Salt

• What is it?
  ◦ An essential mineral
  ◦ Most common form is table salt
  ◦ It is used to add flavor to food, and to cure meat and preserve canned foods
• Too much sodium on a daily basis over years can...
  ◦ Damage the kidneys, cause cardiovascular problems, lead to hypertension
• Foods high in salt:
  ◦ Cured meat (bacon, hot dogs), canned soups, packaged foods
• Many foods have hidden salt!
  ◦ Cheese, bread, canned vegetables
• Tips to reduce sodium intake:
  ◦ Always read nutrition labels for sodium content
  ◦ Aim for less than 140 mg per serving of that food
  ◦ Look out for products that say “Unsalted,” “No Salt Added,” “Reduced Sodium,” or “Lower Sodium.”
  ◦ Add flavors to your food other than salt:
    ▪ Basil, garlic or onion powder, paprika, parsley, thyme, sodium-free seasonings such as Mrs. Dash

Sugar

• What is it?
  ◦ Sugar naturally occurs in foods like fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose) OR
  ◦ Can be added to foods and beverages
• Too much sugar can...
  ◦ Cause dental caries, lead to diabetes complications and cause weight gain
• Foods high in added sugar:
  ◦ Desserts, packaged snacks, cereals, fruit juices, soda, and candy
• Sugar hidden or added to foods like:
  ◦ Yogurt, spaghetti sauces, granola
• Tips to reduce added sugar intake:
  ◦ Read nutrition labels for added sugars
  ◦ Try adding fruit slices to water instead of drinking soda or juice
  ◦ Look out! Sugar can have many names: cane sugar, high fructose corn syrup, malt syrup, maltodextrin and dextrose
  ◦ Look out! Products that say "sugar free" or "low sugar" often contain artificial sweeteners. Monitor their use

Cholesterol

• What is it?
  ◦ A waxy substance used to build cells in your body. Your liver makes all the cholesterol you need, the rest of the cholesterol in your body comes from dietary sources.
  ◦ Two types: LDL-Cholesterol and HDL-Cholesterol
    ▪ LDL cholesterol is less desirable for heart health
    ▪ HDL cholesterol is more desirable for heart health
• Too much cholesterol can...
  ◦ Build-up inside arteries, narrowing them, and making them less flexible and more difficult for good blood flow. This is called atherosclerosis.
  ◦ If a blood clot forms in a narrowed artery and breaks off, it can block blood flow in the heart muscle (heart attack) or to the brain (stroke)
• Tips for managing blood cholesterol levels:
  ◦ Limit saturated fat intake (meats, whole milk dairy, cheeses)
  ◦ Stay away from trans fats (packaged snacks, packaged cookies, etc)
  ◦ Choose heart healthy unsaturated fats:
    ○ Polyunsaturated (fish, walnuts, seeds)
    ○ Monounsaturated fat (olive oil, avocados)

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Desirable cholesterol levels:
  ◦ LDL < 100 mg/dl
  ◦ HDL > 40 mg/dl
  ◦ Total cholesterol < 200 mg/dl

*Your doctor will determine a plan for your cholesterol numbers.

Don’t forget the soluble fiber!

Soluble fibers absorb water and swell to form a thick, jelly-like mass which helps “bind” with cholesterol in the digestive track, helping you get rid of it!

Sources of soluble fiber:

Oatmeal! Asparagus, brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, apricots, mangoes, oranges, legumes

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Created by Haley Gersham, RDN, Rachel Hildrey, RDN and Tina Dugdale, MS, RDN,RN, CD-N.
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