

## Why Follow a Heart-Healthy Eating Pattern if You Are Asian Indian?

A heart-healthy eating pattern will lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. An Asian Indian eating pattern can be very heart-healthy because it is high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, lentils, raw or unsalted nuts, liquid vegetable oils, and spices.



However, Asian Indian meals can also be high in refined carbohydrate foods like white rice and white flour, unhealthy fats like ghee, vanaspati and coconut milk, sugary drinks and desserts, and salt. Eating these foods often can increase heart disease risk factors like high blood pressure, blood sugar, triglycerides and cholesterol, and cause excess fat around your waist. This group of risk factors is called the *metabolic syndrome* and increases your risk of heart disease. The metabolic syndrome is more commonly found in Asian Indians. The **National Lipid Association** recommends trying the *heart healthy tips below* with your favorite Asian Indian meals to reduce your risk of metabolic syndrome and heart disease.

## Tips for Eating Heart-Healthy Asian Indian Style

### Eat whole grains

- Add oatmeal or soy flour to chapati flour
- Use 100% whole-wheat flour
- Replace white rice with brown rice

### Choose plant-based proteins

- Use tofu in place of paneer
- Use Lentils (daals) or legumes like chickpeas and black-eyed beans

### Reduce unhealthy fats

- Use canola, olive, or soybean oil
- Use pureed almonds or cashews (nut butters) or non-fat yogurt in sauces and curries
- Avoid ghee, vanaspati, butter, cream and coconut oil



### Limit starches

- Limit starchy foods to ¼ of your plate
- Eat less rice if eating chapati or naan
- Fill ½ of your plate with non-starchy vegetables like spinach, okra and broccoli

### Dine out more healthfully

- Avoid deep fried foods
- Avoid foods made with coconut oil
- Order curries with no cream or butter
- Choose chicken or fish cooked in a tandoor
- Choose roasted papadam with mint chutney
- Choose fresh fruit for dessert

## Heart-Healthy Asian Indian Meal Ideas



1 cup oatmeal with ½ cup non-fat milk **OR** 2 slices of whole-wheat toast with 2 tsp. of almond butter **OR** 2 small idlis with sambar **OR** 1 cup of cracked wheat upma with low-salt tomato or mint chutney – 1 fresh fruit – tea or coffee with non-fat or 1% milk



3 oz. fish or white meat chicken **OR** 1 cup legumes (daal, sambar) – 1 cup of varied curried vegetables – 1 cup shredded carrot/vegetable salad with lemon juice – ½ cup non-fat Greek yogurt – 2/3 cup brown rice **or** 2 small whole-wheat chapatis – 1 Tbsp. liquid vegetable oil for cooking – 1 fruit



Enjoy a meal similar to lunch for dinner

Snack on unsalted nuts or seeds – fresh vegetables and fruit – ½ cup dry puffed wheat cereal with spices

**A registered dietitian nutritionist can help you make a heart-healthy meal plan that works best for your lifestyle, and support you in your journey to a healthful dietary pattern.**