

DIET TIPS FOR A HEALTHY HEART

1.

Choose low glycaemic index (GI) foods (those absorbed slowly). Low GI foods help keep your blood lipids healthy and prevent insulin resistance.

Low GI foods include oats and wholegrain cereals, wholegrain bread, sweet potato, milk, yoghurt, beans (soy, kidney and baked), pulses (lentils, chick-peas, etc) pasta and basmati rice.

High GI foods include potatoes, white bread, white rice, some highly refined breakfast cereals such as Corn Flakes and Rice Bubbles, cakes, biscuits and watermelon.

Two pieces of fruit and five servings of vegetables per day are recommended.

2.

Watch your weight. Gaining too much weight (especially around the abdomen) will increase the risk of unstable blood lipids and insulin resistance.

Aim for small regular meals and snacks with a good balance of protein, low GI carbohydrates, and plenty of green and salad vegetables.

3.

Increase fibre, especially soluble fibre. The body absorbs soluble fibre which helps reduce “bad” cholesterol. Soluble fibres include barley, oats, rice, soy, fruit and vegetables.

4.

Decrease saturated fat found in cream, butter, cakes, biscuits, fatty meats, fast foods, and palm oil. Saturated fat increases the risk of “bad cholesterol”.

Increase good fats found in nuts, seeds, olives, avocado, and especially omega 3 fatty acids found in fish, linseed and canola oil. Omega 3 fatty acids decrease the risk of “bad cholesterol”.

Use canola or olive oil margarine or those containing plant sterols (eg. Logical, Proactive).

Remember – Both the good and the bad fats all contain the same number of calories!

5.

Reduce salt as salt encourages the body to retain fluid.

6.

Keep alcohol intake to one or two units per day. Too much alcohol will increase triglycerides (as well as affect your liver, brain and other organs).