



FOOD STEPS

A GUIDE FOR MEN
WHO ARE THINKING
ABOUT CHANGING THE
WAY THEY EAT



FOOD STEPS: A Guide To Eating Better

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**What this
guide is
about.**



If you're thinking about eating better, this guide is for you. It doesn't matter if you have been thinking about doing this for weeks, months or even years. What matters is that right now, improving how you eat is on your mind.

This guide is the second in a series of four **FOOD STEPS** guides to help men change their eating habits. This guide will help you think about *why* you might want to make some changes. The third and fourth guides in the series will show you *how* to change and then how to *keep* your new eating habits for good.

In this guide, you'll find out more about:

- healthy eating
- how your eating habits affect your health
- why you eat the way you do
- the benefits and costs of eating better
- how small changes can make a big difference.

We know that improving your eating habits can be challenging. It's like climbing a mountain; from the bottom, it looks a long way up! But you know you can reach the top, if you do it one step at a time. This guide will help you decide if you're ready to change your eating habits one step at a time.

**Why should
I read this
guide?**



IMPORTANT

This guide should **NOT** be used by:

- women
- anyone under 19 years of age
- men who must follow a diet for medical reasons.

If you need a special diet, ask your doctor to refer you to a Registered Dietitian.

Does this sound familiar?

“Just give me the facts, and I’ll decide if I’m ready to change my eating habits.”

Yes, but ... you probably know some of the facts already. The facts are usually not enough to get someone to change how they eat -- especially if they’re feeling healthy.

Changing the way you eat is not an easy thing to do. Before you make any decision to change the way you eat, you need to *think it through*. Changing your eating habits is a bit like buying a new car. You need to ask yourself the same kinds of questions. The table on the next page gives you an example.



Buying a Car	Changing Eating Habits
1. What is the condition of my old car?	1. Is the way I eat now good for my health?
2. What are the benefits of a new car?	2. What are the benefits of eating better?
3. What model car should I choose?	3. What eating habits should I change?
4. How much am I willing to spend?	4. How much am I willing to change?
5. How much will a new car cost?	5. What will I have to give up to eat better?
6. Do the benefits outweigh the costs?	6. Do the benefits outweigh the costs?

Only after asking yourself these types of questions do you then decide to buy a new car. To change your eating habits, you need to go through a similar process. This guide can help you think about these questions. It will help you decide whether or not you are ready to change your eating habits.

How do I use this guide?



To change, or not to change?

Other men who have used this guide say that the best way to read it is like this:

1. Scan the guide quickly to get an idea of what it's about.
2. Read it slowly. Stop and do the *Activities* as you get to them. Take your time! There's no rush.
3. Be sure to do all of the *Activities*. They will help you make your decision.
4. Allow yourself plenty of time to think over what this guide has to say. Then, if you're ready to change your eating habits, order the 3rd guide, **FOOD STEPS 3**. You can find out how at the back of this guide.

Some men don't want to change their eating habits because they think it will be too much trouble. They think healthy eating means making big changes in the way they eat. They think they will have to give up the foods they like or eat boring foods. They think they won't be able to eat fast foods or eat out with their friends any longer. Even worse, they may think they'll have to learn a whole new way of cooking.

What is healthy eating?



What are the benefits of healthy eating?



But that's not what healthy eating is about.

Healthy eating is about:

- making *small changes* in the way you eat now and the way you prepare foods to make them healthier
- enjoying *tasty* and satisfying meals that are quick and easy to prepare
- enjoying all your *favourite* foods, including *fast* foods
- eating well, even on the run
- eating new foods only when you want to
- choosing *nutritious* foods *more often*.

There are many benefits to healthy eating.

Eating well can help you reach a healthy weight and stay there. It can help prevent:

- heart disease
- high blood pressure
- cancer
- diabetes
- obesity.

Eating well can also:

- give you more energy to do the things you enjoy
- help you set a good example for your children
- give you more control over your health.

Where should I start?

