21 STEPS TO A HEALTHY HEART

#1 FEEL YOUR OATS
Foods high in soluble fiber - oatmeal, beans, fresh fruits, broccoli - form a gel that not only interferes with cholesterol absorption but actually helps excrete it naturally, lowering total and LDL cholesterol levels.

#2 WATCH OUT FOR TRANS FAT
One study showed that women who consume lots of trans fats had a 66% higher risk of heart disease.

#3 DON’T PASS ON THE SWEET POTATOES
Brimming with beta-carotene, fiber, folate, and vitamins E and C, the sweet potato is rated #1 healthiest vegetable.

#4 MORNING MATH
Choose whole-grain cereals that contain at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.

#5 NOTHING FISHY ABOUT IT
Eat fish at least twice a week, Omega-3 fatty acids, found abundantly in salmon, mackerel, and other oily fishes, have been shown to lower cholesterol and reduce triglycerides, help prevent blood clots, and contribute to the body's production of anti-inflammatories.

#6 DRINK TO YOUR HEALTH
Studies show that moderate consumption of coffee, black tea, and alcohol can reduce heart attack risk.

#7 EMBRACE YOUR INNER “DRESSING ON THE SIDE”
Two tablespoons of commercial salad dressing can have as many calories as a chocolate bar, as much fat as two slices of pizza, as much sodium as a handful of taco chips.

#8 GO HALFSIES
The easiest way to eat a balanced meal: fill one half of your plate with vegetables, the other half with equal amounts of carbs and high-protein food.
#9 GO NUTS
One serving a day (about the size of a shot glass) of walnuts or almonds can reduce harmful LDL cholesterol.

#10 PICTURE IT

#11 CHEAP DATE
Instead of splurging on premium ice cream, buy the inexpensive stuff and cut the fat in half. Better yet, save 25 grams of fat per cup with light ice cream.

#12 DON’T RAZZ THE BERRIES
Blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries are antioxidant and fiber-rich gems.

#13 PAZZO FOR PASTA
Two ounces of enriched dried spaghetti or any other macaroni provides riboflavin, iron, niacin, thiamin, and 10% of the US RDA for protein - all for less than a gram of fat and 200 calories.

#14 WHERE’S THE (LEAN) BEEF?
Cuts of beef lowest in fat include top round, eye of round, round tip, top sirloin, top loin, and tenderloin.

#15 POWERED BY WATER
German researchers discovered that drinking water boosts metabolism rates; they calculate that consuming eight glasses a day will burn off 35,000 calories a year - about ten pounds.

#16 BE A WEEKEND WARRIOR
Or at least a vigilante: The average American consumes an extra 230 calories on weekends, leading to a five-pound weight gain by year's end.
#17 OJ IS OK!
Orange Juice is a delicious way to get cardio-protective nutrients such as vitamin C, folate, and potassium.

#18 DARK IS BEAUTIFUL
Chocolate, that is, which some studies have shown to promote cardiac health. But only in moderation.

#19 FORGET SOUTH BEACH, TRY OKINAWA
Scientists believe a key reason Okinawans hold the record for average longevity is leaving the dinner table when they’re hara hara bu - "eight parts out of ten full."

#20 BEANS, BEANS, THEY’RE GOOD FOR YOUR HEART
People who eat legumes four times a week lower their risk of heart disease by 21% compared to people who eat them less than once a week.

#21 VISIT WWW.JOEPISCATELLA.COM
A place to go for straight information, practical tips, and Joe’s more than 30-years-after-bypass-surgery perspective. Updated weekly. Try recipes from THE ROAD TO A HEALTHY HEART RUNS THROUGH THE KITCHEN such as Linguine with Clam Sauce, Veggie Chili, Grilled Swordfish with Capers, and Apple Cranberry Crisp.