

Choose the Heart Mark

What does the Heart Mark symbolise?

The Heart Mark is a guideline for consumers to instantly identify heart healthier products on the supermarket shelf and on the menu when eating out.

Products on the supermarket shelf with the Heart Mark logo confirm that they:

- Are healthier choices
- Have been independently tested by a reputable laboratory
- Are approved as part of the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa's eating plan
- Meet stringent nutritional standards so that they are:
 - lower in saturated fats
 - lower in cholesterol
 - lower in salt
 - lower in added sugar
 - higher in fibre (where applicable)

Heart Mark Food Approval Programme:

- Endorses more than **400 products** from 100 companies
- Products that are approved comply with stringent nutritional criteria set by the HSFSa and have had nutritional analysis done by an independent laboratory
- Encourages companies to produce healthier options which comply with HSFSa criteria
- Criteria have been set by the HSFSa in consultation with other local and international heart healthy licensing organisations
- Criteria are different for different categories of food

Categories of Heart Mark Products:

Heart Mark products can be found in each of the food groups and include:

- Grain products (bread, cereal, rice, pasta)
- Vegetables and fruit
- Meat and alternatives (meat, poultry, fish, legumes, nuts and seeds, vegetarian products)
- Milk and dairy products
- Fats, oils and related products

Heart Mark Restaurant Programme:

- Menu items with the Heart Mark logo indicate that they are heart healthier options
- Meals have been approved by the HSFSa and are still tasty and healthy
- Provides health conscious people the opportunity to pursue healthy eating habits even when eating away from home

Choose Heart Mark foods when eating out!

Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease

Heart Disease and Stroke (cardiovascular disease) kills **195 people per day** in South Africa! Cardiovascular disease is predominantly related to poor lifestyle choices. There is much that you can do to reduce your risk, e.g. eating the correct foods, exercising regularly and not smoking can dramatically reduce the risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

Food Pyramid - Build your diet on a base of grains, vegetables and fruit. Add moderate quantities of lean meat, chicken, fish and low fat dairy products. Limit the intake of fats and sugary foods.



Don't become a statistic!

Include Heart Mark options as part of a healthy diet

Including these foods as part of a heart healthy lifestyle, may help REDUCE high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, weight and cardiovascular disease.

Eating healthily means...

- Enjoying a wide variety of foods from the five food groups. This will ensure that your diet provides the protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals necessary for good health (see Food Pyramid)
- Including more natural products, limiting processed foods and refined products that are poor in fibre, high in fat, salt and added sugars
- Learning to read and understand food labels. This is where the Heart Mark logo is important as it identifies foods LOWER in saturated fat, cholesterol, salt and added sugar and HIGHER in fibre (where applicable)
- Changing the way you shop, so that when you prepare meals you have healthy ingredients on hand
- Choosing healthier options when eating away from home