Think about the benefits of healthy eating. It will help you decide whether or not you want to improve *your* eating habits.

There may be lots of changes you could make in how you eat. However, we don't expect you to make a lot of changes at once. We know that it's better to change *one eating habit at a time*, because then you are more likely to change your habits for good. **This is why we suggest that you start by eating less fat.**

Eat less fat.



Why focus on fat?

Most Canadians eat too much fat, and too much fat can be dangerous to your health. There are three main reasons why eating too many high-fat foods can be a problem:

1. High-fat foods increase your risk of heart disease, diabetes or cancer.
2. High-fat foods can lead to weight gain.
3. Many high-fat foods give you only a few nutrients but a lot of calories.



**Small
changes
make a big
difference!**

How much fat do I have to cut out?

Most men don't need any more than 90 grams of fat a day. However, most men eat about 115 grams of fat. So they need to **cut out about 25 grams of fat a day**. That is not hard to do; read on. First you have to know where the fat is hiding.

Which foods are high in fat?

Most of the fat we eat is found in:

- baked goods: cake, muffins, pastries, cookies, croissants, and crackers
- fried foods, and oil and fat used in cooking
- snack foods: nuts, chips, nachos and chocolate
- toppings: salad dressings, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, and gravy
- fat in and around meat, and the skin on chicken and turkey
- regular dairy foods like cheese, whole milk, ice cream, cream and sour cream.

You said I wouldn't have to give up my favourite foods. You just listed them all!

Don't panic! Remember, the key message here is that *small changes* make a big difference. If you decide to eat less fat, here are some examples of how easy it is to do:



- Joe usually has 2 ham sandwiches for lunch - 4 slices of bread with margarine, and 4 slices of ham. By replacing the margarine with mustard, Joe removed **16 grams of fat**.
- Bob likes to make spaghetti sauce. By using lean ground meat instead of regular ground beef, Bob removed **5 grams of fat**. By draining off the fat, he removed another **2.5 grams of fat**. With these two changes, Bob removed **7.5 grams of fat** from each ½ cup (125 ml) serving of sauce.
- Tony used to get a doughnut and a coffee with double cream on his way to work. By switching to a bagel, Tony removed **14 grams of fat**, and by switching to 2% milk in his coffee, he removed another **4 grams of fat**. With these two changes, Tony removed **18 grams of fat** from his morning snack.

By making a *few simple changes* to the way you eat, you can cut out a lot of fat, and still enjoy the foods you like!

To see just how straight forward reducing the amount of fat in your diet can be, see the two menus on the next page. They have about the same number



of calories, but one contains much more fat than the other. You can see how similar they are- they even use much of the same foods. By making just a few small changes, the menu on the right (30% fat) is much lower in fat than the menu on the left (38% fat). Note that you actually get more food to eat when you reduce the amount of fat you eat. That's because fat has twice the calories of either protein or carbohydrate.



More For Less

38% Fat Menu

Breakfast:

1 cup cornflakes
1 cup homogenized milk
 1 cup orange juice
 1 slice toast
 1 tsp margarine
 1 tsp jam

Lunch:

2 slices whole wheat bread
 2 tsp margarine
2 slices chicken breast
1 slice processed cheese
1 tbsp mayonnaise
1 cup chocolate milk
 4 chocolate chip cookies

Dinner:

8 oz Sirloin steak (1/4", not trimmed)
 1 large baked potato
2 tbsp sour cream
 1 cup carrots
 2 tsp margarine
1 serving blueberry pie
 ½ cup ice cream

Calories: 2778

Fat: 116g

Fat: 38%

30% Fat Menu

Breakfast:

1 cup cornflakes
1 cup 2% milk
 1 cup orange juice
 1 slice toast
 1 tsp margarine
 1 tsp jam

Lunch:

4 slices whole wheat bread
 2 tsp margarine
4 slices chicken breast
2 slices light cheese
1 tbsp light mayonnaise
1 cup 1% chocolate milk
 4 oatmeal raisin cookies
 1 apple

Dinner:

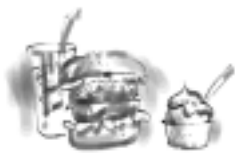
8 oz Sirloin steak (1/4", trimmed)
 1 large baked potato
1 tbsp sour cream
 1 cup carrots
 2 tsp margarine
1 serving blueberry crisp
 ½ cup ice cream

Calories: 2741

Fat: 90g

Fat: 30%

All foods can be part of a healthy diet.



