

Double up on the guac? Those avocados are good for your heart health

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Adding avocados to a healthy diet could reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease, including lowering your cholesterol, according to research published by the American Heart Association. That's especially good news because the consumption of avocados in the U.S. has nearly

tripled in the past two decades, up to nearly 2.6 billion pounds a year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Avocados contain high amounts of fiber, potassium, magnesium, folate, vitamin C and vitamin K. The fruit is a known source of healthy, [unsaturated fats](#) and a great replacement for certain fat-containing foods like butter, cheese or processed meats.

[A study](#) recently published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* found that:

- People who ate at least one avocado each week had a 16% lower risk of cardiovascular disease and a 21% lower risk of coronary heart disease, compared to those who never or rarely ate [avocados](#).
- Replacing half a serving daily of margarine, butter, egg, yogurt, cheese or processed meats such as bacon with the same amount of avocado was associated with a 16% to 22% lower risk of cardiovascular disease events.

[A 2015 study](#) published in the *Journal of American Heart Association* found that eating one avocado a day as part of a moderate-fat diet resulted in lower "bad" LDL cholesterol.

"Although avocados are not a total solution to improving [heart health](#), research shows substantial benefits to adding them to your diet," said Mayra L. Estrella, Ph.D., M.P.H., a member of the American Heart Association's Council on Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health and an assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology, Human Genetics, and Environmental Sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health in Houston. "However, everything in moderation because avocados are not calorie-free. A medium [avocado](#) averages about 240 calories and 24 grams of fat,

according to the California Avocado Commission. Yet, they are a source of healthy fat that can be eaten in place of "bad" saturated fat in a typical diet. And of course, if you're eating them in guacamole or another types of dip, you'll want to be careful not to indulge in too many chips, as well."

The research on avocados aligns with the American Heart Association's guidance to follow the Mediterranean diet—a dietary pattern focused on fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, fish and other healthy foods and plant-based fats such as olive, canola, sesame and other non-tropical oils.

The American Heart Association website has a number of [heart-healthy recipes using avocados](#).

Provided by American Heart Association

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