

heart health: flavor, fitness & fins

Educating yourself and caring for your heart is one of the most important things you can do for your body. Here are three tips and tidbits from our registered dietitians for improving heart health – Flavor, Fitness, and Fins, for short.



FLAVOR

Salt is the most well-known ingredient in the entire world because of its health benefits (in the right amount) and flavor boosting abilities. However, consuming excessive amounts over time has been associated with increased blood pressure. The current recommendation from the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans is <2300mg (approximately 1 teaspoon) of salt per day. Given such a small amount, how do we get more flavor without increasing salt intake?

Try...

Spices, Herbs, Acid and Heat! One of the best ways to decrease your salt intake is to increase the other seasonings in your food. It's all about satisfying your palate, so try adding some cayenne pepper for heat or lemon juice for acidity.

FITNESS

When the words exercise or fitness come to mind, we assume intense exercise. However, a daily brisk walk can be enough to decrease your risk for high blood pressure and heart disease.

Try...

Scheduling 30 minutes a day for a walk. It can be broken into three 10-minute sessions, two 15-minute sessions or whatever works for your schedule.



FINS

Omega-3 fatty acids are the most beneficial type of fat for heart health, and most Americans don't get enough. Luckily, fish is a great source of omega-3s. Consuming two servings of fish per week has been shown to decrease heart disease risk.

Try...

A standard serving is 3.5 ounces of fish, which is roughly the size of a deck of cards. Salmon, mackerel, trout, tuna and sardines are a few great choices. Simply seasoning with salt, pepper and lemon always does the trick!

RECIPE

FOIL-BAKED LEMON SALMON

INGREDIENTS

2 4-ounce salmon fillets (or trout, if preferred)
1 tsp, olive oil or butter
1 tomato, diced

salt and pepper to taste
1 lemon

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400° F
2. Select 4 sheets of foil large enough to wrap each fillet
3. Season both sides of fish with oil, salt and pepper
4. Place each fillet atop a sheet of foil, wrapping the ends of the foil to form a spiral shape
5. Squeeze lemon juice on each fillet, then top with the diced tomatoes
6. Fold the sides of the foil over the fish and tomatoes, covering completely and sealing the packets closed
7. Place packets on a large, heavy baking sheet and bake just until the fish is cooked through, about 25 minutes
9. Using a large metal spatula, transfer the foil packets to plates and serve with lemon wedges

meet the dietitian

Originally from Falls Church, VA, **Brian Tran, MS, RDN** is the Health & Wellness Manager at Georgetown University. He has served in a health and wellness role at several universities, including James Madison University, Cal Poly and Portland State University. His areas of expertise are culinary arts, food allergies and personal fitness.