What about eating fast foods? Aren't they high in fat?

Most fast foods are high in fat, but they can be part of a healthy diet. It's how *often* you eat them, and *how much* of them you eat, that's important. The example below shows you how you can save fat by choosing smaller portions.

Example 1:

A double burger with cheese contains *35 grams fat*. A single burger with cheese contains *16 grams fat*. **By choosing a single burger, you remove 19 grams of fat!**

Another way to reduce fat is to include lower-fat choices when eating higher-fat fast foods.

Example 2:

A double cheeseburger, small fries and apple pie contain a total of *57 grams fat*. A double cheeseburger, orange juice and hot fudge frozen yogurt contain a total of *38 grams fat*. **By choosing the lower-fat choices as part of a fast food meal, you remove 19 grams of fat!**

As you can see, by making small changes in the way you eat or in the foods you choose, you can easily reduce the amount of fat you eat.

Will eating less fat help me keep my weight down?



Will eating less fat cost me more?



If you reduce the amount of fat you eat, you can save a lot of calories. Fat contains twice the calories of protein and carbohydrates, so even if you replaced the fat with equal amounts of protein or carbohydrate, you would still save calories. So, two excellent ways to keep your weight down are:

- become more physically active
- reduce the fat you eat.

Eating well gives you better value for your dollar. And depending on what you choose, you can actually reduce your food bill!

- Fresh produce, bread, cereals, pasta and rice, and most dairy foods cost less than many foods in the supermarket, so buy more of these.
- Lean meats may cost a little more, but you get less wastage and therefore, better value for your money.
- Most of our high food costs come from processed or convenience foods like canned, packaged and frozen foods, snack foods and ready-to-eat desserts like muffins, cookies and cakes. And lower-fat versions of these products may cost a little more. While processed foods cost more, their convenience is often worth the additional cost.

**What do I
have to give
up to eat
better?**



**Am I ready to
change my
eating habits?**

If you decide to reduce the amount of fat you eat, you may run into a few barriers:

- You might find it inconvenient at first.
- You may have to plan your meals ahead a little more.
- You may have to think more about what you eat throughout the day.
- You may have to explain what you are doing in social situations such as business lunches or meals with your friends.
- You may have to deal with how this all affects your family members.

FOOD STEPS 3 includes advice about overcoming each of these barriers. However, it is useful to think about these now as you think about changing how you eat.

We have given you some good reasons for changing your eating habits. But the decision to change your eating habits is something only you can make.

To help you decide if you are ready to start, do the *Pros and Cons* exercise on the next page. It can help you look at the benefits and costs of eating less fat. It will help you think about how you eat now and what that means to you. In the end, it will be very useful in helping you decide if you really want to change your eating habits.

FOOD STEPS 2 ACTIVITY A

Pros and Cons of Healthy Eating

This activity will help you decide whether or not, you want to eat less fat.

❶ On the next page, write down your **reasons for eating high-fat foods** and your **reasons for eating less fat**. Think of things like:

- your health
- your social life
- your time commitments
- what your family and friends think
- your weight
- how you feel about yourself
- how you deal with stress, hunger and frustration
- what problems you may have to overcome.



❷ After writing your list, think about how important each reason is. Even if you have lots of reasons for eating high-fat foods, your reasons for eating less fat may be much more important. Think about whether you want to eat less fat or not.

NOTE: You don't have to decide right now whether or not to change what you eat. In fact, you may want to think of more reasons and spend more time thinking about your choices. Eventually though, you need to make a decision.

