

NIH RESEARCH MATTERS

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How dietary factors influence disease risk

At a Glance

- Researchers found that eating too much or too little of certain foods and nutrients can raise the risk of dying of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.
- These results suggest ways to change eating habits that may help improve health.

Having too much sugar, salt, or fat in your diet can raise your risk for certain diseases. Healthy eating can lower your risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other health conditions. A healthy eating plan emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products; includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and limits saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars.

The major cardiometabolic diseases—heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes—pose substantial health and economic burdens on society. To better understand how different dietary components affect the risk of dying from these diseases, a research team led by Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian of Tufts University analyzed data from CDC's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) and national disease-specific mortality data. The study was supported in part by NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood



A healthy eating plan lowers your risk for heart disease and other health conditions. *m-imagephotography/iStock/Thinkstock*


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