



## Heart-Healthy Heroes

A bounty of wholesome foods awaits your table, and eating a variety of them ensures that you're getting a spectrum of vitamins, minerals and fiber. This chart represents seven groups of foods that are colorful, flavorful and oh so heart healthy.

### Berries

All fruits are a healthy choice and berries especially so. They contain high amounts of antioxidants including anti-inflammatory polyphenols that can help repair or delay cell damage that can cause heart disease. Berries also provide fiber, a heart-healthy nutrient.

### Olive and Avocado Oils

High in monounsaturated fat (a "good" fat) and naturally sodium free, these oils help keep blood vessels strong and blood pressure at healthy levels. A little goes a long way – enjoy one to two tablespoons daily; use them in cooking, baking or salad dressings.

### Leafy Greens

Eating an assortment of vegetables is key to good health. Leafy greens like spinach, kale, chard, arugula, and collard greens, in particular, contain significant concentrations of vitamins and nutrients that help reduce chronic inflammation, an important factor in many diseases.

### Legumes / Pulses

Legumes – sometimes called pulses – include beans, lentils, and peas. They're low in fat, filled with fiber and a great source of plant-based protein. Lentils have significant levels of heart-protecting folate and magnesium, and beans contain phytosterols that may help reduce blood cholesterol levels.

### Nuts

Almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, and pistachios are just a few tasty and healthy nuts to savor. They provide protein, fiber, vitamins, and omega-3 fatty acids that can help prevent heart attacks. Some nuts contain plant sterols, a substance that can lower cholesterol. A small handful is all it takes to reap the nutritional rewards of these little gems.

### Seafood

Fish is a good source of protein and low in saturated fat. Most fish is also a good source of omega-3 fatty acids that can decrease triglyceride levels, slow the growth rate of atherosclerotic plaque and decrease the risk of an irregular heartbeat.

The American Heart Association recommends two servings a week of fish, particularly omega-3-rich fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout, sardines and albacore tuna.

### Whole Grains

Many whole grains, including oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa and barley, are a good source of protein, and a good or excellent source of fiber that can improve blood cholesterol levels and lower the risk of heart disease. They also contain a range of heart-loving vitamins and minerals including B vitamins and magnesium.

