



# Knowledge and Skills in Heart Healthcare



## The low down on FAT and Heart Disease

One of the things we've learnt over time is that instead of having a low fat intake we should instead focus on the type of fat we eat.

Studies show that replacing saturated fat with unsaturated fats has definite benefits for our heart. However, eating foods high in refined starchy foods (like white flour) or sugar does not.

This is why we continue to recommend that people get most of the fat they eat from plant foods such as nuts and avocado and oily fish; as well as having whole grains in place of refined starchy and sugary foods while limiting foods high in saturated fats like bacon, butter, fatty meats, and high fat dairy.

### Coconut oil and the heart

NZ Heart Foundation recently commissioned Dr Laurence Eyres, New Zealand's leading specialist in oils and fats, to prepare an academic paper called 'Coconut Oil and the Heart'.

Dr Eyres concludes that the claims for coconut oil's healthiness simply don't stack up.

"Traditionally, coconut oil hasn't been recommended because it is extremely high in saturated fat. This advice remains, despite the large number of marketing claims to the contrary."

He says switching to coconut oil is likely to lead to less favourable lipid profiles and potential increased risk of coronary heart disease.

[http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/Evidence\\_paper\\_coconut\\_August\\_2014.pdf](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/Evidence_paper_coconut_August_2014.pdf)

[http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/Coconut\\_position\\_statement\\_2014.pdf](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/Coconut_position_statement_2014.pdf)

[http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/QA\\_Coconut\\_2014.pdf](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/QA_Coconut_2014.pdf)

### Visual Food guide

The visual food guide is a fresh new take on the old food pyramid, check it out including the Health Heart meal planner app: <http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/healthy-living/healthy-eating/healthy-heart-visual-food-guide>

See over page for summary of the Heart Foundation Heart Healthy diet recommendations.

## In short, nothing much has changed!

Stopping smoking, eating less, eating better, moving more and moving more often remains key to reducing your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Let's not drown in saturated fat and forget the big picture, which is having a heart healthy way of eating overall. There is no 'one' magic nutrient, food or food group, or way of eating – it is the pattern of what we eat that is most important.

A dietary pattern recommended for heart health based largely on minimally processed foods and which includes:

1. plenty of vegetables and fruit
2. some nuts, legumes
3. intact whole grains
4. seafood and lean meats
5. reduced fat dairy products
6. healthy oils