FOOD STEPS 2 ACTIVITY A

Write your list of Pros and Cons below like the examples:

PROS <u>For Eating Less Fat</u>	CONS <u>For Eating Less Fat</u>
<p>example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>better health</i> _____• <i>more energy</i> _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____	<p>example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>don't like the taste</i> _____• <i>too busy</i> _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____

Considering everything you've written down, would you say that you have more:

- **Pros to reduce the amount of fat** that you eat
- **Cons to reduce the amount of fat** that you eat

If you have more **Pros**, it sounds as if you are ready for the next step. Finish reading this guide, then order ***FOOD STEPS 3*** to learn how to start eating less fat. If you have more **Cons**, keep reading. You may find the health facts on the next few pages interesting.

Health Facts:



How fat affects your health.

Heart Disease:

Heart disease is the *number one* cause of death and illness in men. About 15,000 men in Ontario die of heart disease each year.

Why is heart disease such a problem for men?

There are several reasons why men have a higher risk of developing heart disease than women. One is simply being male. Women have some protection from heart disease because their bodies produce the hormone estrogen. Estrogen helps to control blood cholesterol. This is why men are more likely to have high blood cholesterol - especially if they eat a lot of saturated fat.

High blood cholesterol is strongly linked with heart disease. Cholesterol in the blood often ends up lining the artery walls with hard fatty deposits. These deposits make the arteries narrower so blood pressure becomes greater. These narrower arteries also make it easier for blood clots to get stuck, causing a heart attack or a stroke.

Men also store excess body fat in their upper body, but women store it around their hips. Fat in the upper body makes a person more likely to have heart disease than fat around the hips.

There are several risk factors for heart disease:

Here are four major risk factors that you can control:

- high blood cholesterol
- high blood pressure
- lack of physical activity
- smoking.

Eating less fat helps you reduce your cholesterol level and your blood pressure. Eating well also gives you the energy you need to be more active. By eating less fat and being more active, you can reduce three of the four major risk factors for heart disease. And if you smoke, giving it up would be an added bonus for your health!



Cancer:

Cancer is the next leading cause of death in men. Reducing the amount of fat that you eat can lower your risk of getting certain types of cancer.

Prostate Cancer:

Prostate cancer is the second major cause of death from cancer in men. There is a link between a high-fat diet and the development of prostate cancer.

Colon Cancer:

Ten percent of men who die from cancer each year die from colon cancer. There is a strong link between a high-fat diet and colon cancer.

Diabetes:

Diabetes is increasing in North America. Diabetes often leads to heart disease because it affects the blood vessels and this leads to poor circulation. Also, people with diabetes have higher-fat levels in their blood.

Men who are overweight have a greater risk of developing diabetes. High-fat diets, too many calories, and not enough physical activity make men more likely to get diabetes.

Obesity:

About half of all North American adults are overweight. Of these, *more* men than women are overweight! The 1990 Ontario Health Survey found that about one third of women aged 20-64



**Will eating
less fat now
really help?**



were overweight, but one half of men of the same age were overweight. Part of the reason for this is that many men have poor eating habits and are physically inactive. For many men, skipping meals, eating out, and not exercising are the norm.

In addition to health problems, men who are very overweight are often discriminated against. They are sometimes treated unfairly in job interviews; they are often verbally abused; and they may also be seen to be less successful than men who are leaner.

Summary:

A high-fat diet increases your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity. Reducing the amount of fat you eat is a very important way to protect your health.

Many men feel that if they have eaten high-fat foods for many years, they may have already harmed their health. They don't see any point in changing now, but they are wrong. Cutting down on fat still makes sense. High blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and obesity can all be turned back to normal levels. And, heart disease and diabetes can be controlled.

