- Cholesterol

PREVENTION

FOOD



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WARM LEMONY SALMON AND BROWN RICE SALAD
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NUTRITION

EAT TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL

These foods target a key factor influencing heart health.

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RECIPE BY KRISTINA KUREK

KEEPING YOUR biological timepiece in good working order is essential for longevity and right-now health—and just like the ticker worn on your wrist, your heart is its own complex system of parts with functions that coordinate to keep you on the go.

What you eat has a particular impact on your heart's structure and efficiency, and while you hear a lot about foods that support healthy blood pressure or control inflammation, you can also use food to help control your cholesterol. Cholesterol is a waxy, fatlike substance (though it's not technically fat) that's produced by your liver to help you digest fatty foods, create hormones, and build cells. There are two main types: LDL cholesterol is the "bad" kind that can cause plaque buildup in arteries, increasing your risk for heart disease, and HDL cholesterol helps sweep away the LDL.

In addition to the cholesterol your liver makes, you get it from certain foods (red and processed meats, fried foods, and desserts are the main culprits)—

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it's smart to minimize these. And some foods, like the ones at right, contain nutrients that can help reduce LDL levels to keep things in balance.

WARM LEMONY SALMON AND BROWN RICE SALAD

ACTIVE **30 MIN.**
TOTAL **1 HR. 5 MIN.**
SERVES **4**

Cook 1 cup **short-grain brown rice** per pkg. directions. Fluff rice with fork and fold in 4 cups **baby spinach** to wilt. Meanwhile, drain three 6-oz cans **boneless, skinless sockeye salmon** in water, reserving 2 Tbsp liquid. Break salmon into bite-size pieces. Heat ⅓ cup **olive oil** in large skillet on medium-low. Add 5 cloves **garlic** (finely chopped) and cook, stirring, until fragrant and very pale gold, 1 to 2 min., adjusting heat if necessary. Reduce heat to low and add 4 large **pepperoncini** (roughly chopped) plus 2 Tbsp **pepperoncini pickling liquid**, salmon, and reserved liquid from salmon and heat gently, shaking pan occasionally, until salmon is just barely warmed through, 1 to 2 min. Gently fold in 1 cup **flat-leaf parsley leaves** (chopped) and 2 tsp **lemon zest** plus ¼ cup **lemon juice**, keeping salmon as intact as possible. Divide rice mixture among plates and top with salmon mixture and any juices. Sprinkle with ¼ tsp coarsely ground **pepper** and additional chopped parsley.

PER SERVING *About 497 cal, 25.5 g fat (4 g sat), 63 mg chol, 633 mg sodium, 41 g carb, 2 g fiber, 2 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 32 g pro*

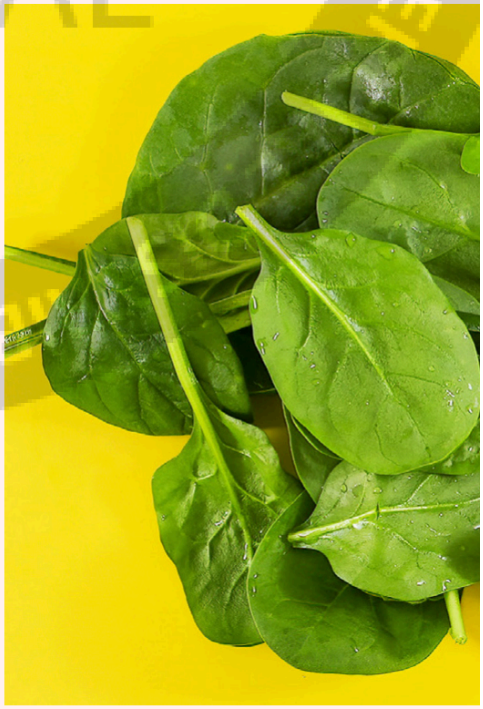
For more ways to help keep your heart strong, go to prevention.com/heart-health-tips.

STOCK UP ON THESE

Your grocery list: delicious picks to lower cholesterol

SALMON

Fatty fish is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help reduce triglycerides (fats in the blood) and inflammation, both of which can raise your heart disease risk over time. Tuna, sardines, mackerel, and oysters are other



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good seafood sources of omega-3's.

BROWN RICE

Have this and other whole grains such as barley, bulgur, and oats; they provide fiber, including a type of soluble fiber called beta-glucan that has particularly powerful cholesterol-lowering effects (it absorbs water in your GI tract and helps remove excess cholesterol before it can enter your bloodstream).



GETTY IMAGES (2)

SPINACH

Adding more leafy greens to your plate may help lower your cholesterol by promoting your body's production of nitric oxide, which helps dilate blood vessels and lower your risk of atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries due to plaque buildup. Greens like kale and cabbage are also smart options.

NUTS

They contribute fiber for allover heart health, and peanuts, almonds, and pistachios have antioxidants as well as anti-inflammatory compounds shown to help improve cholesterol levels by lowering LDL and aiding in maintaining HDL, research shows.

CHICKPEAS

All beans deliver a dose of cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber, but chickpeas and black beans are higher in this nutrient than some other types.

SOY-BASED FOODS

Tofu, tempeh, and edamame are all good plant-based protein options that don't have the saturated fat of many animal proteins. Plus, they contain heart-friendly fiber and antioxidants.

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