



ULTIMATE CHOLESTEROL LOWERING PLAN[®]



HEART UK
THE CHOLESTEROL CHARITY

Welcome to the Ultimate Cholesterol Lowering Plan[®] (UCLP[®])

The UCLP[®] is a fully flexible 3-step eating guide to help manage your blood cholesterol levels and your heart health.

You choose how and when you take on board recommended changes within each step. Be assured that ANY recommended improvements you make and maintain will help your cholesterol levels and heart health. So, take things at your own pace!

Step 1: Time to get motivated

Get into the right mindset, understand which changes you need to make, how to keep motivated and stay on track.

Step 2: Building heart healthy foundations

Take our UCLP[®] quiz (page 3) and identify what changes you need to make and which heart healthy foods to incorporate into your every day eating plan.

Make one or two of the recommended changes at a time. Take it at your own pace and gradually incorporate more changes. You choose which change and when!

Step 3: Your pick 'n' mix of four key UCLP[®] foods

It's important that you have built heart healthy foundations first before moving onto Step 3. Each ONE of the UCLP[®] foods can help to manage your cholesterol and your heart health.

Which and how many you include in your every day plan is totally up to you.

Take it at your pace by introducing just one at a time. It's easier to build up slowly.

STEP 1:
Time to get motivated
make some notes
along the way

Let's face it – it's not easy making changes to the way we eat. But to stand the best chance of success, getting into the right mindset is vital. You have to feel ready, and have clear, strong reasons for making the change.

Try answering the following questions to see if you are ready to make some changes.

-  Why do YOU want to lower your cholesterol levels – what will it mean to you – why is it so important?
-  What has kept you from making changes to your diet in the past? What do you find the most difficult?
-  Things that stop us from making changes are often called "barriers". What do you feel you can do this time around to overcome them? It might help to talk this through with a friend, relative, your doctor, nurse or dietitian.
-  What are you eating and drinking now? Keeping a food diary for a few days will help identify things you can change.

Review & refer to this page from time to time – especially if you are finding it tough.

STEP 2: Building heart healthy foundations

How well are you doing already?

Complete our check list below to see which parts of your diet are already heart healthy and where you can still make some improvements.

Tick the boxes that apply to you	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Do you have at least 5 portions of fruit and veg every day? Fresh, frozen, tinned and dried all count.			
Do you have 2 portions of fish every week – one of which is oil-rich e.g. sardines, pilchards, salmon, kippers?			
Do you have at least 2 meat-free days in a week?			
Do you eat plant protein foods every day e.g. peas, beans (incl. baked beans), nuts, lentils, soya, Quorn™ etc?			
Do you keep fatty and processed meat to a minimum e.g. sausages, pies, salamis, bacon, tinned meats, sausage rolls etc?			
Do you eat wholegrain foods every day e.g. wholemeal bread / chapatti, wholegrain pasta or breakfast cereals, brown rice, oats / porridge?			
Do you use vegetable oils and spreads such as sunflower, rapeseed, olive and corn instead of coconut oil, butter, ghee, palm oil and other hard animal fats?			
Do you usually opt for lower-fat dairy options e.g. low-fat milk and yogurts, lower fat cheese OR plant-based drinks and yogurt alternatives?			
Do you usually opt for diet / sugar-free drinks over sweetened versions or fruit juice?			
Do you avoid snacking on fatty, sugary and salty snacks e.g. chocolates, crisps, chocolate covered or filled biscuits, Indian sweets, pastries, etc.			
Do you avoid high fat and salty fast food and take-aways such as fried chicken, tacos, creamy curries, kebabs, burgers, chips, fried fish and sandwiches with mayonnaise?			

Where you answered YES: WELL DONE & CARRY ON.

Congratulate yourself as this means you are already taking steps to manage your heart health.

Where you answered NO or SOMETIMES:

Aim to make one improvement every 1-2 weeks. Trying to make too many improvements all at once can be overwhelming and makes it more difficult to keep this up for the long-term.

Step 2 of the UCLP[®] is all about building a strong heart healthy foundation diet.

There are lots of improvements to choose from. For best results, it is best to start with: Including more heart healthy fats whilst reducing saturated fat and achieving your 5-a-day.

Include More Heart Healthy Fats

Eating too many foods high in saturated fat can increase cholesterol levels.

