



# Sri Lanka Medical Nutrition Association

## NUTRITION UPDATE - JUNE 2015



### Prevention of Heart Attacks through healthy eating

Diet is one of the important risk factors associated with heart attacks. The safest way to prevent of getting heart attacks is to strive for healthy diet and active lifestyle. This includes the following components:

- Consuming the heart-safe diet which should be low in fat, low in cholesterol and low in salt and high in fiber.
  - Limit red meat (beef, pork, mutton) for once a week
  - Replace other days of the week with its leaner cousin, poultry, maximum of thrice a week
  - Fish is an excellent low-fat alternative to red meats. Tuna, Hurulla, Salaya are rich in heart-friendly omega-3 oils.
  - Shellfish have a reputation for being high in cholesterol. Although they are high in cholesterol, they are low in fat. Shrimp, crab, lobster, cuttle fish and prawns can be part of your weekly diet.
  - Sausages and Bacon also have high fat and tend to be full of salt, supplying about 25% of the daily sodium intake' so use them sparingly.
  - Butter is little more than milk fat. Like other high fat foods, should not be used on a daily basis. Margarine contains saturated fat and some trans fatty acids, both of which have the potential to increase blood cholesterol levels.

Consumers mistakenly assume that margarine is lower in kilo calories than butter. A gram of fat-whatever the source- supplies 9 kilo calories of energy.

- First, reduce the margarine or butter that you use each day
  - Second, further decrease the fat intake by using low fat varieties
  - Finally, use soft spread margarine, which contain less saturated fat and trans fatty acids.
- Consume no more than 4 egg yolks per week, including those in pudding and bakery items.
  - Coconut are high in fat. Use one coconut for 5 persons per day.
  - Restrict intake of processed foods. Most processed foods contain significant amounts of fat.
  - Remove as much excess fat as possible from meats before cooking.
  - Fry foods infrequently. Stir-fry food in tiny quantities of very hot oil.
  - Invest in non-stick cookware.
- Increased consumption of a wide range of vegetables and fruits to boost intake of Vitamin A (beta-carotene), E and C in the diet. These vitamins are heart protective.
    - Vitamin E contains in avocado, dark green vegetables, eggs, butter, margarine, cheese, nuts etc..
    - Vitamin C contains citrus fruit and juices, tomatoes, green leafy vegetables, bean sprouts, green peppers etc..
    - Beta-carotene contains in yellow and orange fruit. Green vegetables, carrots, pumpkins, spinach, tomatoes, whole milk and its product.
- Maintaining the healthy body weight
  - Avoiding tobacco (both smoking and chewing)
  - Participating in regular exercise programme or active life

Reducing stress throughout adulthood is also important to keep your healthy heart.

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