



10 Tips for a Heart-Healthy Refrigerator

♥ **Take stock of what's inside.** Once a month, pull everything out and separate the better-for-you foods from the rest. Make sure you have more low-fat, high-fiber and low sugar foods than other types, and, if not, consider gradually reducing the number. Choose more low-fat and fat-free dressings, condiments, sauces and tablespreads instead of full-fat ones.

♥ **Hide desserts.** Stow away desserts and other indulgent foods in the crisper, so they're "out of sight, out of mind" Most of the time, healthier foods like fruits and vegetables are the ones that perish the quickest and, therefore, should be kept on the refrigerator shelf where you can see and eat them. (*Americans on average waste about \$10 a week on produce that spoils.*)

♥ **Organize by "more" and "less."** Divide your refrigerator into different sections of "choose more often" and "choose less often." This could be by shelf or within the shelf, always keeping healthier foods up front and less-healthy foods toward the back.

♥ **Substitute lower-fat foods for higher-fat ones.** Some examples include skim or 1% milk for whole milk; soft margarine for butter; and lean meats, chicken and fish for ribs, ground meat and other fattier meats. A simple substitution like soft margarine for butter over a week's time can save you an entire day's worth of saturated fat

♥ **Make healthy eating fun for the family** by color-coding foods with stars or heart stickers - use green for heart-healthy, and red for less healthy.

♥ **Make healthy food appealing.** Keep an indulgent topping or accompaniment next to a healthy food to make it more appetizing. Next time you want a snack, you'll be more likely to eat something healthy if the mixed nuts are next to the low-fat yogurt, or the chocolate syrup is beside the skim milk, ready to be mixed together.

♥ **Prepare leftovers as a meal for the next day.** Put the entree with the vegetables and other side items on a plate and cover for the next day's lunch or dinner to create a do-it-yourself balanced "TV " dinner.

♥ **Prepare foods as "ready to eat" meals** when you come home from grocery shopping. Cut up vegetables and fruits and store them in containers, so they'll be ready for the next meal or when you come looking for a ready-to-eat snack.

♥ **Freeze foods in portion sizes** to make healthy eating easier. Did you know the recommended serving of cooked meat is 3 ounces, similar in size to a deck of playing cards? The standard serving size for pasta is one cup (or the size of a Walkman) and half a cup for vegetables (about the size of a tennis ball).

♥ **Freeze fruit for fun.** Freeze fruits such as bananas, grapes and orange slices to make them more fun to eat for children. Next time they want a sweet snack offer them frozen fruit rather than ice cream.

Source: "Open the Door to Healthy Heart " campaign.