Saturated fat is mainly found in fatty meat, full fat dairy products, butter, lard, ghee, suet, palm and coconut oils and products made from them. Unsaturated fat is found in nuts, seeds, vegetable spreads and oils and many other plant-based foods.

We should be eating fewer foods high in saturated fat and instead focus on consuming – in moderation – foods with heart healthy unsaturated fats.

Consider what you eat and drink now – are there any swaps here that you think are easy to make? Don't forget that pastries, pies, puddings, cakes and biscuits also contain saturated fats.

Eat less:

Butter, ghee, lard, suet, hard margarines, coconut and palm oil.



Swap for:

Vegetable spreads & oils such as olive, rapeseed, sunflower, soya.

Fatty meat and processed meat products e.g. sausages, salamis, canned meat.



Remove all visible fat from meat and skin from poultry. Have red meat less often (*no more than 500g cooked weight per week*). Have meat-free days: include oil rich fish at least once a week, use beans, pulses, soya or Quorn™ mince to replace meat in dishes.

Full cream milk and yogurts and canned coconut milks.



Semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed dairy milk or a plant-based drink e.g. soya, almond, oat, cashew. Low fat or fat-free yogurt or soya alternative to yogurt.

Most cheeses. Dairy cream (all types) and coconut cream.



Lower fat cheeses e.g. cottage cheese, small portions of lighter hard cheeses such as cheddar. Small quantities of soya alternative to single cream.

Cakes, desserts and chocolate. Coconut (fresh, dried, desiccated).



Plain buns e.g. currant/hot cross buns, scones, plain biscuits, fruit, low-fat yogurts, soya alternatives to yogurt, soya desserts.

Pastry – pies.



Potato topped savoury dishes, crumbles made with vegetable spread, oats, chopped nuts and seeds.

Roasting or frying with butter, lard, ghee, other animal fats or coconut oil.



Use small quantities of vegetable oil instead or try other cooking methods without fat e.g. boiling, grilling, steaming.

4.6g
SAT FAT



Medium latte
full cream dairy milk

0.6g
SAT FAT



Medium latte
soya milk alternative

6.4g
SAT FAT



2 grilled pork
sausages

0.7g
SAT FAT



Grilled medium chicken
breast – skin removed

10.2g
SAT FAT



Pasta with a creamy
cheese sauce

1.1g
SAT FAT



Pasta with a
tomato sauce

21.2g
SAT FAT



Cheese sandwich
with mayo

3.7g
SAT FAT



Chicken salad
wholemeal sandwich
without mayo

8.2g
SAT FAT



Chocolate éclair

1.1g
SAT FAT



Hot cross bun

Other foods providing unsaturated fat include oil-rich fish, oil-based salad dressings, avocados, nuts and seeds.

Fruit & Vegetables (5-a-day)

We should all be trying to consume at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables each day.

Fresh, frozen, canned, dried - ALL COUNT!

Fruit juice and smoothies can only count once and at no more than 150ml per day.

An adult serving is:



16 medium lady's fingers/okra



1 medium sweet potato



3 tbsps. peas



3 tbsps. sweetcorn, or other canned vegetables or fruit in water/natural juice



1 slice of mango



A bowl of salad



1 tbsps. dried small fruit



A handful of strawberries, or other fresh or frozen berries

Here are some suggestions for how you can increase your fruit and vegetable intake:

Breakfast

- Add a tablespoon of dried fruit, a handful of berries or a small sliced banana to your breakfast cereal or porridge.



Dinner

- Always make sure you serve your meal with cooked vegetables or a bowl of salad.
- Add chopped vegetables to stews and casseroles.
- Try making vegetable soups with leftover vegetables.
- Choose fruit-based dessert e.g. baked apple, summer pudding, fruit with soya alternative to plain yogurt.



Lunch

- Sandwiches / wraps – can you add a bit of extra salad?
- Vegetable sticks and dips such as hummus or tomato salsa.
- Add fruit to yogurt.



Snacks

- A spoonful of dried or a handful of fresh fruit.

More Ideas for a Heart Healthy Foundation Diet

As well as including more heart healthy fats, reducing saturated fats and achieving your 5-a-day, there are other improvements you can make to build strong heart healthy foundations.

Have a look at the options below and see which improvements you would like to make.

