



| PITTSBURGH

# Prepare Heart-Healthy Foods for Your Family



February is Heart Health Month at the Y. Enjoy these life saving tips provided by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and connect with our Healthy Living staff to learn more about how to keep your heart in check.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in America. Fortunately, many risk factors are things we have control over — such as our food and lifestyle choices. Making nutritious food choices and working in physical activity throughout the day are two excellent ways to help keep your family's heart beating strong.

## Heart Healthy Foods

Fiber is great for heart health because it can bind with bad cholesterol and remove it from the body. Foods high in dietary fiber include whole grains, vegetables and fruit. To increase your fiber intake from foods, include more plant-based sources of protein such as beans and peas, choose whole-grains whenever possible and make half your plate fruits and vegetables at each meal.

Low to moderate amounts of fat, specifically unsaturated fat, can also give heart health a boost. The unsaturated fats from foods such as nuts, olives, avocados and fatty fish can help increase good cholesterol levels. On the other hand, foods high in saturated fat should be limited, such as high-fat cuts of meat, butter and full-fat dairy products. Trans fat, also known as partially-hydrogenated oil, should be avoided.

**Next time you are at the grocery store, pick up some of these heart-healthy items:**

### Beans, peas and lentils

- Soybeans and tofu
- Fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen or canned without salt or added sugars)
- Salmon, tuna, sardines and mackerel
- Whole-grain breads, cereals and pasta, brown rice, barley
- Nuts such as almonds, walnuts, pecans and hazelnuts

### Move It

Another way to reduce your risk of heart disease is to be active.

- Encourage pre-school aged children to engage in three hours of varied active play each day.
- Children (6 years and older) and teens should get 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day, including aerobic activity as well as muscle and bone strengthening activities.
- Adults should get at least 2 and a half hours of physical activity a week, including muscle strengthening activities.

Being physically active helps to lower blood pressure, manage stress and control weight. Be physically active in your own way and start with what you can — any physical activity is better than none. Reach your goals together by encouraging your family to take a walk after dinner, go for a bike ride or play a game of basketball.

Reviewed by Sarah Klemm, RD, CD

Learn More At  
[pittsburghymca.org/movetothebeat](http://pittsburghymca.org/movetothebeat)