

Nutrition Guidance for Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH)

1 Choose foods with unsaturated fat and limit foods with saturated fat

Fat is an important nutrient, but some fats are better for heart health and cholesterol than others. Unhealthy fats, such as saturated and *trans* fats, can increase LDL cholesterol (LDL-C) levels. Choose unsaturated fats instead of saturated and *trans* fats to help lower LDL-C and improve heart health.^{1,2}

Fats to Choose

Monounsaturated fat

- Olive oil
- Avocados, avocado oil
- Canola oil
- Safflower oil



Polyunsaturated fat

- Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, striped bass, sardines)
- Walnuts
- Flax seeds
- Chia seeds



Fats to Limit

Saturated Fat

Limit to 5-6% daily calorie intake.³ <15g saturated fat daily for a 2,000-calorie diet.

Examples of saturated fats:

- **Meats:** beef, dark meat poultry, bacon, sausage, processed meats such as pepperoni, potted meats, some vegetarian meat alternatives
- **Full-fat dairy products:** butter, whole milk, whole milk yogurt, cheese, ice cream
- **Tropical oils:** coconut oil, palm oil
- **Processed foods:** frozen meals that contain full-fat dairy or high fat meats, beef jerky, meat sticks, ramen noodles, etc.



Trans Fat **AVOID!**

- Choose products with 0g *Trans* Fat.
- Watch out for “partially hydrogenated oil” listed on food labels.

Finding Fat in the Nutrition Facts Panel on Food Labels:

- Look for 0g *trans* fat, low saturated fat (1g or less per serving) and no **partially hydrogenated oils**.
 - Even if the label lists “0g” of *trans* fat, if “partially hydrogenated oil” is listed as an ingredient, the food contains some *trans* fat (less than 0.5 grams per serving).⁴

Total Fat 14g		18%	
→ Saturated Fat 2g	Nutrition Facts Amount/Serving %DV Serving Size 8 cookies (24g) Calories 130 Calories from Fat 60	Total Fat 14g	28%
→ Trans Fat 0g		Sat. Fat 2g	4%
→ Polyunsaturated Fat 1.5g		Trans Fat 0g	0%
→ Monounsaturated Fat 10g		Total Carb 30g	6%
		Sugars 13g	26%
		Dietary Fiber 1g	2%
		Protein 2g	4%
		Sodium 115mg	5%
		Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0% • Calcium 0% • Iron 4%	
		INGREDIENTS: Enriched flour, riboflavin, sugar, partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, cocoa, cornstarch, hydrogenated oils, soy	

Ways to Decrease Saturated Fat:

Breakfast Ideas:

- Choose 1 egg and 2 egg whites instead of 2 whole eggs.
- Choose uncured turkey bacon or uncured turkey sausage instead of pork bacon or pork sausage.
- Make a parfait with nonfat Greek yogurt, berries, and chia seeds.



Lunch Ideas:

- Pack your lunch instead of eating out.
- Use mashed avocado or an olive oil-based mayonnaise instead of regular mayonnaise for sandwiches or chicken salads.
- Make a salad with chickpeas or black beans instead of meat. Use a vinaigrette dressing instead of a creamy dressing.



Snack Ideas:

- Choose a snack mix of dried fruit and almonds or walnuts instead of a protein bar.
- Choose whole wheat crackers and hummus instead of chips.



Dinner Ideas:

- Choose a lean protein such as chicken breast or fatty fish.
- Try having a meatless meal 1 - 2 days per week. Use lentils, legumes, or nuts for protein.
- Use reduced fat (2%) cheese instead of regular and nonfat plain yogurt instead of sour cream.



2 Increase soluble fiber intake

Viscous (gel-forming) soluble fiber can help lower LDL cholesterol by trapping bile acids and cholesterol in your intestines so not as much is absorbed.

Ask your doctor or dietitian how much soluble fiber you should be eating per day and if a supplement would be helpful!

Foods high in soluble fiber:

- oats
- legumes
- chia seeds
- barley
- apples
- pears
- brussels sprouts
- sweet potatoes



3 Maintain a healthy lifestyle

Stay active, avoid tobacco and vaping, get enough sleep, and manage stress levels. Also, limit or avoid foods and beverages high in added sugars to control blood sugar levels and limit sodium intake to support healthy blood pressure.



Life's Essential 8:⁵

Defined by the American Heart Association, these are key measures for improving and maintaining cardio-vascular health. Better cardiovascular health helps lower the risk for heart disease, stroke and other major health problems.

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Patient Resources

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1. Williams, Lauren et al. (2022). *Nutrition interventions for youth with dyslipidemia: A National Lipid Association clinical perspective*. Journal of Clinical Lipidology, 16(6), P776-796. <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1016/j.jacl.2022.07.011>

2. U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*. 9th ed. (December 2020). Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).

3. American Heart Association (2023); accessed Sept. 21, 2023. www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/saturated-fats

4. American Heart Association (2023, August 3). *Understanding Food Nutrition Labels*. www.heart.org. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/understanding-food-nutrition-labels

5. American Heart Association (n.d.). *Life's Essential 8*. www.heart.org. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/lifes-essential-8