



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A.,
Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative
Extension Service

SCFCL WEBSITE: <http://clemson.edu/fyd/fcl.htm>

Leader Training Guide

Foods to Lower Cholesterol and Blood Pressure: Cutting Out the "White Stuff"

Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to describe which foods to limit to help lower cholesterol and blood pressure.
2. Participants will be able to list foods that may help in lowering cholesterol and blood pressure.

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

According to the American Heart Association, more than one in three American adults have one or more types of heart disease, including heart attacks, stroke and/or heart failure. Those who are physically inactive, smoke, have high blood cholesterol and/or overweight are at risk for developing heart disease. When we think about these risk factors two of them are directly related to our diet (high cholesterol and overweight). These risk factors can be reduced with some basic changes to your eating style. Eating habits can be hard to break but making small changes to how you cook and what foods you eat each day can make a significant difference in your overall health and help to reduce your risk for heart disease.

When we think about heart disease and our diet, our main concerns are how to lower cholesterol and blood pressure by what we eat or should not eat. In this lesson we will take a look at what foods we should include in our diet and which foods we should limit to help lower cholesterol and blood pressure. When you think about this, what foods do you automatically think of that we should cut out? Our main focus is cutting out the "white stuff" like fats and salt. We know we can't cut all the "white stuff" out of our diet but there are several approaches we can take to limit these to improve our health and have a diet that tastes good too!

Lesson:

1. Food choices to help lower cholesterol

- a. Limit high fat meats, poultry with skin and/or dark meat and high fat fish
 - i. Choose more often:
 1. Lower fat cuts of meat. These are cuts of meat that contain the words "loin" or "round", such as sirloin, tenderloin, eye of round and top round.
 2. White meat of chicken or turkey without the skin. Poultry can be cooked with the skin on to retain moisture, but remove before eating.
 3. The American Heart Association recommends eating 2 servings per week of salmon, albacore tuna, sardines, mackerel, herring and lake

trout. These types of fish are high in omega-3 fats, which are heart healthy fats.

- ii. Limit whole eggs
 - 1. The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute recommends not eating more than 2 egg yolks per week, including those found in baked goods and other dishes.
 - 2. Substitute 2 eggs whites for 1 whole egg in egg dishes and other recipes. Cholesterol and fat is found in the egg yolk, so limit how much of the yolk you eat. Egg substitutes are also a good substitute for eggs, but can be expensive.
- iii. Limit high (or whole) fat dairy foods
 - 1. Choose nonfat (skim) or low fat (1%) milk, yogurt and sour cream.
 - 2. Choose reduced fat cheese or cheese made with low fat or part skim milk.
- iv. Limit high fat processed foods and sweets
 - 1. These foods often include: processed deli meats like salami, pepperoni and bologna, frozen entrees, frozen vegetables with sauce, snack foods including potato chips, crackers, buttered popcorn, etc., breaded and fried foods, and baked goods including cake, cookies, pie, etc.
- b. Read food labels to determine which foods should be limited due to their fat and cholesterol content.
 - i. Choose foods often that have 5% or less Daily Value for total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
 - ii. Foods that have 20% Daily Value for total fat, saturated fat and/or cholesterol should be limited as much as possible.
 - iii. Choose foods that have 0 trans fats.
- c. Eat more oatmeal and other high fiber foods such as whole grains, vegetables and fruits.
- d. Snack on walnuts, almonds and other types of nuts. The heart healthy fats found in nuts may help in lowering cholesterol. A serving size to receive the most heart health benefits is about 1 ½ ounces. Be careful not to exceed this serving size so you don't consume too much fat in your diet.
- e. Cook with olive and canola oils, which are great heart healthy fats.
- f. Plant sterols are known to help in reducing cholesterol. These are added to some margarines, fruit juices and yogurt. Read product labels to see if they contain plant sterols.

2. Food choices to help lower blood pressure

- a. Do not add salt to foods at the table.
- b. When preparing recipes omit added salt or reduce the amount of salt from the original recipe by ½ or more.
 - i. Use herbs, spices, onions or onion powder, garlic or garlic powder in recipes to add flavor without adding extra salt.
- c. Limit foods that tend to be high in salt/sodium. These foods include: canned soups and vegetables, processed deli meats, bacon, pickled vegetables, some condiments, frozen entrees and other prepared and prepackaged foods and mixes.

- d. Read food labels to determine which foods should be limited due to their sodium content.
 - i. Choose foods often that have 5% or less Daily Value for sodium.
 - ii. Limit choosing foods that have 20% or more Daily Value for sodium.
 - iii. Choose products that are labeled as: “no salt added”, “reduced sodium”, “very low sodium”, “low sodium” or “less sodium”.

Lesson Summary:

Following a healthy low fat and low salt diet is important to help control cholesterol and blood pressure. If you are beginning to watch what you eat, know that it can be difficult to make all of the necessary changes too quickly. If you try to change too many of your eating habits and patterns at one time, you are less likely to maintain these changes for a long period of time. Instead, choose a few goals that you would like to work on and stick to them for several weeks until you are comfortable with the changes that you made. Then add a few more new goals and continue this process until you have successfully reached all of your goals. Don't feel bad if you make a mistake every now and then, just pick up where you left off and continue to reach your goal. Following a healthy low fat and salt diet will help you to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and help to control your cholesterol and blood pressure.

Suggested Activities:

1. Show pictures or empty containers of foods to limit or increase in the diet to lower cholesterol and blood pressure (i.e. hot dog, steak, egg, whole milk, skim milk, oatmeal, fruits, vegetables, canned soup). Before talking about each item, ask participants if this item should be increased or decreased in the diet and why.
2. Pass out empty food containers or copies of food labels of comparable foods that are high/low in fat, high/low in cholesterol and high/low in sodium (i.e. whole milk and skim milk, whole eggs and egg substitute and canned tomatoes and canned tomatoes with “no added salt”). Ask participants to read how much fat, cholesterol or sodium is in both items and have the group decide which items is the best choice.
3. Ask participants what cooking tips they have to reduce fat, cholesterol and salt in cooking. If available, write each tip on a large flip chart for the group to see.

Suggested Materials (optional):

1. Handout 1: Clemson Extension HGIC Factsheet - “Cholesterol”
 - a. <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/food/pdf/hgic4051.pdf>
2. Handout 2: Clemson Extension HGIC Factsheet – “Halt Salt!”
 - a. <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/food/pdf/hgic4054.pdf>

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Sources/References:

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2. American Heart Association. *Make Healthy Food Choices*. <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=537>
3. National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. *Your Guide to Lowering Your Blood Pressure with DASH*. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf
4. National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. *Your Guide to Lowering Your Cholesterol with TLC*. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol_tlc.pdf