**I'm young
and healthy,
why should I
worry about
eating less fat
now?**



Most of the diseases we have talked about usually affect men over the age of 40. If you're younger than this, it may be hard to worry about what may happen in the distant future. But think about it; we put money away in RRSPs for our old age. We buy medical insurance, and insurance for our cars and our houses to guard against possible disasters. Yet most of us forget all about guarding our most important asset, our health. The cheapest insurance policy for good health in the future is this:

- eat well
- get regular exercise, and
- don't smoke.

Without good health, you won't be able to enjoy your retirement. Like RRSPs, the sooner you start, the more you'll have to work with! It's never too late to start taking better care of yourself. The quiz on the next page will help you assess your risk of heart disease, the number one cause of death in men.

**Keep a healthy heart!
Do the Heart Health Quiz on the next page.
It will help you assess your risk
for heart disease.**

FOOD STEPS 2 ACTIVITY B

Heart Health Quiz

Statistics mean much more when we apply them to our own health. The **Heart Health Quiz** can give you an idea of *your* risk of heart disease.

Below, is a list of several factors that affect your heart. Circle the number in each category that best describes you.

Risk factors:	Score
1. Family history - age of relatives who died of heart disease.	
• no family history	1
• 1 relative over 60 years	2
• 2 relatives over 60 years	3
• 1 relative under 60 years	4
• 2 relatives under 60 years	6
2. Your age	
• less than 20	0
• 21-30	1
• 31-40	2
• 41-50	4
• 51 and above	6
3. Cigarette smoking	
• non-user	0
• 10 cigarettes or fewer a day	2
• 20 cigarettes or more a day	4
• 30 cigarettes or more a day	6

FOOD STEPS 2 ACTIVITY B

Risk factors:

Score

4. Physical activity

Your level of physical activity at work and outside of work.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Job</i>: very physically demanding <li style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Spare time</i>: physically active 30 minutes every day | 0 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Job</i>: physically demanding <li style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Spare time</i>: physically active 30 minutes 4 days or less | 1 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Job</i>: inactive <li style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Spare time</i>: physically active 30 minutes most days of the week | 2 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Job</i>: inactive <li style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Spare time</i>: physically active 30 minutes 4 days or less | 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Job</i>: inactive <li style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Spare time</i>: little physical activity | 6 |

5. Waist-to-hip ratio

Measure the largest part of your waist and hips with a cloth tape measure. Divide your waist measure by your hip measure; e.g. 34" waist ÷ 36" hips = 0.94. Then find your answer in the list below.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.00 and less | 1 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.01 - 1.10 | 2 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.11 - 1.20 | 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.21 - 1.30 | 4 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.31 or more | 6 |

Add up your score:

FOOD STEPS 2 ACTIVITY B

NOTE: You may have other risk factors too, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and smoking. Each of these can greatly add to your risk. You must have these tested by your doctor.

Your risk of heart attack:

- 4-10** Your risk is **below average**. Keep up the good work. Reducing the amount of fat you eat can only improve your low risk profile.
- 11-16** Your risk is **average**. You're OK right now. Be sure to do something about the factors you can control: your weight, what you eat, physical activity, and smoking.
- 17-21** Your risk is **medium**. You may develop heart disease at some point in your life, especially if you get high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes. You can reduce your risk by eating less fat, achieving a healthy weight, being physically active for at least 30 minutes every day, and if you smoke, by quitting.
- 22-30** Your risk is **high**. You need to seriously consider doing something about all the risk factors that you can: your weight, your physical activity, your smoking (if you smoke), what you eat.

Adapted from Heart Health Quiz, Loma Linda University. Nutrition Concepts and Controversies Activity Manual. West Publishing Co., New York, 1994.

The process of change.



We hope you have learned these useful facts from this guide:

- If you want to eat well, eat less fat. This is a very good place to start.
- All foods can be part of a healthy diet.
- Small changes can make a big difference.

This guide was meant to get you to think about your eating. We wanted you to think about the pros and cons of eating healthier foods - before you make any final decisions.

This process of thinking through a change in behaviour is very important. It usually has a strong effect on how successful people are in sticking with their change.

