



# The Crestwood Behavioral Health Heart Healthy Diet

Here at Crestwood, we serve what we describe as a heart healthy diet. This diet is appropriate for the vast majority of our clients, including those with diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

The menus and recipes are developed by Margaret McDonald, the Director of Nutrition and Wellness, who has an M.S. in Nutrition Education, and they are reviewed and approved by Tawnya Dorn, a Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator.

The Crestwood Heart Healthy Diet is low in saturated fat and sodium. Foods are prepared from scratch as often as possible, including salad dressings, ketchup, and granola. Fish is served twice a week, and red meat is limited to once a week. We also offer three vegetarian meals a week and offer a vegetarian alternative meal every day to encourage those who want to eat a vegetarian diet. Lean proteins such as chicken and turkey are served often, as are beans and tofu. The diet includes many sources of healthy fats such as plant oils, seeds, and nuts. Whole wheat breads and pasta products are used whenever possible, and low fat dairy products such as fat-free milk and low fat yogurt are served. Fresh fruit is available every day. We also avoid food additives such as high fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils, artificial sweeteners, and excessive preservatives.

The diet is appropriate for diabetics because we keep each meal within a certain range of carbohydrates, and we offer very few concentrated sweets. We do most of our baking with whole wheat flour and serve real sugar in small portions.

The diet is appropriate for those with heart disease because we limit saturated fat by serving red meat only once a week and serving low fat dairy products. We also use very little added salt, and few processed or canned goods.

We appreciate client feedback and many of our Dietary Directors meet with clients regularly to listen to their requests and suggestions. We celebrate holidays and other events with special menu items, often those requested by clients. Barbeques are common in the



warmer months, and monthly birthday parties are celebrated with ice cream and cake or other special desserts.

The Crestwood Heart Healthy Diet also includes meals from a wide array of cultures, in an effort to serve meals that will appeal to our diverse clients. We serve curries, stir-fries, Mexican dishes such as tacos, burritos, and enchiladas, American fare such as burgers and

pizza, Italian meals such as lasagna and chicken cacciatore, and Southern foods such as collard greens and black-eyed peas, to name a few.

After implementing the Heart Healthy Diet, we have seen a gradual decrease in body weight in some of our overweight and obese clients, and an improvement in the lipid profiles and blood sugar levels in many of our clients. The diet is well-received by our clients and many appreciate the noticeable health benefits they experience.

In addition to our diet, many of our facilities offer nutrition and wellness groups, fitness groups, and we have also started a Zumba program, training two staff at each facility to be a licensed Zumba instructor to hold classes for the clients and staff. We plan on conducting cooking groups at our facilities in the near future to give our clients the valuable life skill of being able to cook for themselves. We also have written the Crestwood Cookbook which clients can take with them upon discharge to learn to cook many of the meals from our diet. Our staff also receive nutrition and wellness education so they can demonstrate and support healthy living for our clients.

Our goal is to model a healthy diet for our clients, to not only enhance their health while they are with us, but to educate them about what a healthy lifestyle looks like so that they can continue to eat and live well when they leave us for lower levels of care.