Wholegrains & potatoes

INCLUDE WITH EVERY MEAL

Breakfast cereals

A small cereal bowl of: malted wheats, bran flakes, multigrain hoops, oat flakes, unsweetened muesli, porridge or 2 shredded wheat type or Weetabix-type biscuits.

Wholemeal breads

2 slices bread, 1 small or ½ large pitta, 1 bagel, roll, small wrap/tortilla or small baguette, small chapatti without added fat or 1 English muffin.

Potatoes, yams, plantains & sweet potatoes

Boiled or baked, or cooked with a little vegetable oil:
1 medium sized baked potato (size of your fist),
4-5 small new potatoes.



Grains and more

Opt for those labelled **wholemeal, wholegrain** or **brown**. A couple of handfuls of cooked rice, pasta, couscous, quinoa, buckwheat, bulgur wheat or popped corn.

Best to avoid: Fatty breads e.g. garlic bread, brioche, naan, croissants, chips, sugar/honey coated breakfast cereals or those with chocolate or granola.

Please note: portion sizes will vary depending on our age, whether male or female, our body weight and how active we are. Portions stated are average recommendations for women of a healthy body weight who are moderately physically active.

More plant proteins and less meat

Beans & pulses

ANY that take your fancy: baked beans, chickpeas, kidney beans or cannellini beans. Beans and lentils are a great source of fibre and we recommend you include a daily serving of at least 100g or 6 tablespoons.

- Try adding to soups, stews, salads, curries, stir fries and pasta dishes.
- Use to make bean dips e.g. hummus or mashed with potatoes.

Nuts

- Any unsalted nuts such as peanuts, almonds, walnuts, cashews, hazelnuts (a portion is a small handful).
- Peanut butter – opt for the lower salt varieties.

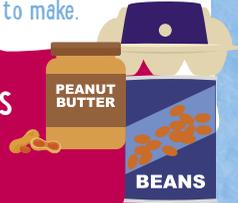
Reducing red meat and avoiding processed meat

- Lean red meat – no more than 500g cooked weight (700-750g raw) per week.
 - A single serve is no more than: 110g raw or 70g cooked.
 - Remove all visible fat.
 - Try to have a couple of meat-free days every week.
 - Replace half the meat quantity in recipes with beans, lentils, soya or Quorn™.

Other animal proteins

- Chicken (1-2 thighs or 1 breast counts as a portion) with skin removed.
- Choose fish twice a week. Two servings of fish a week (140g or a small fillet is one serving). One of which should be oil-rich (see next page).
- Eggs (a couple counts as a portion), poached, boiled or scrambled. Some individuals need to restrict eggs; discuss with your health professional.

Best to avoid: Processed meats such as tinned meats, bacon, meat pies and pasties, salamis.



Dairy & Alternatives

Milk and yogurts

Always opt for the lower fat or skimmed varieties or switch to plant-based drinks and soya alternatives to yogurt.

Cheese

As well as being high in saturated fat, cheese is also high in salt. Therefore, opt for lighter or lower fat versions and keep to a minimum.



Vegetable Oils & Spreads

In place of animal fats.

Use sparingly! Vegetable – Olive – Sunflower – Rapeseed oils and spreads made from them are good choices.



Healthy Hydration

Tap water

Naturally zero calories and sugar-free!

Other options

- Sugar-free / 'diet' soft drinks.
- Tea and coffee made without sugar and lower fat milk or a calcium fortified plant-based drink.
- Coffee shops: Ask for lower fat milk or a plant-based drink, forgo any additional syrups and cream toppings



Oil-Rich Fish

One 140g serving a week [in addition to your one serving of white fish a week] from sustainable sources.

Oil-rich fish are a good protein source, low in saturated fats and rich in heart healthy unsaturated fats – long chain omega-3.

Tinned, frozen or fresh e.g. salmon, sardines, pilchards, trout, herring, mackerel.

Always go for sustainably sourced fish – ask the fishmonger or look on the label for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) logo.



Cut Down & Minimize

Foods high in fat, salt and/or sugars

Crisps, biscuits, cakes, Indian sweets, chocolate, pastries, buns, pies, fast foods, take-aways, pakoras, bajis, bombay mix and salted snacks.

Start by cutting down on the portion sizes and have less frequently.

Salt & Condiments

- Do not add salt when cooking, instead use more herbs and spices and pepper.
- Cut down on ready-meals and take-aways.
- Go for lower salt and lower fat varieties of mayonnaise, salad dressings, stock cubes, ketchup and brown sauce.