Dr. James Prochaska, a psychologist, found that people go through several stages before they finally change a behaviour, whether they are trying to stop smoking, or changing how they eat.

Here are the stages you will probably go through if you decide to change what you eat:

Stage 1: You are not even thinking of changing how you eat.



Stage 2: You begin to think about reasons for changing your eating habits. ***You are likely at this stage.***

Stage 3: You actually start eating better. ***This is the stage we hope you will move to next.***

Stage 4: You make healthy eating a permanent part of your life.

We have developed four **FOOD STEPS** guides to help men change their eating habits based on these stages. This book is the second in the series. It gives the information you need to help you decide whether or not to change your eating habits.

If you have decided not to change the way you eat, we hope that you will think about changing in the future. In the meantime, you may wish to review **FOOD STEPS 1**. If you don't have **FOOD STEPS 1**, call or write for your free copy.

If you have decided to start eating less fat, great! You need to begin preparing yourself for the next step. You've already done much of the hard work

Taking the next step.

because you've thought a lot about it. You've also made a commitment to yourself to change. Now you can move on.

As you move to the next step, remember this: you may go through *Step 2*, *Step 3* and *Step 4* more than once before you reduce the amount of fat that you eat for good. Don't get frustrated if this happens. It happens to a lot of people, and it *does not mean* that you are failing or that you shouldn't bother to try. Every time you go through the stages, you learn more about yourself and what the challenges are for you to change. You also learn what works for you! The more often you try, the more likely you are to succeed! So keep up the good work.

Looking ahead.

If you have decided to change your eating habits, then you'll need the next guide in the ***FOOD STEPS*** Program.



***FOOD STEPS 3: A Guide For Men
Who Are Ready To Reduce
The Amount Of Fat They Eat***

FOOD STEPS 3 will give you lots of practical ideas:

- information about the fat in foods
- how to figure out how much fat you are eating now
- a 10-week plan to reduce the fat in your diet
- tips for how to still enjoy some high-fat foods
- help with your cravings for too many high-fat foods.

You can order your ***FOOD STEPS 3*** Guide by telephone or mail. The address and telephone number is on the back cover. Use the ORDER FORM enclosed in this guide.

GOOD LUCK!



For More Information

About the *FOOD STEPS* Program:

- Call the organization stamped on the back cover of this guide and ask for the *FOOD STEPS* Program.

For reliable information on Nutrition and Your Health:

- Call a Public Health Dietitian or Public Health Nutritionist at your local Public Health Unit.
- Call a Registered Dietitian at your local hospital or community health centre.
- Visit the web site of the Dietitians of Canada at www.dietitians.ca
- Visit the web site of Publications, Health Canada at www.hc-sc.gc.ca
- Call the Heart Health Resource Centre 1-800-267-6817 for information and a Heart Health Contact in your area.

For more information about:

- A private practice dietitian in your area, call your local Public Health Unit.
- Nutrition and heart disease, call your local chapter of the Heart And Stroke Foundation of Ontario.
- Nutrition and cancer, call your local chapter of the Canadian Cancer Society of Ontario.

FOOD STEPS: A Guide To Eating Better

FOOD STEPS 1:

A Guide For Men Who Don't Want To Change The Way They Eat

This guide invites you to think about why you eat the way you do.

FOOD STEPS 2:

A Guide For Men Who Are Thinking About Changing The Way They Eat

This guide helps you look at the pros and cons of eating better and asks you to decide if you're ready to change your eating habits.

FOOD STEPS 3:

A Guide For Men Who Are Ready To Reduce The Amount Of Fat They Eat

This guide helps you eat less fat. It gives you a 10 week, step-by-step Action Plan to reduce your fat intake, and helps you identify and deal with things that tempt you to eat a lot of high-fat foods.

FOOD STEPS 4:

A Guide For Men Who Want To Keep A Low-Fat Way of Eating

This guide shows you how to keep your low-fat way of eating for good.



For More Information Contact:

