Heart healthy eating may not require any cooking at all but instead simply combining a variety of ingredients to prepare salads, power bowls, wraps, cold soups, sandwiches, and more.

Poaching: Food is immersed in simmering liquid (water, stock with herbs, and seasonings) over direct heat. Perfect for cooking fish, eggs, or fruits.



Figure 1: Several cooking methods

Pressure cooking: It uses steam that is sealed in an airtight pressure cooker. This cooks food quickly and preserves the nutritive value too. An endless variety of dishes can be prepared this way including rice, stews, soups, stocks, lentils, and bean dishes.

Sauté / Stir-fry: Is when food is cooked quickly in a small amount of oil or liquid/stock over direct heat. Try stir-frying meats and vegetables with a variety of seasonings.

Slow cooking: Ideal for those who are busy or short on time. Assemble ingredients in the slow cooker or Dutch oven and leave it to cook while you are doing other things. Instant pots can be used to prepare meals with less fat and in less time. An Instant Pot is a pressure cooker, slow-cooker, rice cooker, and yogurt maker all in one package.

Steaming: Helps keep foods' shape, texture, and nutritional value intact. Steaming can be done in a steamer or microwave. Try adding herbs and spices to the water to enhance the flavour.

Stew / Casserole Cook: A heart Healthy method of cooking meats at a low temperature, generally for a longer period. Trim the fat off the meat before putting it in a casserole dish with some vegetables and legumes.

For more information on heart-healthy cooking visit: <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eating-at-home>

Food Preparation Tips:

- Try to cook with less salt. Flavour dishes with herbs, spices, salt-free seasoning blends, flavoured vinegars, peppers, garlic, and/or citrus juice/zest.
- Drain and rinse canned meat/seafood, vegetables, and beans to remove excess salt or oil.
- When cooking foods on a griddle or in a frying pan, brush the pan with cooking oil lightly or use a non-stick spray of vegetable oil.
- Choose healthy cookware that is nontoxic like stainless steel, iron-clad, ceramic, ceramic-coated, titanium, glass, and carbon steel.
- Trim all visible fat from meat before cooking. Consider boiling.
- Use skinless poultry or remove the skin before cooking.
- Cook vegetables just long enough to make them tender-crisp. Overcooked vegetables lose flavour, colour, and important nutrients.



Figure 2: A Healthy Heart Beats Longer!



For more information and TIPS on Healthy cooking methods including Recipes, visit: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-cooking-methods/>

References:

www.heart.org/foodwhereurhttps://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-cooking-methods/