Build up slowly - just one or two improvements at a time. The more improvements you make, the better for your heart.

Your Plan for a Heart Healthy Foundation Diet

- 1 Decide on one or two improvements you would like to make to your current diet.
 - Any choice you make will help towards maintaining a healthy heart.
 - It is always best to tackle heart healthy fats first.
- 2 List what specific changes you will make to your diet. Refer back to the relevant pages to review your options.
- 3 Review your progress every 2-3 weeks and tick off the improvements you have made. Decide if you are ready to make more improvements and how you will make them.

1) Which improvement?	2) How will you achieve the improvement?	3) How have you done? Are there more improvements to make?
Heart healthy fats (reducing saturated fat) PG 4		
Meat and processed meat PG 4&6		
Plant proteins every day PG 6		
Oil-rich fish once a week PG 7		
Achieving your 5-a-day PG 5		
Wholegrains PG 6		
Dairy and alternatives PG 4&7		
Healthy hydration PG 7		
High fat, salt and/or sugar foods PG 7		

Once you feel your diet is as heart healthy as possible - it's time to move on to step 3 of the UCLP®

STEP 3: Four UCLP® foods to help manage your cholesterol

Before progressing to Step 3, are you confident that you have made the changes suggested in Step 2 and your foundation diet is as heart healthy as possible?

There are four UCLP® foods you can choose to ADD to your new heart healthy diet. All of these will help towards your goal of a healthy cholesterol level.

Have a look at each option and how much you should try to eat every day.

Decide which you would like to try. You can choose ONE, TWO, THREE or ALL OF THEM. It's best to build up slowly.

Option 1: Soya foods

Many soya foods are naturally low in saturated fat. Replacing meat, full cream dairy products and snacks high in saturated fat with foods low in saturated fat such as soya alternatives, as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle, will help you manage your cholesterol levels.

How much should you consume daily?

Start with 1 serving and gradually build up to 2-3 servings every day. Any of the below options and any combination:

- 100g Marinated tofu pieces
- 100g Firm silken tofu
- 100g Soya mince, ready to use
- 80g Young edamame beans (frozen)
- 35g (a handful) roasted edamame (soya) beans
- A large (250ml) glass soya drink (calcium fortified): use it in tea, coffee, on your cereal, to make smoothies and in cooking
- 150g Plain soya alternative to yogurt
- 150g Greek-style soya alternative to yogurt



Option 2: A handful of nuts

ALL nuts (including peanuts) are naturally high in unsaturated fats. Replacing foods high in saturated fat with foods high in unsaturated fat such as nuts, can help lower cholesterol.

How much should you consume daily?

ONE handful (28-30g) every day of any nut variety – unsalted and unsweetened of course: e.g. almonds, pistachios, walnuts, pecans, cashews and peanuts. Have instead of your normal snack or as part of a meal.



Option 3: Foods fortified with plant sterols or stanols*

Sterols and stanols are naturally found in plants in very small amounts. When eaten in the right quantity, they have been shown to lower cholesterol levels. Foods fortified with the right amount of plant sterols or stanols are now readily available in most stores.

How much should you consume daily?

Products will provide anything from 0.54g to 2g sterols or stanols in a single serve. Always check the labels as recipes can change. Ensure you do not exceed 3g stanols or sterols in one day.

ONE a day

Products labelled as fortified with plant stanols/sterols

OR

Any THREE servings of the following products a day

Products labelled as fortified with plant stanol/sterols



OR



OR



One 70g or 100g bottle mini drink / mini yogurt drink

One 120g pot fruit yogurt

One 40g fruit & nut cereal bar

10g (2 tsp) spread

250ml skimmed milk

Should always be consumed with meals.

* Please note that sterol or stanol-containing products: • Should only be used if you need to lower your cholesterol levels. • Aim for intakes of plant sterols / stanols above 1.5g and not exceeding 3g daily – always check the label. • Consume as part of a healthy balanced diet, which contains 5 servings of fruit and vegetables. • Are NOT APPROPRIATE for pregnant and breastfeeding women; or for children unless advised by a health professional.

Option 4: Oats and barley

Oats and barley contain a special form of fibre called beta-glucan. 3g of beta-glucan daily, as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle, can help to lower cholesterol.

3 servings of barley and oat-rich foods every day

Choose ANY THREE of the following options daily to achieve the effective dose of 3g beta-glucan. Each of the options below provide around 1g beta-glucan:

- A bowl of porridge (using 30g dry oats or an individual sachet of instant porridge)
- A serving (30-35g) oat-based breakfast cereal flakes
- 1 oat breakfast biscuit, e.g. Oatibix
- 13g [1-2 tbsp.] oat bran – sprinkled onto cereals or added to casseroles, stews, soups and smoothies
- 3 oatcakes
- Any recipe providing at least 30g oats per single serving (and is low in saturated fat)
- 60g [6 spoonfuls] cooked pearl barley – in stews, casseroles or salads



How to achieve your THREE daily servings: 2 Oatibix for breakfast PLUS 2 oatcakes as a snack or with your light meal OR porridge for breakfast PLUS 60g cooked pearl barley in a salad or casserole PLUS 1-2 spoonfuls oatbran added to foods throughout the day e.g. sprinkled over your porridge oats or breakfast cereals, added to soups, smoothies or casseroles.

Alpro Recipes

Low in saturated fat – One of your 5-a-day – Source of plant protein



Soya Green Smoothie

Serves 1 Time: 10mins

- 1 kiwi fruit, peeled and quartered
- 28g walnuts or pecans, roughly chopped
- 200ml Alpro Soya Unsweetened alternative to milk
- 1 small handful young spinach
- 15g rocket leaves
- ½ medium banana, peeled
- 2-3 basil leaves

Put all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth.

Overnight Oats

Serves 2-3 Time: 10mins + overnight chilling

- 100g porridge oats
- 150ml Alpro Soya Original alternative to milk
- 250g Alpro Plain No Sugars alternative to yogurt
- 1 apple, cored and grated or finely chopped
- 30g dried apricots, chopped
- A handful of almonds, chopped
- 100g fresh berries

1) Stir all the ingredients except the almonds and berries together in a bowl. 2) Seal with clingfilm or place in an airtight container and place in the fridge overnight. 3) Serve the next morning, each serving sprinkled with nuts and topped with berries.



Tagliatelle with Spinach and Portobello Mushrooms

Serves 4 Time: 30mins

- 375g tagliatelle pasta – wholegrain if possible
- 500g pot Alpro Greek-style Plain alternative to yogurt
- 1 large white onion, finely chopped
- 3 portobello mushrooms or 250g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 250g fresh young spinach leaves
- 1 reduced-salt vegetable stock cube
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Ground black pepper

1) Crumble half the stock cube into boiling water and cook the pasta 'al dente'. 2) Whilst the pasta is boiling, gently fry the chopped onion and sliced mushrooms in a non-stick pan with the oil, stirring occasionally. Season with black pepper to taste. 3) Pour the Alpro Greek-style Plain into the onion and mushroom mix with 200ml of boiled water from the pasta and the other half of the vegetable stock cube – stir constantly until the sauce is creamy and thick. 4) Add in the spinach and stir until the spinach wilts. Finally add the drained cooked pasta and give it a good stir.



Visit: www.heartuk.org.uk/UCLP for lots more UCLP[®] tips, tools, 5-minute store tour, recipes and menu ideas.

Medication and the UCLP[®]

Your doctor may have advised you to take cholesterol-lowering medication such as a statin. Eating a healthy diet is still very important, however the UCLP[®] is not intended to be a replacement for cholesterol-lowering medications. If you have any questions about the UCLP[®], statins or cholesterol in general, why not call the HEART UK helpline.

At HEART UK – The Nation's Cholesterol Charity – we're passionate about reducing unhealthy cholesterol levels to help you maintain a healthy heart. That's why we have teamed up with Alpro UK Ltd. to develop the UCLP[®], a diet plan to help control cholesterol levels.

Help us to help you

HEART UK – The Cholesterol Charity is the only charity in the UK dedicated to saving lives by helping people avoid heart attacks and strokes caused by high cholesterol. We are not a big charity and every penny we raise we really value. If you would like to donate,

SIMPLY TEXT

HEARTUK3 to 70480

to donate £3*

*Texts cost £3 plus a standard message rate. Available on major UK networks such as Vodafone, O2, EE, Three and Virgin.

Cholesterol helpline: 0345 450 5988 • Email: ask@heartuk.org.uk

• Visit: www.heartuk.org.uk

Charity Registration No. 1003904

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